



Select Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, December 8, 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, Mrs. Morgan

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

Absent: Mr. Helmuth

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes of Meetings: November 3, 2025; November 10, 2025
2. Executive Session Minutes: July 21, 2025
3. For Approval: 20b Exemption for Two Municipal Roles
Officer Meredith Gallagher
4. Reappointment
Parks and Recreation Commission
Josh Fenollosa (Term to Expire: 06/30/2028)
5. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, December 13, 2025 @
Robbins Memorial Town Hall for Winter Market
Thomas Allen
6. Request: Special (One Day) Beer & Wine License, 1/13/26, 1/27/26, 4/14/26,
4/29/26, 5/5/26, and 5/13/26, @ The Mill Cafe for Community Education Event
Jen Rothenberg
7. Winter Snowflakes Banners
Beth Locke, Executive Director Arlington Chamber of Commerce
8. Black History Month Banners
Ramsha Baluch, DEI Director

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (4-0)

APPOINTMENTS

9. Civilian Police Advisory Commission

Sylvia Dominguez

(Term to Expire: 12/31/2028)

Sylvia Dominguez, a sociology professor at Northeastern University, was appointed to the Civilian Police Advisory Committee. She expressed her motivation to enhance community and police relations, emphasizing her expertise in strategy and community engagement. Her appointment received positive comments, including a public endorsement from a town resident. The Board thanked Ms. Dominguez for her willingness to serve and looks forward to working with her in the future.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (4-0)

10. Human Rights Commission

Marie Meslin (she/her/hers)

(Term to Expire: 10/31/2026)

Marie Meslin was appointed to the Human Rights Commission. She has lived in Arlington for over 15 years, recently became an American citizen, and has a professional background in international women's rights, social impact, and entrepreneurship. She views serving on the commission as a way to give back to her community and deepen her connection as a new citizen. The board congratulated her on her citizenship and thanked her for volunteering. Her appointment was unanimously approved.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval.

SO VOTED (4-0)

LICENSES & PERMITS

11. For Approval: Wine & Malt Alcohol License

Rumruai Munkong Chokdee Inc., d/b/a Sumen, Tarita Charoenvesyankul, 444 Massachusetts Avenue.

The Board considered an application from Tarita, representing Lam Loyalty at 444 Mass Ave, for a wine and malt alcohol license. Tarita explained the license was requested to serve beer, wine, and sake with food, in response to customer demand at the reopened restaurant location. He confirmed prior experience running a restaurant in Dorchester and familiarity with the TIPS alcohol certification program. The Board and town counsel reviewed safe alcohol service protocols, emphasizing town oversight.

Mr. Hurd moved approval.

SO VOTED (4-0)

12. For Approval: Class I Licenses

MAG Retail Holdings - W CH LLC, d/b/a McGovern Chevrolet, Matt McGovern,
1125 Massachusetts Avenue

The Board's discussion of the McGovern Chevrolet class one license applications included a clear focus on compliance with the town's signage bylaws. After Mr. McGovern explained the transition in dealership ownership and license requirements, Board member Mr. DeCoursey noted that the application materials referenced signage, reminding Mr. McGovern to ensure any changes to dealership signage follow Arlington's bylaws. The Board, with guidance from town counsel, voted on the two licenses separately.

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval subject to all conditions as set forth. SO VOTED (4-0)

MAG Retail Holdings - HMD LLC, d/b/a McGovern Hyundai of Arlington, Matt McGovern, 1165 Massachusetts Avenue

Mr. DeCoursey moved approval subject to all conditions as set forth. SO VOTED (4-0)

OPEN FORUM

Larry Slotnick, 94 Grafton Street, Town Meeting Member for Precinct 7, expressed concerns regarding the Arlington Redevelopment Board's public hearing process for the proposed project at 126 Broadway. He noted that the developer intends to demolish an existing two-family house and construct a five-story, 14-unit building utilizing MBTA Communities overlay zoning bonuses. Mr. Slotnick reported significant neighborhood concern about reduced opportunities for public comment, overall transparency in the hearing process, and the limited acknowledgment by the ARB of a petition containing 175 signatures submitted by area residents. He also shared his personal surprise at the scale of the proposed building once the project designs were made public.

Wynnell Evans, Town Meeting Member for Precinct 14, spoke regarding an upcoming agenda item concerning the appeal of a tree removal at 53 Churchill Avenue. She explained that the proposed removal is intended to improve access to an apron parking space located in an area that violates zoning bylaws, which prohibit parking within front setbacks. Ms. Evans urged the Board to recognize that removing the tree could further compound a potential zoning violation and encouraged consideration of preserving the tree.

