



Select Board
Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, November 3, 2025

Time: 7:15P.M.

Location: Members of the public may access the hybrid meeting via the Select Board Chambers, Zoom, or ACMI

Present: Mrs. Mahon, Chair, Mr. Hurd, Vice Chair, Mr. DeCoursey, Mr. Helmuth, Mrs. Morgan

Also Present: Mr. Feeney, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Maher

1. Organizational Meeting for the Purpose of Electing a New Vice Chair

Diane M. Mahon, Chair

Mrs. Mahon called for nominations for Select Board Vice Chair.

Mr. DeCoursey made a nomination to appoint John Hurd as Select Board Vice Chair.

Mr. DeCoursey moved to close the nominations.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Cunningham.

Mr. DeCoursey: yes

Mrs. Morgan: yes

Mr. Helmuth: yes

Mr. Hurd: yes

Mrs. Mahon: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

Mr. DeCoursey moved to appoint Mr. John Hurd for Select Board Vice Chair.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion by Mr. Cunningham.

Mr. DeCoursey: yes

Mrs. Morgan: yes

Mr. Helmuth: yes

Mr. Hurd: yes

Mrs. Mahon: yes

SO VOTED (5-0)

PROCLAMATION

Children's and Teen's Grief Awareness Month

The Select Board issued a proclamation recognizing November 2025 as Children's and Teens Grief Awareness Month and November 20, 2025, as Grief Awareness Day in Arlington. The proclamation acknowledges the impact of grief on young people and highlights the important support provided by the Children's Room, a local organization

founded in Arlington that offers grief counseling and resources to children, teens, and their families. Board members shared personal stories about the Children's Room's positive influence, and representatives from the organization described its growth, mission, and services. The proclamation calls on residents, schools, and organizations in Arlington to foster a supportive community for grieving youth and their families.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

AGENDA ITEMS

2. Vote: Confirmation of Treasurer Appointment

James Feeney, Town Manager

The Select Board discussed the appointment of Arlington's new treasurer/collector. Town Manager Jim Feeney presented Lynn Gallagher as the candidate, highlighting her three years of experience in the treasurer's office and strong educational credentials (including a Master of Science in Taxation and a Master of Science in Business Administration). Ms. Gallagher also has significant experience with municipal finance, onboarding staff, and bank reconciliation. She shared her professional background and commitment to serving the Arlington community.

Mr. Helmuth moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

3. End of Year Budget Report

Ida Cody, Comptroller

The FY2025 End-of-Year Budget Report showed free cash certified at a record \$22,737,640, up \$2.1 million from last year. This surplus was driven by \$2.5 million in appropriation turnbacks, \$8.1 million in general fund revenue surplus, and about \$11 million carried forward from the prior year. All departments operated within their budgets, with only two reserve fund transfers: \$230,000 for Fire Department retirement buyouts and \$144,000 for Facilities. Revenues exceeded expectations in several areas, including motor vehicle excise tax (\$1.3M over projection), meals and hotels taxes, building permits, ambulance fees (up \$600,000), parking violations (doubling to \$500,000), rental income, and interest earnings (\$3.5M). Marijuana tax revenues fell short, but enterprise funds all closed with healthy retained earnings, with recreation showing particularly strong results. Building permit growth was attributed to solar panel and EV charger installations. Unspent balances in major funds and salary reserves were carried forward. Overall, the town ended FY2025 in a very strong financial position, reflecting conservative budgeting and diverse revenue growth.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

4. Discussion and Vote: Senior Citizen Means Tested Property Tax Exemption Amount Board of Assessors

Dana Mann, Director of Assessment

The Select Board, joined by the Board of Assessors, discussed the Senior Citizen Means Tested Property Tax Exemption for fiscal year 2026. The exemption helps income-eligible

seniors reduce their property tax burden. The Board of Assessors reported 35 applicants this year, with 29 approved (others were declined due to exceeding income or asset limits). Several exemption percentage options were presented, ranging from 50% to 200%; the percentage chosen affects both the tax relief provided and the potential risk of disqualifying applicants from related state programs (notably the state "circuit breaker" program).

The board and staff discussed the importance of keeping the exemption percentage consistent to avoid creating situations where seniors gain a higher benefit one year but lose more valuable state benefits the next year. Analysis showed that at the 150% exemption level, applicants could be disqualified from both state and local programs, but no such risk existed at the 50% level for current applicants. Compare with other towns, Arlington's current \$250,000 asset limit is similar. After considering whether to raise the percentage to 75% or higher, the Board decided on maintaining the current 50% exemption rate to minimize potential negative impacts on applicants and maintain stability in the program. They requested that next year's analysis include possible scenarios at the 75% exemption level to further inform future decisions. The vote to set the exemption at 50% was unanimous.

