



## Select Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, November 10, 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. Discussion and Vote: MWRA/Cambridge/Somerville Updated CSO Control Plan(s) Comment Letter

Patrick Herron, Mystic River Watershed Association, Executive Director

The Board received updates and public input on the MWRA, Cambridge, and Somerville Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Control Plans, with specific attention to Alewife Brook. Representatives from the Mystic River Watershed Association and Save the Alewife Brook highlighted deficiencies in the latest MWRA draft plan, citing concerns that it lacked sufficient ambition to protect public health and property from sewage overflows, especially as climate change increases risks. The advocates urged the Board to oppose any lowering of water quality standards and to call for more robust CSO controls, including sewer separation and green stormwater infrastructure. Board members discussed the substance and specificity of a comment letter to the MWRA, agreeing overall to advocate for the "highest achievable" CSO control ideally, meeting a "25-year storm" standard, and to request clearer presentation of viable alternatives and cost estimates.

Mr. DeCoursey moved to authorize the chair to work with members and staff to finalize and submit the comment letter in advance of the regulatory deadline.

SO VOTED (3-0)

Mr. Helmuth formally recused himself, and Mr. Hurd joined the meeting after its scheduled start.

### 2. Discussion and Vote: Boston Harbor Cleanup Support Letter

Patrick Herron, Mystic River Watershed Association, Executive Director

The Board discussed a request from Patrick Heron, Executive Director of the Mystic River Watershed Association, to consider sending a letter supporting the organization's motion to intervene in an ongoing federal case regarding the Boston Harbor cleanup and control

of combined sewer overflows (CSOs). Mr. Heron explained the importance of participating directly in legal proceedings to represent Arlington's and the watershed's interests, especially since key cleanup goals have yet to be met. Board members expressed general support for the mission but agreed with Mr. DeCoursey that it would be premature to endorse the intervention without first seeing the actual motion to be filed. Town Counsel advised that once the motion was filed, it would be distributed for the board's review.

Mr. DeCoursey moved to table the discussion until the motion is available, with plans to revisit the support letter at their December 8 meeting. SO VOTED (4-0)

Mr. Hurd joined the meeting after its scheduled start.

3. Discussion and Vote: Property Tax Classification - Tax Rate

Dana Mann, Director of Assessments

Mary Winstanley-O'Connor, Board of Assessors, Chair

The Select Board engaged in a detailed discussion with the Board of Assessors regarding the property tax classification and the tax rate for Fiscal Year 2026. Chair Mary Winstanley O'Connor and Director of Assessments Dana Mann explained the components and calculations leading to the proposed tax rate of \$10.67 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, outlining factors such as the previous year's levy limit, Proposition 2½, new property growth, and school debt exclusions. They compared Arlington's rate and average tax bills to neighboring communities, noting Arlington's relatively lower rate and strong municipal services. The team also addressed questions about new developments contributing to tax growth, the impact of residential exemptions, abatement activity, and the handling of the overlay account. After a thorough review, including discussion on classification options and their implications for residential and commercial properties, the Select Board unanimously voted to set the residential factor at one and to approve the tax rate at \$10.67 for FY26.

Mr. Helmuth moved to set the tax rate at \$10.67 with a residential factor of 1.

SO VOTED (5-0)

**CONSENT AGENDA**

4. Small Business Saturday Proclamation

5. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, November 22, 2025 @ Robbins Memorial Town Hall for Book Rack Event  
Michael Buglio / Book Rack

6. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, November 29, 2025 @ Whittemore Robbins House for Private Event

Judy Rakowsky

7. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, December 21, 27, and 28, 2025  
@ 422 Summer Street for Event

Lauren Corsino

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

### **LICENSES & PERMITS**

8. For Approval: Common Victualler License

Greek Habits, 478 Massachusetts Avenue, Georgia Nikolakakos

The Select Board considered and approved a common victualler (restaurant) license for Greek Habits, located at 478 Massachusetts Avenue. The new owner, Georgia Nikolakakos, appeared before the board to explain that she was taking over the business from her sister, who wished to focus more on her family. Ms. Nikolakakos highlighted her extensive experience in the restaurant industry and her commitment to continuing the successful operation of Greek Habits, which she and her sister had run together for the past year and a half. Board members praised the restaurant's contributions to the Arlington community and expressed their appreciation for the quality of its food and service.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

### **APPOINTMENTS**

9. Youth Counseling Center Advisory Board

Mary Kowalczyk (Term to Expire: 1/31/2027)

Ms. Kowalczyk introduced herself as an Arlington resident working for the Cambridge Public Health Department and explained that she had collaborated with the Youth Counseling Center (YCC) for the past year, which led to her selection as a potential board member. Members of the Select Board expressed their gratitude and enthusiasm for her willingness to volunteer, noting that YCC is a unique and vital organization in the community. The board praised her dedication to youth mental health and community service, officially welcoming her to the advisory board and acknowledging the valuable expertise she will bring from her professional and volunteer experiences. Ms. Kowalczyk expressed gratitude for the opportunity and described YCC as an incredible resource for Arlington.

Mr. Helmuth moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

## **OPEN FORUM**

No members of the public spoke during open forum.

## **TRAFFIC RULES & ORDERS / OTHER BUSINESS**

### 10. Discussion and Vote: Order of Takings for the Stratton Safe Routes to School Project

Jim Feeney, Town Manager

The board discussed the Order of Takings related to the Stratton Safe Routes to School Project, which aims to provide accessible and safe walking routes for children and pedestrians traveling to the Stratton School. The project requires the town to acquire a combination of fee takings, permanent easements, and temporary easements affecting 56 properties, to facilitate the construction and ensure compliance with federal requirements for projects receiving state and federal funding. The total appraised cost for the necessary property interests was reduced from initial estimates to \$457,800 after review and negotiation with MassDOT, largely due to a shorter temporary easement duration and appraisal updates. These takings will allow sidewalk, ramp, and crosswalk improvements, and were authorized by three separate board votes: to sign the order of taking, the notice of taking, and to allow the town manager to accept compensation donations. Town staff and MassDOT representatives were thanked for their detailed collaboration and efforts in bringing costs down and moving the project forward on schedule.

