

Subject: Please Reappoint Freddie Gillespie: A Dedicated and Exceptional Public Servant



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Tue, Jun 16, 2:09 PM

to Select Board, Mark Purple, Sam Stivers, Kathy Cook, Andrew Dennington, Tim Fling, Andrew Pfaff ▾

[EXTERNAL]

June 16, 2026

Southborough Select Board
Town of Southborough
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

Dear Members of the Select Board,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to reappoint Freddie Gillespie to the Open Space Preservation Commission and the Stewardship Committee at tonight's Select Board meeting.

For many years, Freddie has devoted countless volunteer hours to the Town of Southborough through her service as Chair of the Open Space Preservation Commission, her work on the Stewardship Committee, and her participation on numerous other town committees and initiatives. Her dedication to preserving Southborough's natural resources, educating residents, and advancing conservation efforts has benefited every resident of our community, whether they realize it or not.

Volunteers of Freddie's caliber are rare. She brings not only passion and knowledge, but also an extraordinary willingness to dedicate her personal time to the service of others. The work of protecting open space, maintaining trails, stewarding conservation lands, educating the public, and planning for future generations requires a level of commitment that few people are willing to make. Freddie has consistently stepped forward to do that work.

As of June 2, 2026, there were nearly forty vacancies across Southborough's various boards and committees. At a time when communities everywhere struggle to recruit and retain volunteers, Southborough should be celebrating and supporting residents who repeatedly answer the call to serve. Freddie is exactly the kind of "super volunteer" every town hopes to have-someone who shows up, does the work, and remains committed year after year.

I recognize that passionate advocates can sometimes generate disagreement. However, advocacy for open space preservation is not a disqualification for service on a commission whose very purpose is to preserve and protect open space. Freddie's strong commitment to conservation is one of the reasons she has been such an effective and dedicated member of these committees. While reasonable people may occasionally differ on specific issues, those differences should not overshadow years of exemplary public service.

I respectfully ask the Board to look beyond any political disagreements or personality conflicts that may exist and focus instead on Freddie's record of service, expertise, and commitment to Southborough. The residents of this town benefit enormously from her participation. The committees she serves on benefit from her institutional knowledge, energy, and dedication. Southborough itself is stronger because of volunteers like Freddie.

Holding the reappointment of such a long-serving volunteer can easily create the appearance that dedicated public servants are being singled out or discouraged from participating. I am confident that is not the message this Board wishes to send. Instead, I hope the Board will reaffirm that Southborough values civic engagement, welcomes passionate volunteers, and recognizes the contributions of those who have devoted years of their lives to making our community a better place.