

SELECTBOARD MEETING minutes-DRAFT

Tuesday August 18, 2026, 6:00P.M.

In attendance: Jenn Miner, Mike Hogan, Peggy Miller, Skip Bothfeld, Fred Ducharme, Jeanne Johnson, Amy Monahan, Brittany Butler, Sid Griggs, Sandy Pond, Ruth Goodrich, Doug Cooke, Maria Acchonie, Morgan Churchill, Gary Gulka, Dean Deasy, Ken Denton, Trisha Cox, Steve Cox, Hunter Eastman, Ben and Keri Moll, Will Ameden

Online: Jacqueline Lumbr, Daniel Dunham, Matt Nally, Kris Schmitt, Luis Guzman, Michael Miller, Jennifer Churchill, Amy Hornblas, Doug Page, Pat Moulton, Jason Monaco, Samsung phone.

1. **Call Meeting to Order** Jenn called the meeting to order at 6pm
2. **Approve Agenda** motion to approve by and 2nd after the addition of # 12(zoning) and #13(impact Fees) the agenda was approved.
3. **Approve Minutes** of August 4, 2026, and August 6, 2026, Motion to approve by Mike and 2nd by Skip motion carried. Fred abstained as he was not in attendance for the August 6th meeting.
4. **Approve Hearing Minutes** for Dog and Knox box Ordinances Motion to approve the minutes by Mike and 2nd by Fred. Motion Carried.
5. **Public Comment**

Sandy Pond- Question on the possible bond vote for the wastewater plant. If there is a bond vote and they whole town will be paying for the septic of the village, and is the town going to pay to fix and replace everyone's private system. She also asked if board members are on town septic if they have to recuse themselves of a vote? Mike believes that the board should not have to recuse themselves, as they benefit but if rates were to increase that would not be a benefit.

Sandy Pond- Questions on monies spent on all aspects of what the fire department has spent up till now, design, demolition, loss of tax revenue, engineering costs, etc.

Ruth- Gave an update on the ambulance garage and that the project is well underway, and the rafters were supposed to come today but got held up in NY.

Peggy asks Sandy to: in the future please write all the questions she has so that we can find the answers and give an answer to the questions posed. Sandy agrees and has the questions she posed written down.

6. **Beavers adjacent to Rec field (05-003.000) discussion/action**

Mr. Guzman is having an issue with the beavers on his property on the south Walden road The field is flooded and cannot be brushhogged. Jenn states that in 2025 Mr Guzman received a letter stating that for the ability to add buffers in his area of the river (3 acres) in order to receive the green light to replace the North Bridge and in turn the town would take care of the beaver issues along that stretch of river. Gary then talked on the application and requirements at that time for the project. At this point there is no project and there is no award in hand. Gary contacted the community grant program, they reduced the amount of funding that we applied for. We have since then found another source of funding. The question was asked that, if we did not have that buffer area could we still be eligible for funding, their answer was yes.

Jen says that it is great that Mr. Guzman was/is willing to allow a buffer on his property to be able to fulfill the requirements of the project. This is however a situation on private property that is not impacting the roads or municipal infrastructure. The other component is that the buffer would allow

flooding onto Mr. Guzmans property which could impact his ability to adhere to his current use plan.

Peggy asks Gary, When did the issue with the riparian buffer not become a requirement? Jen says when it was for FEMA funding it was required once we went to an alternate funding source it was not a requirement.

The question of where the dam is located, it is on land adjacent to the rec field but not on the Rec field Property. The talk of setting precedence, Jenn asked if the board wants to table the discussion and wait for the flood task force to weigh in. Mr. Guzman is frustrated as anytime prior the town has taken care of the beaver issues approximately 2-3 times and he has taken care of them 2-3 times as well. He is unsure of why it is not being dealt with immediately. Fred says that Mike sent him (Mr. Guzman) a letter, on behalf of the town, stating that we would deal with the beavers and Fred believes that we should honor the agreement and also to Morgan's point that if in the event of a flood it could do more damage downstream to the town. Motion for Town Clerk to contact Hunter Eastman to remove the beavers by Fred and seconded by Peggy and all were in favor. Brittany will contact Hunter and ANR to make sure that we can remove the beavers. Ken Denton says that he will get in touch with some trappers to help alleviate the issues in the future.

7. Highway- