

Approved: January 27, 2026

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29

Select Board Meeting: January 6, 2026

Present: Marjorie Freiman, Thomas Ulfelder, Colette Aufranc, Beth Sullivan Woods, Kenneth Largess

Also Present: Executive Director Meghan Jop, Assistant Executive Director Corey Testa

Meeting Documents:

1. Agenda
2. Select Board Calendar
3. Meeting Overview
4. Memo from Town Clerk KC Kato Re: Election Staff Supplemental Appointments dated 12/31/25
5. Memo to Select Board from the Policy Subcommittee Re: Appointment Policy – Proposed Revisions dated 12/2/25
6. Redlined Appointment Policy
7. Draft 2026 Town Meeting Article List
8. Draft 2026 Annual Town Meeting Warrant
9. Draft Minutes
 - a. November 18, 2025
 - b. November 25, 2025
 - c. December 2, 2025
 - d. December 11, 2025
10. Other Correspondence
 - a. Save the Date Reading Frederick Douglas Together
 - b. Wellesley Report: Volunteers rally to throw holiday parties for Wellesley seniors in public housing

1. Call to Order

Ms. Freiman called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:30 PM in the Juliani Room, Town Hall. Ms. Freiman announced that the meeting was being broadcast live on Comcast Channel 8 and Verizon Channel 40 and would be available for later viewing on wellesleymedia.org.

2. Citizen Speak

Lisa Moore, a Wellesley resident and environmental educator for the Natural Resource Commission (speaking on her personal behalf), read a letter she had sent to Governor Healey. She requested the 40 acres of MassBay Forest at 40 Oakland Street be removed from the surplus land inventory list, noting the contradiction between selling this forest and the Governor's own 25-year biodiversity initiative launched in August. Ms. Moore emphasized the importance of preserving mature forests rather than trying to rebuild destroyed ecosystems and pointed out that Wellesley has already lost hundreds of trees to recent development.

Philip Hahnfeldt, Chestnut Street, questioned whether alternatives to selling the land had been explored, such as acquiring the land through a conservation trust with sufficient public support.

He noted the contradiction in potentially destroying unique natural resources for the very purpose of sharing them through affordable housing development.

Christine Duvivier, Pine Street, expressed surprise that Wellesley has more housing and less parkland than comparable cities and towns despite receiving the National Tree City Award in 2024. She supported the Select Board's challenge to the state on the MassBay Forest issue and identified two "false trade-offs" being presented: (1) that the forest must be destroyed to fund a MassBay building, and (2) that the forest must be destroyed to get affordable housing. She emphasized that the forest is a Metro Boston treasure used by residents from many surrounding communities.

Ellen Fine, from Needham, spoke about her experiences hiking through the forest and expressed concern about the climate impact of removing acres of forest. She also mentioned potential historic and cultural significance to indigenous peoples and suggested development could occur on already partially developed spaces rather than destroying natural forests.

Caroline Wilson a Wellesley resident, spoke about her frequent use of the park as a dog walker, noting how busy the parks are and therefore her shock at the land being designated as surplus. Ms. Wilson described the park as a third space, free for the community to enter noting the community maintained the trails.

Paul Derrickson, Riverdale Road, emphasized the rarity of having such a reservation so close to downtown in a suburban town, and stressed that once land like this is built upon, it cannot be recovered.

3. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Meghan Jop provided several updates:

- Ms. Jop reminded residents that the last date to pull nomination papers for Town-wide office is Friday, January 9, at 5pm, with papers due by Tuesday, January 13, at 5pm with 50 signatures. For Town Meeting members, the last day to pull papers is January 23, with a January 27 deadline and only 10 signatures required from the candidate's precinct.
- Ms. Jop noted it was annual renewal time for parking passes and dog licenses. Dog license renewals must be completed by March 31 to avoid fines. Annual parking permits cost \$480 for residents, students, or business employees, and \$1,080 for non-residents. She emphasized that annual passes are more economical for those using parking lots more than 13 times per month.
- Ms. Jop announced MassDOT overnight closures starting that evening for ramps from I-95/Route 128 northbound and Mass Pike eastbound/westbound from 10pm-5am, with detours in place.

4. Consent Agenda

Appoint Election Workers

Ms. Freiman reviewed the consent agenda items and confirmed with Ms. Jop that there had been no requests for removal of any items from the Consent Agenda.

82 **Upon a motion by Ms. Aufranc and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board voted (5-0) to**
83 **approve the Consent Agenda.**

84
85 **Aufranc – Aye**

86 **Freiman – Aye**

87 **Largess – Aye**

88 **Sullivan Woods – Aye**

89 **Ulfelder – Aye**

90 **5. Policy Subcommittee Update**

91 **Discuss and Vote Appointment Policy Amendments**

92 Ms. Aufranc presented the draft Appointment Policy amendments that had been distributed to the
93 Board in December. She noted feedback had been received and circulated to the Board. The
94 Board had a detailed discussion about several aspects of the policy:

- 95 1. A section titled "Broad Community Engagement" was revised to "Consideration of Other
96 Town Service" to better reflect the content, and language suggesting that holding multiple
97 positions was inherently beneficial was removed.
- 98 2. In procedure step 2, the language was modified to clarify the consultation process
99 between the Select Board chair/liaison and appointed board chairs regarding needs and
100 qualifications.
- 101 3. Procedure step 3 was simplified focusing on notifying members whose terms are
102 expiring and asking if they will be applying for reappointment.
- 103 4. The term "Underlying Board" was changed throughout the document to "Appointed
104 Board" for consistency with other town documents.
- 105 5. Procedure step 6A was revised to clarify that the Select Board will determine whether
106 and how its members will participate in the interview process for appointments and
107 establish a process for individual board members to request additional information via
108 staff.