Mr. Hurd moved the following three motions:

- Approve and sign the Order of Taking document to be recorded at the Registry of Deeds.
- Approve the Notice of Taking document for future execution.
- Authorize the Town Manager to accept just compensation donations as the authorized Town signatory on the Certificate of Donation document.

SO VOTED (5-0)

### 11. Discussion and Vote: Temporary Relocation of Bus Stop at 190-200 Massachusetts Avenue

Patrick Young, Bandar Development

The Board discussed the temporary relocation of a bus stop at 190-200 Massachusetts Avenue due to an adjacent private construction project requiring the space. The board, alongside the town manager and representatives from the MBTA and the project's developers, reviewed three main relocation options: two would move the bus stop to different sections along the 180 block of Mass Ave, each impacting several parking

spaces, and a third, preferred option would relocate the stop into the right-hand turn only lane, which would not affect parking but required special MBTA operational approval. Board members prioritized minimizing parking disruptions while ensuring accessibility and safety. The board required the developer to update the construction management plan to ensure safe pedestrian passage during the project and requested regular communication on progress and accessibility concerns such as temporary sidewalk closures.

Mr. Hurd moved to approve option three, the right-turn lane, as their primary choice, contingent on MBTA approval, and option one as a backup if option three was not approved. SO VOTED (5-0)

12. Discussion and Vote: Two On-Street Parking Spaces as Short-Term Parking or Loading Spaces at 1025 Massachusetts Avenue  
Matthew Maggiore, The Maggiore Companies

Developer and building manager Matthew Maggiore explained that this request was a permanent condition for two on-street parking spaces as short-term or loading spaces. This request arises from the comprehensive permit for the newly constructed 50-unit residential building, which is expected to open for occupancy by early January. The board clarified that the new parking conditions would come into effect once the building is occupied, rather than immediately. Board members recognized the successful progress and quality of construction at the site.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval SO VOTED (5-0)

13. Discussion and Vote: Arlington Center Safety Zone  
Jim Stubbe, Transportation Advisory Committee, Chair  
Scott Smith, Transportation Advisory Committee

The Arlington Center Safety Zone proposal, presented by Scott Smith of the Transportation Advisory Committee, recommended establishing a 20-mph safety zone along Massachusetts Avenue from the high school to the main fire station. This stretch was identified due to its high volume of pedestrian and bicycle activity, numerous MBTA bus routes, businesses, and several recent crashes involving vulnerable users. The committee considered various boundary options, ultimately choosing to begin the zone near the high school, where community use and after-hours activity are significant, and to end it near the fire station. The signage plan calls for 20-mph signs placed strategically, including after major intersections and before uncontrolled crosswalks, with "End Safety Zone" signs marking the transition back to the default 25-mph speed limit. The board discussed the implications for driver behavior, placement of signs, and the importance of

layered traffic calming measures, ultimately approving the recommended safety zone to enhance safety for all roadway users in the Arlington Center area.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

#### 14. Discussion and Vote: Irving Street Safety Zone

Jim Stubbe, Transportation Advisory Committee, Chair

The Board considered the establishment of a 20-mph safety zone on Irving Street, stretching approximately a quarter mile from Jason Street to Pleasant Street. This proposal was brought forward by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which identified the segment as a well-used route with significant pedestrian activity due to the adjacent park and children's center, as well as being a frequent cut-through for drivers. Despite a low number of reported accidents, the TAC emphasized the narrow, hilly nature of the street and the presence of many vulnerable users, including children and pedestrians, as factors necessitating stronger safety measures. The safety zone will be marked with clear signage at both ends and at key entry points and is part of a broader effort to improve safety around Arlington's parks and residential streets.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval.

SO VOTED (5-0)

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mrs. Mahon brought up the topic of including information for Arlington seniors about tax relief options on the upcoming local census, both as a question and as an educational tool. She suggested coordinating with Town Counsel to ensure it's legal and plans to circulate the final list of options for board review if allowed. Mrs. Mahon concluded with a brief report on a recent town event honoring Private First-Class Chris Brine, referencing board members and community participation, and reminded the board to send ideas for census questions to Mr. Diggins and Town Clerk.

Mr. Hurd mentioned the recently installed speed bump on Jason Street and safety concerns related to it, suggesting a potential need for further action.

Mr. Hurd moved to adjourn at 9:37p.m.

SO VOTED (5-0)

Next Scheduled Meeting of Select Board December 8, 2025

A true record attest.  
Ashley Maher  
Board Administrator

11/10/2025

Agenda Item	Documents Used
1	MWRA Draft Letter
2	Boston Harbor Cleanup Draft Letter
3	Memo from Assessors Tax Classification Booklet
4	Small Business Saturday Proclamation
5	Special One-Day Beer & Wine Application
6	Special One-Day Beer & Wine Application
7	Special One-Day Beer & Wine Application
8	Greek Habits – CV Application Inspection Reports
9	M. Kowalczyk Reference
10	Presentation Notice of Taking Order of Taking ROW Plans Certificate of Donation
11	Presentation MBTA Comments Town Comments – Email
12	Letter from Maggiore Construction 1025 Mass Ave Plan
13	Arlington Center Safety Zone Memo Presentation
14	Irving Street Safety Zone – Memo Presentation