

SELECT BOARD

MINUTES

December 10, 2025



Board met in HYBRID session at 7:00 p.m. at Abbot Hall, 188 Washington Street, Select Board Meeting Room

The following Board members were present constituting a quorum:

Dan Fox, Chair
M. C. Moses Grader
Erin M. Noonan
Alexa J. Singer
James R. Zisson

Thatcher W. Kezer III, Town Administrator

The Chair called the meeting of Wednesday, December 10, 2025, to order. This meeting is being recorded.

PUBLIC COMMENT. Al Jordan addressed the Board regarding: FY27 budget and making it available to residents early on in the process / concerns with Marblehead becoming a Green Community.

MARBLEHEAD MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT. Grid work. Michael Hall, Energy Programs Manager, MMLD, presented a plan to fortify the town's grid by replacing wooden poles with galvanized steel and undergrounding transmission lines. The project, funded by a \$318,593 grant, will begin this winter and is expected to be completed by October 2026.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE. The Town Administrator provided the following consolidated summary of key ongoing projects, operational updates, and upcoming initiatives currently underway across town departments:

Mary Alley Building Roof Replacement Project

The full roof replacement at the Mary Alley Building is now 100% complete, marking the successful conclusion of a major facilities stabilization effort. This project addressed years of water intrusion and deterioration that had contributed to interior damage and limited use of portions of the building. With the exterior work complete, the focus now shifts to internal improvements, including replacing the aging HVAC systems, installing energy-efficient windows, restoring the elevator to service, upgrading the downstairs bathrooms to meet ADA accessibility standards, and improving and expanding the downstairs conference room to better support public meetings and community use. The only remaining item associated with the roof project is the

installation of a new roof access door, which is currently on order and scheduled for installation in January. No additional deficiencies or punch-list items have been identified.

Community Center Roof Coating and Safety Improvements

Work on the Community Center roof, focused on extending the useful life of the existing roof, has also been completed in full. Crews applied a protective roof coating system designed to seal problem areas, improve waterproofing performance, and delay the need for a full roof replacement. In addition, new snow guards were installed across critical roof edges to reduce winter safety hazards caused by sliding snow and ice. These improvements were executed within the expected schedule and are part of a broader strategy to stabilize the building envelope while long-term capital planning for the facility continues. Staff report that the roof system is performing well and that no additional corrective work is required at this time.

Hobbs House Rear Lower Deck Replacement

The rear lower deck replacement at the Hobbs House is now 100% complete. This work addressed structural and safety deficiencies identified during facility assessments. The new deck provides safer access and meets current construction standards. This project represents progress in improving the condition of municipal facilities and resolving deferred maintenance needs.

Fire Alarm Systems Repairs and Compliance

Comprehensive repairs to the municipal fire alarm systems at Fire Headquarters, the Community Center, Old Town House, and the DPW facility have been completed. All identified deficiencies in system components, panels, and notification appliances were corrected. As a result, all four facilities' fire alarm systems are now fully compliant, tested, and in good working order. This work resolves outstanding maintenance issues across multiple buildings and improves overall life-safety readiness.

DISABILITIES COMMISSION. Interviews. Appointments. Julie Matuschak and Amy Malkoff appeared before the Board as it relates to serving on the Disabilities Commission. The Board interviewed both applicants. Motion made and seconded to appoint Julie Matuschak to the Disabilities Commission with a term to expire in June 2028. All in favor. Motion made and seconded to appoint Amy Malkoff to the Disabilities Commission with term to expire in 2027. All in favor.

FINANCE. Budget and Revenue Forecast. Alec Goolsby, Chair, Finance Committee, Aleesha Nunley Benjamin, CFO, and Molly Teets, Finance Committee, appeared before the Board to make a presentation focusing on the town's budget and revenue forecasts. The revenue forecast for fiscal year 2027 was discussed, showing a decrease to revenue of approximately \$700,000 compared to the previous year. The free cash estimate for the current year was projected to be lower than the previous year's certified amount, with potential impacts on capital spending and stabilization funds. The discussion also touched on the town's policy of reducing reliance on free cash for the operating budget, though with some flexibility depending on future revenue projections.

