



TOWN OF TYNGSBOROUGH

Office of the Select Board

Town Offices | 25 Bryant Lane

Tyngsborough, MA 01879

Tel: (978) 649-2300 Ext. 100 | Fax: (978) 649-2320

Select Board Meeting Minutes **AMENDED DUE TO STORM (VIRTUAL)**

APPROVED

VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85323424553?pwd=6XbjF57OSkniRCsYc59wpr3oEqbxEB.1>

Passcode:820484

Phone one-tap:

+13052241968,,85323424553# US

+13092053325,,85323424553# US

Join via audio:

+1 305 224 1968 US

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chairperson which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed, and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

1. 6:00 PM Open Meeting/Pledge of Allegiance/Board Introduction/Read Agenda

Members present: Ronald Schneider, Jackie Geilfuss, Eric Eldridge, Ron Keohane, Adele Coughlin

Staff present: Town Manager Colin Loiselle, Assistant Town Manager Sean Walsh

Chair Ronald Schneider calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and explains the process for engaging in a virtual meeting via Zoom.

2. Meeting Minutes

A. Regular Session Meeting Minutes for Review/Approval

- i. **Selectperson Eldridge moves to approve the regular session meeting minutes from January 5, 2026. Selectperson Geilfuss Seconds. Roll Call vote: Selectpersons: Coughlin, IN FAVOR; Keohane, PRESENT; Geulfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR. Motion Carries 5-0-0.**

B. Executive Session Meeting Minutes for Review/Approval/Not Release





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- i. **Selectperson Eldridge moves to approve but not release the executive session meeting minutes from January 5, 2026. Selectperson Geilfuss Seconds. Roll Call vote: Selectpersons: Coughlin, IN FAVOR; Keohane, PRESENT; Geuilfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR. Motion Carries 4-0-1.**

3. Citizen/Business Time

Citizens or businesses may address the Select Board on matters of interest to the public for not more than three (3) minutes unless there are more than six (6) speakers wishing to be heard in which case each speaker will be limited to two (2) minutes. Citizen/Business time shall not exceed 15 minutes total, unless the Select Board, within its sole discretion, waives the limit to allow for more time.

Representative Vanna Howard addresses the Board and introduces herself as a State Representative of the 17th Middlesex District in her second term, discussing her Committee work, her background surviving the genocide in Cambodia as a child, and her experience in the United States since arriving at age 11. She further discusses her experience in two District Attorney's offices in MA, former Congresswoman Niki Tsongas, and additional work professionally. She continues to discuss her campaign for the late Senator Kennedy's vacant seat in the MA. State Senate.

4. Police Department Presentation

Town Manager Loiselle explains that due to the change to the meeting location via zoom, the police presentation will take place at the Select Board's next regularly scheduled meeting on February 9, 2026.

5. Public Hearing: TCI-LHE LLC, 440 Middlesex Road, units D-13, E-23, F-1, and F-11 On-Premises All Alcohol and Common Victualler Licenses applications (continued from January 5)

Attorney Peter Nicosia thanks the Board for continuing the hearing to allow Sam Park and Zach Lehan to be here to address the board and summarizes the four applications before the board, noting expected further changes to the licenses for tenants expected to occupy the four respective units.

Sam Park addresses the board to discuss the plan for the four units at 440 Middlesex Rd, soon to be renamed the Edge District. He notes the importance of having these restaurants to ensure the tenants have the financing vehicles to open and operate. He notes the intent to ensure these licenses are not pocket licenses but a vehicle for economic development and notes the investment of upwards of \$500,000 per restaurant at the location. He notes the potential for a fast casual pizza restaurant, a farm fresh restaurant, as well as an entertainment/food concept in the space.





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Mr. Jon Huang addresses the public hearing asking if there is any downside in the applicant controlling all four licenses.

Mr. Park responds with the importance of operating these licenses, the restrictions on three of the four, and the financing issues leading to the applicant submitting these applications. He continues to note the importance of these licenses at this location relative to its location to Nashua to position itself for the entire population corridor.