109 The Board agreed that the policy should make it clear that while the Select Board has ultimate
110 responsibility for appointments, the appointed boards will have appropriate input in the process.

111 **Upon a motion by Ms. Aufranc and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder the Board voted (5-0) to**
112 **approve the Appointments Policy, as amended, with final editorial and review by Town**
113 **Counsel to be integrated into the policy at the Policy Subcommittee meeting, and if**
114 **necessary bring back to the Select Board for further review.**

115 **Aufranc – Aye**

116 **Freiman – Aye**

117 **Largess – Aye**

118 **Sullivan Woods – Aye**

119 **Ulfelder – Aye**

120 **6. Annual Town Meeting Preparation**

121 **Review Draft Warrant**

122 Ms. Jop presented the draft warrant for Annual Town Meeting, noting it was currently being
123 reviewed by Town Counsel. With 37 articles, she described it as the shortest warrant in recent
124 memory, with several articles carried over from the previous year.

125 Ms. Jop noted the Board had already discussed several supplemental appropriations, the division
126 of the omnibus budget and continued with an overview of other key articles.

127 The Board had an extended discussion about the DPW campus project feasibility study and how
128 it fits into larger capital planning efforts. Concern was expressed about the significant cost
129 implications and board members requested more information ahead of the joint meeting with the
130 Board of Public Works.

131 Ms. Jop explained that the feasibility study is part of a broader approach to town-wide capital
132 planning, with similar studies planned for the Fire Stations and in early discussions for School
133 buildings. This would allow the Town to develop a comprehensive 10–15-year plan with clear
134 financial implications for taxpayers. Preliminary estimates suggest major projects could increase
135 the median tax bill by approximately \$2,000 over a 4-year period.

136 Board members emphasized the importance of transparency about the cumulative impact of
137 multiple large capital projects on taxpayers, noting that operational costs also increase annually
138 and property valuations continue to rise. There was consensus that the Town needs a Town-wide
139 Facilities Master Plan to complement the Town-wide capital planning work.

140 The Board identified the need for additional joint meetings with various committees to discuss
141 articles and coordinate efforts including the Human Resources Board regarding when HR policies
142 have a financial implication, the Natural Resources Commission regarding the proposed financing
143 structure for the Land Conservation Plan and Wights Pond, and the Planning Board regarding
144 amendments to the Residential Incentive Overlay zoning bylaw amendments.

145 **7. Administrative Matters**

146 **Discuss and Vote Minutes**

147 The Board reviewed the minutes of November 18, 2025, November 25, 2025, December 2, 2025,
148 and December 11, 2025.

149
150 **Upon a motion by Ms. Aufranc and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board voted (5-0) to**
151 **approve the minutes of November 18, 2025, November 25, 2025, December 2, 2025, and**
152 **December 11, 2025, as amended.**

153
154 **Aufranc – Aye**

155 **Freiman – Aye**
156 **Largess – Aye**
157 **Sullivan Woods – Aye**
158 **Ulfelder – Aye**

159 **8. Chair’s Report**

160 Ms. Freiman reported that she and the Vice Chair did not meet with the School Committee that
161 morning but did meet with the Advisory Committee. She noted that the chair of Advisory would
162 be presenting his analysis of longitudinal school expenditures the following evening, and that the
163 School Committee liaisons would be incorporating this work into their write-ups.

164 Ms. Jop added that the Town-wide Financial Plan presentation to Advisory has been moved to
165 February 25, which would allow for finalization of health insurance numbers.

166 **9. Executive Session**

167 At 7:45 pm, Ms. Freiman asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session to conduct strategy
168 for potential litigation with the Commonwealth regarding the disposition of surplus MassBay
169 Community College land as having the discussion in open session would be detrimental to the
170 Town’s position.

171 **Upon a motion by Ms. Aufranc and seconded by Mr. Ulfelder, the Board voted by roll call**
172 **vote all aye (5-0) to enter executive session under Mass General Law chapter 30A sub section**
173 **21A exemption number 3 to conduct strategy for potential litigation with the Commonwealth**
174 **regarding the disposition of surplus MassBay Community College land and to invite Meghan**
175 **Jop, Corey Testa, Town Counsel Tom Harrington and Eric Reustle, and Special Counsel**
176 **Nick Shapiro and Robbie Hopkins to join as the Chair has declared that having such**
177 **discussions in open session would have a detrimental effect on the Town's position. Following**
178 **the adjournment of executive session, the Board will return to open session for the sole**
179 **purpose of adjourning the meeting.**

180 **Aufranc – Aye**
181 **Freiman – Aye**
182 **Largess – Aye**
183 **Sullivan Woods – Aye**
184 **Ulfelder – Aye**

185 **10. Adjournment**

186 The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm

187
188 The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2026, at 6:30 pm in Juliani Room, Town
189 Hall.
190