Mr. DeCoursey moved to set the exemption at 50%.

SO VOTED (5-0)

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Minutes of Meeting: October 20, 2025

6. Executive Session Minutes: May 20, 2024

7. Request: PFC Christopher Brine Memorial Dedication on Monday, November 10, 2025 @ Windermere Avenue
Philip J. McGovern, Director of Veterans Services

Mr. DeCoursey removed this item from the consent agenda.

The Select Board unanimously approved the dedication of a memorial for Private First-Class Christopher Brine, an Arlington High School graduate who died in combat in Vietnam on April 16, 1967. The dedication ceremony will take place on November 10, 2025, across the street from his childhood home, coinciding with the 250th anniversary of the Marine Corps. During the meeting, board members honored Christopher Brine by sharing his background, reading from an essay he wrote as a senior at AHS about the meaning of sacrifice, and encouraging the community to attend the ceremony to recognize his service and ultimate sacrifice for his country.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

8. Naming of 'No Name Brook'

David Morgan, Environmental Planner and Conservation Agent

9. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, November 14, 15, and 16, 2025 @ Saint Athanasius Greek Orthodox Church for Fall Greek Cuisine
Saint Athanasius Greek Orthodox Church/Stefanos Bouboulis, Parish Council President
10. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, November 13, 2025, December 4, 2025, February 12, 2026, March 12, 2026, and April 9, 2026 @ The Mill Cafe for Community Education Event
Jen Rothenberg

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval of items 5,6,8-10.

SO VOTED (5-0)

APPOINTMENTS

11. Tree Committee
Karen Thomas-Alyea (she/her/hers)
(Term to Expire: 12/31/2028)

Karen Thomas-Alyea was appointed to the Tree Committee. She introduced herself as a 20-year Arlington resident, noted her experience volunteering with the Adopt-a-Tree program, and expressed concern about increasing stress on town trees due to drier summers. Ms. Thomas-Alyea shared her efforts in organizing volunteers to support tree health, especially at Robbins Farm playground. The Select Board expressed enthusiasm for her appointment, highlighting her professional background in greenhouse gas reduction, her local volunteering, and her positive impact on the community.

Mr. Helmuth moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

12. Zoning Board of Appeals - Associate Member
Nicholas J. Rosenberg
(Term to Expire: 10/31/2028)

Mr. Rosenberg was appointed as an associate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, with his term expiring in October 31, 2028. Mr. Rosenberg received a strong recommendation from Christian Klein of the ZBA. During the meeting, Mr. Rosenberg introduced himself as a 15-year Arlington resident, parent, attorney, and commercial litigator with considerable experience in land use and zoning matters. He expressed his eagerness to contribute to the board, highlighting his legal expertise and passion for supporting Arlington's growth.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

13. Arlington Youth Counseling Center Advisory Board
Lauren Schiffer (she/her/hers)
(Term to Expire: 06/30/2028)

Ms. Schiffer, an Arlington resident and clinical social worker with 20 years of experience, shared her background in public health, private practice, and work with children, teens, and young adults. She expressed a desire to give back to the community, utilize her

professional expertise to support the Counseling Center's growth, and build stronger community clinician relationships. The Select Board praised her qualifications and unanimously approved her appointment to the Advisory Board.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

14. Human Rights Commission
Professor Beatrice Manz
(Term to Expire: 10/31/2027)

Professor Manz is an academic with global experience, especially teaching the history of the Middle East and Inner Asia. Professor Manz expressed a commitment to human rights, greater understanding of different prejudices, and fostering mutual respect across divides. The Select Board admired her background and thanked her for her willingness to serve.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

Lauren Walczyk (she/her/hers)
(Term to Expire: 10/31/2026)

Mr. DeCoursey moved to table.

SO VOTED (5-0)

LICENSES & PERMITS

15. For Approval: Food Vendor License

My Brothers Place Pizza and Roast Beef, Maninder Kaur, 181 Broadway

The Select Board considered and approved a food vendor license for My Brother's Place, a pizza and roast beef restaurant at 181 Broadway. The applicant, Harkirat Singh, is an experienced restaurateur with five other restaurants and emphasized his commitment to high-quality, fresh food and community responsibility. Board members welcomed him, noted the restaurant's longstanding presence in Arlington, and confirmed this was a license for new ownership.

Mr. Hurd moved to approve subject to all standard conditions and fire department re-inspection of the fire suppression system.