Mr. Nicosia notes that all four licenses are issued under special legislation and are location specific on Middlesex Road.

Selectperson Keohane thanks the applicants for attending this evening and notes the special legislation licenses were for this project. He notes his comfort in approving the licenses for the applicant.

Selectperson Eldridge asks the applicant if they are comfortable with a timeline to address the licenses if there are no tenants. He notes that they may call in the applicants in 12 months if no action is taken on the licenses.

Mr. Nicosia asks for one year and expects to be back before the board beforehand.

Selectperson Geilfuss wants to address the units ensuring the map matches the applications.

Selectperson Eldridge moves to close the public hearing at 6:43 PM. Selectperson Geilfuss seconds. Motion carries by roll call vote 4-0-1: Selectpersons: Coughlin, IN FAVOR; Keohane, PRESENT; Geilfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR.

Selectperson Eldridge moves to approve four applications as presented. Selectperson Geilfuss seconds. Motion carries by roll call vote 5-0-0: Selectpersons: Coughlin, IN FAVOR; Keohane, IN FAVOR; Geilfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR.

6. Town Manager's Report

- Response to Select Board's Requests, Budget, Departmental Information, Contracting/Procurement

-Moved to after Item 8-





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Town Manager Loiselle and Asst. Manager Walsh provide updates around Town, including but not limited to:

- Tyngsborough Public Schools will be closed Tuesday 1/27/26;
- Updates on the snow storm and work DPW has been doing around the clock;
- Nomination papers being available for Town elections;
- Budget office hours for the upcoming Town Meeting cycle
- Staffing and Event updates; and
- An RFP issued on behalf of the Town's regional health organization for strategic planning.

Selectperson Coughlin gives props to the DPW for a job well done.

Selectperson Keohane reaffirms support for the DPW staff and the work they've done.

Selectperson Eldridge gives a shout out to DPW Staff, the contractors, and how well the top-notch staff has done through storms big and small this season.

Selectperson Geilfuss also gives props to DPW and notes conversation on Facebook with how well roads were cleared in Tyngsborough. They then ask thoughts on why TPS is closed tomorrow.

Mr. Loiselle notes additional snow left to fall and additional work to be done on roads and making schools fully accessible via detailed work now that the storm is close to passing.

Selectperson Geilfuss asks about the budget related to the snow and ice account. Mr. Loiselle notes the strategy in over vs underbudgeting for snow and ice, noting additional flexibility in now over budgeting with the Department of Revenue.

Selectperson Schneider also notes his thanks and support for DPW. He continues that for budget office hours that the budget is our budget, meaning everybody in the Town, not just staff or the Select Board. Ne notes how important it is to be made available to all in these sessions.

7. Fire Station Building Project Update

Town Manager Loiselle provides an update on the Fire Station Building Committee.

To date, the Fire Station Building Committee has spent much of its time focusing on public outreach and bringing information to the public square.

We've hosted five different information sessions including ones in the evening, morning, weekdays, weekends, and in person and virtual. We've had a steady attendance and great engagement with the folks who have attended. We still have two more planned. Our next one is at Town Hall on Wednesday, February 4th at 5 PM and the final one in this phase of our outreach is on Wednesday, February 11th at 6:30 PM virtually.

We've also launched a direct outreach campaign to bring these information sessions to local community groups during their regular meetings. Late last





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week we reached out to a host of community groups and have asked to attend their next meetings to make a brief presentation. If you are a member of a community group that hasn't heard from us and would like to, please reach out to the Town Manager's Office and we'll set that up.

Last week, the Committee met and approved the site layout and proposed floor plan. Both of those design submissions are available on the Fire Station Building Committee's page on tyngsboroughma.gov and have been since prior to their meeting on Wednesday. Our work now focuses on some of the more technical details including ironing out mechanical systems, utility connections, and grading.