TRAFFIC RULES & ORDERS / OTHER BUSINESS

13. Arlington Community Electricity Plan Updates
Talia Fox, Sustainability Manager

Talia Fox, the Town of Arlington’s Sustainability Manager, presented an update on the Arlington Community Electricity (ACE) Plan. She explained that ACE is a municipal aggregation program that allows the Town to purchase electricity in bulk on behalf of residents, providing fixed-rate options with varying levels of renewable energy content. The current contract, covering the period from 2024 to 2027, includes three participation products: Arlington Basic, which offers the lowest cost and meets the minimum state renewable requirement; ACE Local Green, the default option, which provides 100 percent renewable energy; and ACE Local Greenest, which includes 100 percent renewable energy with additional local renewable sources. Ms. Fox noted that Arlington is the first municipality in Massachusetts to offer 100 percent renewable energy as the default option for all residents, resulting in a significant environmental benefit and strong participation, with more than 15,000 accounts enrolled, representing approximately 71 percent of eligible customers.

Ms. Fox further reported that, since the program’s inception, participating customers have saved an average of \$480 per account, while emphasizing that future savings cannot be guaranteed. She described updates to the ACE Plan to align with a new Department of Public Utilities template, which will simplify reporting requirements and allow for greater flexibility, such as making future product changes without requiring an extended DPU review process. A key proposed change is the automatic enrollment of low-income residents into the lowest-cost option, Arlington Basic, which is expected to save eligible households approximately \$150 per year and would affect about 600 current participants. She added that outreach efforts will continue, with a focus on low-income households through targeted mailings and town-issued notices. Ms. Fox concluded by requesting comments or guidance from the Select Board, after which a 30-day public comment period will be held before the plan is finalized.

Mr. Hurd moved to support the plan.

SO VOTED (4-0)

14. Discussion and Vote: Outdoor Restaurant and Retail Permit Application Rules and Regulations

The Select Board discussed proposed updates to the rules and regulations governing outdoor restaurant and retail permits, with a particular focus on parklets used for on-street dining. The discussion incorporated recommendations from a subcommittee as well as a detailed presentation by Economic Development Coordinator Katie Luczai. The Board reviewed several proposed changes intended to improve safety, efficiency, and equitable use of public space. Among the key proposals was shortening the parklet operating season from April 15–November 15 to May 1–October 1, based on data indicating that parklets are underutilized at the beginning and end of the current season. The Board also discussed limiting individual parklets to a maximum of two public parking spaces, or 36 linear feet, while allowing potential exemptions for public or shared parklets.

Additional proposed changes included revising the fee structure to charge on a per-parking-space basis, rather than a flat fee regardless of size, and requiring applicants to submit a sanitation plan outlining trash management and pest control measures. The Board reviewed a proposal to replace rolling application submissions with two semiannual application deadlines in order to streamline review and processing for both staff and applicants. The use of town-provided water-filled plastic separation barriers was also discussed, with a proposal to make them optional and allow alternatives such as heavy planters or fencing, subject to engineering review for safety. Special consideration was given to Broadway Plaza, where the Board discussed potential reconfiguration of seating and parklet layouts due to safety concerns related to head-in parking and to improve access for multiple businesses.

The Board agreed that staff would incorporate subcommittee recommendations and public feedback into a revised, red-lined policy document to be presented at a future meeting for final approval. As part of the application process, businesses may also be asked to specify anticipated parklet operating hours to help assess the appropriate allocation of public space. Overall, the Board emphasized the goal of balancing the benefits of outdoor dining for businesses and residents with public safety, fair use of public parking, and efficient use of town resources.

Mr. Hurd moved to receive the recommendations.

SO VOTED (4-0)

15. For Approval: Elm Tree Removal @ 53 Churchill Avenue

Paul Pandolfo

The Select Board considered an appeal by homeowner Paul Pandolfo of 53 Churchill Avenue regarding the Tree Warden's denial of a request to remove a public elm tree located in front of his driveway. Mr. Pandolfo stated that the request was based on safety and access concerns related to the driveway. Tree Warden Tim Lecuire explained that the elm tree is healthy, was planted in 2017, and is considered a valuable public asset. He noted that the removal request was denied in accordance with Massachusetts law and in response to public objections. Mr. Lecuire further reported that the homeowner had proceeded with unauthorized driveway expansion work that may have impacted the tree's root system.

Multiple members of the public, spoke in favor of preserving the tree:

Keith Schnebly, 78 Webcowet Road

Marina Popova, 255 Ridge Street

Steve Moore, 64 Piedmont Street

Susan Stamps, 39 Grafton Street

Joanne Cullinane, 69 Newland Road

Commenters emphasized the ecological, aesthetic, and community value of mature street trees and expressed concern about setting a precedent that would allow removal of public

shade trees for private convenience. Some speakers also raised concerns that damage to a public tree following a denial should not be rewarded.