The Select Board and Finance Committee discussed the town's budget challenges, with projections showing a \$7 million deficit next year that could grow to \$15 million over three years due to factors like double-digit increases in healthcare and pensions, along with inflation. The Board agreed to work on preparing both a state-required balanced budget and a contingent budget option for voters to consider, and the need to communicate the situation clearly to residents. The discussion touched on the need to determine which costs are mandatory versus desirable when building an override scenario. The Finance Committee plans to review the budget again after the Town Administrator's State of the Town Address on January 28th to get a better idea of service impacts and potential cuts. Significant cuts would likely be needed, with non-essential services and staff reductions being potential areas for savings. Before considering an override request, the Town will need to explore ways to address the budget gap through departmental reviews and cost control measures with the Town Administrator and CFO working with all departments to make fiscally prudent decisions for a balanced budget.

PUBLIC HEARING. Licensing. Revocation Hearing. Shin Dynasty, 1 Atlantic Avenue. The Chair announced this is a continuation of the Public Hearing, opened on November 13, 2024, on the revocation of the Wine Malt Beverage License # 00042-RS-0656, Shin Dynasty, 1 Atlantic Avenue. Alexander Lewis appeared before the Board and provided a written progress update to the Board which read in part that work continues and is nearing completion. The Town Administrator reported that he and the Fire Chief visited the site earlier in the day and a tremendous amount of work has been done and he believes with a little more time they should be able to get all the required sign offs. The Fire Chief and Building Commissioner spoke about what needs to be completed to receive the sign offs. The Board reviewed the information, asked questions and reiterated their expectations regarding the applicant getting the work completed and the business open. The Board agreed to continue the hearing and set a firm deadline for their February meeting, making it clear that if the work is not completed by then, they will proceed with revoking the license. Motion made and seconded to continue the Public Hearing to February 11, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. All in favor.

SENIOR TAX WORK OFF PROGRAM. Income Guidelines. The Board reviewed the request from Lisa Hooper, Council on Aging Director, related to the 2026 Senior Tax Work Off Program. After reviewing the information a motion was made and seconded to approve the request from Lisa Hooper, Council on Aging Director, to adopt the Income Guideline Increase for 2026 Senior Tax Work Off Program. All in favor.

LETTER OF SUPPORT. Coffin School, technical assistance with disposition. Brendan Callahan, Community Development & Planning Director, addressed the Board seeking a letter of support. Motion made and seconded to send a letter of support, for technical assistance with the disposition of the Coffin School Property, to the Mass Housing Partnership's Community Assistance program, and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. All in favor.

LETTER OF SUPPORT. Village Street Bridge Repair. Brendan Callahan, Community Development & Planning Director, Maggie Wheeler, Town Engineer and

Amy McHugh, DPW Director, appeared before the Board seeking a letter of support. Motion made and seconded to send a letter of support, for funding for the Village Street Bridge Replacement Project #612947, to the Boston Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization, and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. All in favor.

LICENSING. 2026. Renewals for Businesses in the Town of Marblehead. The Chair noted that Mr. Zisson will need to recuse himself from voting on the Gerry #5 License Renewal. The Board will vote on the Gerry 5 renewal in a separate motion.

Motion made to renew all 2026 Licenses for businesses in the Town of Marblehead, as posted and attached here in the Select Board Meeting packet, *except the Gerry #5 Veteran Fireman Association Inc.*, subject to the following:

- all taxes and fees to the Town being paid
- receipt of all applicable departmental approvals
- approval from the Commonwealth's Department of Public Safety for Sunday Entertainment
- a valid Certificate of Inspection for 2025-2026, a Certificate of Occupancy as appropriate and compliance with Chapter 304 of the Acts of 2004:

Moved by Mr. Grader, seconded by Mrs. Singer. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mrs. Singer, in favor; Mr. Grader, in favor, Mrs. Noonan, in favor; Mr. Zisson, in favor; Mr. Fox, in favor.

Motion made to renew the following 2026 Licenses for the *Gerry #5 Veteran Fireman Association Inc.*, as posted and attached here in the Select Board Meeting packet, subject to the following:

- all taxes and fees to the Town being paid
- receipt of all applicable departmental approvals
- approval from the Commonwealth's Department of Public Safety for Sunday Entertainment
- a valid Certificate of Inspection for 2025-2026, a Certificate of Occupancy as appropriate and compliance with Chapter 304 of the Acts of 2004:

Moved by Mrs. Singer, seconded by Mr. Grader. On a polled vote the Board voted as follows: Mr. Grader, in favor; Mrs. Noonan, in favor; Mrs. Singer, in favor; Mr. Fox, in favor. Mr. Zisson recused himself.