Selectperson Coughlin discusses the success of the info sessions and notes Chief Russell did an excellent job at the info session this past Saturday, answering questions for all who came out. Selectperson Keohane notes the success of the sessions and wants to note the potential to discuss naming a new fire station after Sara Winslow at a future time.

Selectperson Eldridge mentions the importance of continuing to keep the community involved and wants to ensure we're connecting with enough members of the community and make sure there are no surprises come Town Meeting and the ballot vote and the need to be successful with both. He says we should be pulling out all the stops to communicate with folks

Selectperson Geilfuss notes the tremendous work being done already, but worries about perceptions about the station and budget issues.

Selectperson Coughlin says the Fire Station Building Committee is encouraged by the outreach that's been done so far, noting metrics on social media, content still to come, and people who've been present in person.

Mr. Loiselle notes that this is going to come down to the taxpayers deciding if they can afford the fire station, mentioning there has been no feedback from the outreach that the Town doesn't need a new fire station. He reiterates that the votes will come down to taxpayers deciding on if they can afford and want to absorb the cost.

Selectperson Schneider reiterates that we can never be too transparent and can never overcommunicate about the fire station. He goes on to applaud the FSBC for the work done to this point.





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8. New Business

A. Discuss Proposed Friendly 40B (Age Restricted Rentals) - 352 Middlesex Road

Attorney Melissa Robbins discusses the proposed property as a 55 and over development. She notes this would be subject to MGL Chapter 40B. She is open to a friendly 40B process or going through the full process through EOHLC with the state. She provides data on the size and number of units, eligible renters, and the financial implications for the development.

Mr. Loiselle gives so context to the development, noting its location on a state road, changes to ADU policy, and general use of the space if not for housing.

Selectperson Coughlin asks for potential downsides to the project.

Attorney Robbins notes impact to traffic being negligible, the desire of the community to add housing given being over the 10% threshold for subsidized housing inventory (SHI) and the buffer it would provide.

Mr. Loiselle notes potential other options for housing, and notes that the ZBA has special permit authority on this project.

Selectperson Keohane notes the benefit of a friendly 40B to provide a buffer to avoid unfriendly 40B projects down the line. He continues to discuss potential traffic issues, noting prior concerns about traffic in the area have not come to be a problem. He adds that this could be a potential option for people looking to stay in Town while downsizing and that we are just at the beginning of this process.

Selectperson Eldridge thanks the applicant for bringing up this project and notes he is open to housing citing the need across the state, including Tyngsborough. He notes the location and traffic concerns seem okay. He asks Mr. Loiselle about utility capacity in the area.

Mr. Loiselle notes the project would have to go before the Sewer Commission, but explains there is capacity in this location.

Selectperson Eldridge expects concern from the Community about being a 55+ community, noting capacity in the schools for more students. He adds that he wants the development to go through the process and wants to see more as it proceeds.

Selectperson Geilfuss starts by noting they are taking the call from a development done by the applicants, citing good work. They confirm that the zoning of the proposed development is currently commercial.





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Attorney Robbins confirms that 40B projects allow for mixed use in commercial zones. Selectperson Geilfuss goes through the renderings confirming layouts and numbers of units shown and proposed. They continue confirming the process with ZBA and Planning Board, as well as the housing development plan previously adopted.

Selectperson Scheider asks the applicant if there is any sense for what the rent range might be in the affordable units?

Attorney Robbins notes an affordable 1-bedroom unit would likely be about \$1700/month and about \$2000/mo for a 2-bedroom. Market rate units would likely be \$1900 for a 1-bedroom and \$3000 for a 2-bedroom, noting affordable prices in the area generally. She continues highlighting the process for applying through the state for a project like this in relation to SHI inventory rates.

B. Review/Approve Draft Sustainable Purchasing Policy

Mr. Walsh discusses the Board's role in approving a new Sustainable Purchasing Policy to make the Town/Health Dept eligible for MassDEP grants starting in FY2027.

Selectperson Coughlin addresses concerns regarding the state issuing mandates to the Town on policies and asks for clarification on the impact this will have, noting concern about money spent.