SO VOTED (5-0)

OPEN FORUM

TRAFFIC RULES & ORDERS / OTHER BUSINESS

16. Discussion and Vote: Date for 2026 Annual Town Election

Michael Cunningham, Town Counsel

Mr. Cunningham stated that under the Town Bylaws it reads:

"The Annual Town Meeting for the purposes of conducting the regular Town Election of Town officers including Town meeting members, and for the submission of questions to the voters of the Town, if required to be submitted thereat, shall be

held annually on the first Saturday of April unless the Select Board vote not later than February 1 to establish another date in order to better suit the public convenience for reasons it shall determine including, but not limited to, conflicts with the observance of religious holidays. Said election shall be considered part of the Annual Town Meeting held in that year.”

The Select Board unanimously voted to set the date for the 2026 annual town election as Saturday, March 28, 2026. This decision was made in consideration of avoiding conflicts with religious holidays. SO VOTED (5-0)

17. Discussion and Vote: Date for 2026 Override Election

Michael Cunningham, Town Counsel

The board engaged in a detailed discussion about the timing of the 2026 override election, weighing options such as holding it on the same day as the annual town election (March 28) or on a later date in April or June. Considerations included school staffing and hiring timelines, state budget release schedules, and communication logistics for the public. Although there was input from members favoring different dates, the board ultimately agreed that additional feedback was needed, particularly from the Long-Range Planning Committee. The Town Clerk noted that early December was a preferred, but not an absolute deadline for publishing election details in the census mailing.

Mr. DeCoursey moved to postpone making a final decision on the override election date until their meeting on December 8. SO VOTED (5-0)

18. Discussion and Vote: Opening of Warrant for Annual Town Meeting 2026

Michael Cunningham, Town Counsel

Mr. Cunningham explained that the Board must take a vote to set the dates that the Town Meeting warrant should open and close. As a point of information for the Board, a review of an interfaith religious calendar does not reveal any readily evident conflicts with the possible April 27, 2026, start date for the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Cunningham noted that in advance of that the Board must vote the dates to open and close the warrant. As stated in Mr. Cunningham’s memo to the Board, he suggested to open the warrant on December 5, 2025, and close on January 30, 2026.

Mr. Hurd moved to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on Friday, December 5, 2025, and close the last Friday on January 30, 2026, Town Meeting will commence on Monday, April 27, 2026.

19. Request: Temporary Relocation of Bus Stop at 190-200 Massachusetts Avenue

Patrick Young

Bandar Development

The temporary relocation of a bus stop located at 190-200 Massachusetts Avenue, was discussed due to necessary sidewalk closures for a building demolition and construction project at that address. The development team (Summit Real Estate and their construction manager) explained that public safety required the bus stop to be moved for about eight months. Working with Town staff and the MBTA, they presented two main

relocation options: (1) in front of Derby Farm (losing four parking spaces) and (2) near Egerton Road (losing two parking spaces).

Board members expressed concerns about local parking impacts, traffic congestion, and the feasibility of using the right turn lane in front of the Capitol Theatre instead (which would require further MBTA review). Ultimately, because the MBTA had not considered all possible alternatives, especially the right turn lane, the board voted to postpone the decision to their next meeting. They requested that the Town Manager coordinate with the MBTA to get feedback on using the Capitol Theatre location and explore options to recoup some lost parking if Derby Farm is chosen. The development team, though eager to proceed, agreed to the timeline.

Mr. Hurd moved to table until the 11/10 meeting.

SO VOTED (5-0)

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Mahon reported that the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) announced plans to downgrade water quality classifications for the Alewife Brook and Charles River, which could allow more sewage (CSO) discharges for cost reasons. She expressed concern and urged the Town Manager and Counsel to explore options to respond to MWRA’s proposal, noting local and media opposition.

Mr. DeCoursey welcomed his parents, Anne and Joe DeCoursey, back as Arlington residents after a 42-year absence.

Mr. Hurd moved to adjourn at 9:52p.m.

SO VOTED (5-0)

Next Scheduled Meeting of Select Board November 3, 2025

A true record attest.
Ashley Maher
Board Administrator

11/3/2025

Agenda Item	Documents Used
1	
Proclamation	Children’s Room Proclamation
2	
3	End of Year Budget Report Reference
4	Senior Means Tested Memo Presentation

5	10.20.2025 Draft Minutes
6	Draft Executive Session Minutes 5.20.2024
7	Brine Memorial Reference CR Reference
8	Memo from Planning Department
9	Greek Church Special One-Day Beer & Wine Application
10	Community Education Special One-Day Beer & Wine Application
11	Tree Committee Appointment Reference
12	Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment Reference
13	Arlington Youth Counseling Center Appointment Reference
14	Human Rights Appointment Reference Human Rights Appointment Reference
15	My Brothers Place FV Application My Brothers Place FV Inspection Reports
16	Memo from Legal Department
17	Memo from Legal Department
18	Memo from Legal Department
19	MBTA Comments Town Comments – Email