The Select Board discussed prior practices, applicable legal standards, and public policy considerations, noting that public shade trees are rarely removed to accommodate private driveway expansion and underscoring the importance of adhering to permitting and tree protection requirements.

Mr. Hurd moved to deny the removal of the tree.

SO VOTED (4-0)

16. Discussion and *Vote: Date for 2026 Override Election *(Pending LRPC Update)

Michael Cunningham, Town Counsel

The Select Board discussed setting the date for the 2026 Proposition 2½ override election. Mrs. Mahon and Mr. DeCoursey highlighted recent positive developments in long-range planning efforts, which reduced the projected fiscal year 2027 town budget deficit from \$13.5 million to \$3.8 million. All sides, including the school committee, are now in alignment regarding budget strategies and deficit reduction.

The official vote and discussion centered on scheduling the override question to coincide with the annual town election on March 28, 2026. While consensus was reached on the date, the board clarified that the specific override amount and related commitments would be reviewed and finalized at a later date (before February 2026), as long-range planning continues. The discussion also noted thanks to those involved in long-range planning and acknowledged ongoing efforts to further refine the financial request that will go before the voters.

Mr. DeCoursey moved “That as part of the Annual Town Election to be held on March 28, 2026, a question for the purpose of voting on a Proposition 2 ½ Override shall be included. The wording of the question will be approved by the Select Board and timely written notice shall be directed to the Town Clerk in compliance with G.L.c.54, §42C.”

SO VOTED (4-0)

17. Status of Select Board Executive Session Minutes

Michael Cunningham, Town Counsel

Town Counsel Michael Cunningham explained that executive session minutes do not always remain confidential indefinitely; they can become public when the reason for their confidentiality no longer exists. The Board conducts periodic reviews to determine if minutes can be released. Recently, several have been approved for release, but one executive session from 2025 remains confidential because its purpose has not yet been fulfilled. Town Counsel will continue to update the Board as reviews happen, ensuring minutes are released when appropriate.

No vote was required on this item.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

18. Safe Walking Routes to School Maps

19. Town Manager Vacation "Buy Back"

20. Town of Arlington Host Community Agreement Letters NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Hurd moved receipt and referred item 18 to TAC.

SO VOTED (4-0)

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Maher noted that the annual Town Meeting warrant submission opened on December 5th and will be available until January 30, 2026. The submission packet was updated to be more user-friendly, and the public is encouraged to submit questions or articles and consult with counsel as needed.

Mr. Cunningham thanked the Select Board staff for their work on the new warrant article forum and encouraged public engagement for any queries related to warrant articles. He confirmed he would continue his yearly town meeting primer, coordinating dates for public outreach.

Mrs. Morgan reminded the Board and Staff to connect with Ms. Brazile about a mailing date, confirming the board met its deadline as promised.

Mr. Feeney reported successful completion of the first recycling audit under the new contract with Waste Management, noting a low 3.4% contamination rate and commending the community for effective recycling. Further audits will be reviewed to identify and reduce sources of contamination.

Mr. DeCoursey commended the Redevelopment Board for addressing issues at 455 Mass Ave, where as-built construction differed from the permitted plans. He praised their handling of enforcement and public discussion.

Mr. Hurd promoted upcoming holiday caroling events by the Select Board, honoring former colleague Mr. Greeley and describing community enthusiasm for the tradition. He also mentioned the annual firefighters' retirement banquet, highlighting the unique karaoke acceptance speech, community spirit, and appreciation for the event.

Mrs. Mahon, and others reminisced about the event, capping the new business section with no additional items.

Mr. Hurd moved to adjourn at 9:36p.m.

SO VOTED (4-0)

Next Scheduled Meeting of Select Board December 22, 2025

A true record attest.
Ashley Maher
Board Administrator

12/8/2025

Agenda Item	Documents Used
1	Draft 11.3.2025 Minutes Draft 11.10.2025 Minutes
2	Draft 07.21.2025 ES Minutes
3	Disclosure Form
4	Parks and Rec Reappointment Reference
5	Special One-Day Beer & Wine License Application
6	Special One-Day Beer & Wine License Application
7	Banner Application Banner Designs Banner Schedule
8	Banner Application Banner Designs Banner Schedule
9	Police Advisory Commission Appointment Reference
10	Human Rights Commission Appointment Reference
11	Sumen Alcohol License Application
12	1125 Class I Application 1165 Class I Application Inspection Reports
13	Memo from Planning Department Presentation Revised Plan
14	Memo from Planning Department Presentation
15	Email of Appeal Cover Letter

	Building Card Letter of Affidavit Request for Tree Transplant Zoning By Law Request for Tree Hearing Tree Committee Minutes 53 Churchill Plans Reference 2
16	Memo from Legal Department
17	
18	Memo Reference
19	TM Buy Back Memo
20	Host Community Agreement Letters