Mr. Walsh reiterates that no additional money needs to be spent by the Town under adoption of the policy and acts primarily as a tiebreaker in the event two similar cost items have differences in sustainability.

Selectperson Geilfuss asks what grants and amounts we receive as part of adopting the policy.

Mr. Loiselle indicates the grants total about \$7,000 and help fund programs from the Board of Health that benefit citizens of Tyngsborough. He further reiterates the Town always purchases lowest cost items for supplies and this policy will not change that practice internally.

Selectperson Schneider mentions the benefits of purchasing sustainable items and that the policy can benefit the town despite dictation from the state.

Selectperson Eldridge moves that the Select Board approve the Sustainable Purchasing Policy as presented. Selectperson Geilfuss seconds. Motion carries 4-1-0 by roll call





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vote: Selectpersons: Coughlin, NOT IN FAVOR; Keohane, IN FAVOR; Geulfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR.

C. Letter of Support - Public School Fiscal Crisis

-moved to after 8A-

Carolyn Scafidi addresses the Board representing the Massachusetts Teachers Association regarding the FY27 budget for school spending. She asks the Board to sign onto the letter addressed to the Governor and State Legislature regarding additional funding for schools, noting signatures by School Committee and School Administration staff already.

Selectperson Coughlin asks if the letter is for each individual to sign individually or the Board as a group, as well as if any action has been taken after the first round of signatures was sent in November 2025? She notes she is not comfortable signing on to the letter personally given concerns about its chances of success.

Selectperson Keohane notes the Board has the authority to sign individually or as a Board collectively, with varied levels of success on other issues in the past. He notes we should be doing as much as we can for education and letting the Governor's Administration know about current pain points.

Selectperson Eldridge notes that this specific letter is asking for individual signatures, noting concerns on the Board signing this particular letter given the concerns in the letter. He adds that the Board just signed a letter to the state, and that funding from the state is not enough, but Tyngsborough misses state aid to cities and rural areas, where Tyngsborough doesn't get what it needs being stuck in the relative middle of municipalities. He suggests a specific letter specific to Tyngsborough needs, but that individuals could and should sign on to the matter, just not speaking for the Town as a cohesive Board.

Selectperson Geulfuss notes the well spoken points of the other members, noting concerns relative to Tyngsborough. They point out transportation costs and charter schools for issues to advocate being addressed. They continue to reiterate a potential Tyngsborough specific letter to address the Town's needs. They ask how the members who want to sign could do so appropriately, noting the letter asks for titles.





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Mr. Loiselle notes that identifying yourself as a Select Board member does not attempt to represent the opinion of the Town. In addition, it is noted that letters from the public discouraged the Board members from signing the letter.

Ms. Scafidi appreciates the Board's feedback and is open to a Tyngsborough specific drafted letter.

Selectperson Schneider notes given the budget situation, it is important to find ways to support the schools however possible. He continues that it may be more impactful to be a part of a letter like the one before the board than an individual new letter from the Select Board or Tri-Board. He adds that he is in favor of personally signing the letter. Selectperson Keohane follows up to agree with Selectperson Schneider and emphasizes the signatures of members of the School Committee and Superintendent.

Selectperson Geilfuss notes an appreciation for Selectperson Schnieder's reframing and support.

Selectperson Coughlin wonders if adding name and title to the letter might be misleading to the letter of support in the aggregate.

D. Ratify Contract Approvals

i. Director of People and Culture

Town Manager Colin Loiselle notes that the Select Board approved the contract for the Director of People and Culture at its last meeting in an executive session and is required to ratify that approval in public. The contract is included in the meeting packet.

Selectperson Eldridge moves that the Select Board ratify the Director of People and Culture's contract as presented. Selectperson Geilfuss seconds. Motion carries 5-0-0 by roll call vote: Selectpersons: Coughlin, IN FAVOR; Keohane, IN FAVOR; Geilfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR.

ii. Fire Chief

Town Manager Colin Loiselle notes that the Select Board approved the contract for the Fire Chief at its last meeting in an executive session and is required to ratify that approval in public. The contract is included in the meeting packet.