LICENSING. New Years Eve, Extended Business Hours. Motion made and seconded to allow restaurants in the Town of Marblehead to remain open for business on Thursday, January 1, 2026, until 1:00 a.m., at their discretion. All in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS, GENERAL. Motion made and seconded to approve the following Consent Agenda Items except those put on hold:

MINUTES of November 19, 2025, November 25, 2025, and December 2, 2025.

Abbot Hall, Festival of Arts, Puzzle Fundraiser, January 10, 2026, subject to the usual rules, regulations, fees and receipt of the required Certificate of Insurance.

Abbot Hall, Matthew Arnold, and New England Yankees, Valentines Day Dance, February 14, 2026, subject to the usual rules, regulations, fees and receipt of the required Certificate of Insurance.

All in favor.

CONTRACTS. The Board reviewed contracts and took the following votes:

Contract No. 26-28, On-call Fencing Repairs and Installations. Motion made and seconded to approve contract 26-28 on-call fence installations and repairs between the Town and Premier Fence, LLC in the amount of forty-two thousand four hundred and eighty-five dollars and 00/100 (\$42,485) and authorize the Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Board. All in favor.

Contract No. 26-30 Replacement of the Siding on the Right side of the Fire Station. Motion made and seconded to approve contract 26-30 to replace siding on the right side at the Fire Station between the Town and Unicon Inc. in the amount of thirty-five of thirty five thousand and three hundred dollars and 00/100 (\$35,300) and authorize the Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Board. All in favor.

Contract No. 26-36 Towing Services. Motion made and seconded to approve contract 26-36 for towing services between the Town and Todisco Services LLC and authorize the Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Board. All in favor.

Contract No. 26-39 Phase I Stormwater Utility Fees. Amy McHugh, DPW Director, reviewed this contract with the Board. Motion made and seconded to approve contract 26-39 for Phase I of the Stormwater Utility Fee between the Town and Woodward & Curran in the amount of One hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars and 00/100 (\$135,000) and authorize the Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Board. All in favor.

SURPLUS EQUIPMENT. Coffin School contents. Motion made and seconded to declare the contents of the Coffin School as surplus and no longer needed for Municipal purpose so that they may be disposed of in accordance with the Town's policy on surplus equipment. All in favor.

CHRISTMAS TREE BURNING / REMOVAL. Notification was received from the Fire Chief and Public Works Director regarding tree pick up and the annual tree burning. Christmas Trees will be picked up at the curbside from Friday, December 26, 2025, through Tuesday, January 6, 2026, and will be placed at Riverhead Beach for the community bonfire on Tuesday, January 6, 2026. The Christmas Tree pile will be set alight at 6:00 p.m. Residents are invited to attend this community event on January 6, 2026. Christmas Trees will continue to be picked up curbside after January 6, 2026, until January 16, 2026. After January 16, 2026, residents should bring trees to the town's

transfer station for proper disposal. All trees left curbside for pick up from December 26th until January 16th must have all lights, ornaments, and stands removed and not be in plastic bags. Any tree not meeting these requirements will not be picked up. In addition, holiday wreaths, roping and garland will not be picked up.

CULTURAL COUNCIL. Letter of Interest. The Board received a letter of interest from Susan Wood to serve on the Cultural Council. The Board will receive letters of interest to serve on the Cultural Council with a deadline to submit by January 9, 2026.

SELECT BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS. The Board noted the passing on Sean Casey. Motion made and seconded to send a letter of condolence to the family of Sean Casey and appreciation for his many contributions to the Town.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. All in favor.



Kyle A. Wiley
Administrative Aide

List of documents used: MMLD Power Point presentation / Financial Forecast / Resumes: Julie Matuschack, Amy Malkoff / Shin Dynasty update / COA request for increase guidelines Senior Tax Work Off / CD&P requests for letters of support / 2026 Annual License Renewals / Minutes 11.19.25, 11.25.25, 12.2.25 / FoArts request for Abbot Hall / Matthew Arnold request for Abbot Hall / Contracts / Letter of Interest, Susan Wood