Selectperson Eldridge moves that the Select Board ratify the Fire Chief's contract as presented. Selectperson Geilfuss seconds. Motion carries 5-0-0 by roll call vote: Selectpersons: Coughlin, IN FAVOR; Keohane, IN FAVOR; Geilfuss, IN FAVOR, Eldridge, IN FAVOR; Schneider, IN FAVOR.





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9. Old Business

A. Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Update

Town Manager Loiselle gives an updated presentation on the FY27 budget preparation. He notes a further discussion will take place in a joint meeting with the School Committee will take place Monday, February 2, 2026.

Selectperson Coughlin notes how daunting the work done so far has been done and notes good work having been done so far. She asks for next steps from the Town Manager.

Mr. Loiselle notes he will need to make additional cuts in order to present a balanced budget to the Board to advance to Town Meeting. He notes that additional cuts will result in a reduction in services in some capacity unless something major changes.

Selectperson Keohane mentions the Town not having been in this position recently. He mentions the importance of grants, reducing operating expenses,, the elementary school field watering changes, and that towns around Tyngsborough have been in tough situations for years. He continues to note a lack of desire for a Prop 2.5 override. Selectperson Eldridge expands that he is not in favor of an operational override. It's important to be transparent in the process for the budget, noting it can get ugly, but it's the budget of the residents of the town to participate in. He adds that assistance from the State should not be expected.

Selectperson Geilfuss is glad to see health insurance costs come in lower than expected, but wants to express frustration that GLP-1s will not be covered moving forward, noting the importance of the medications for the lives of many. Moving on to the rest of the budget report, the exercise was helpful for detail on budget deficit reduction. Continuing on to note that we'll need to find the additional approximately \$155,000 somewhere, nevermind what the school needs to find to get to a balanced budget, noting anticipated reduction in services, as well as the positives of department heads being part of the process in identifying changes.

Selectperson Schneider notes anticipation for reviewing the line-item report for deficit reduction, noting apprehension about deferring maintenance or training in long-term costs.

10. Select Board Reports





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Selectperson Coughlin mentions the special election on February 3, 2026 for State Senate.

Selectperson Geilfuss shares that they attended the Board of Library Trustees monthly meeting last month. The library is going to have a difficult time with budget cuts, noting State regulations regarding percent of budget allocated to the budget. They note how grateful they are to have attended the meeting and note the importance of joining meetings like these and shouts out library staff and the Board of Library Trustees.

Selectperson Eldridge moves that the Select Board enter into Executive Session at 9:14PM under Exemption 2: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel: Finance Director, Assistant Fire Chief and Exemption 3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares: SEIU Local 888 Mid-Managers & Clerical Union. Motion carried by Roll Call Vote; Selectpersons Eldridge, IN FAVOR, Geilfuss, IN FAVOR, Schneider, IN FAVOR, Coughlin, IN FAVOR, Keohane, IN FAVOR.

11. Executive Session

- A. Exemption 2: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel: Finance Director, Assistant Fire Chief
- B. Exemption 3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares: SEIU Local 888 Mid-Managers & Clerical Union

13. Adjournment

Selectperson Eldridge moves to adjourn at 9:39 PM; Selectperson Geilfuss seconds; motion carries 5-0 by Roll Call vote Selectpersons Eldridge, IN FAVOR, Geilfuss, IN FAVOR, Schneider, IN FAVOR, Coughlin, IN FAVOR, Keohane, IN FAVOR.

Future Meetings

February 9, 2026

February 23, 2026

If any member of the public wishing to attend this meeting seeks special accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact Sean Walsh at 978-743-5339 or email swalsh@tyngsboroughma.gov. While every attempt will be made to





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provide reasonable accommodations, requests should be made with as much advance notice as possible. Please note some requests, specifically for communication access support, may require 2 week notice beyond the control of the Town.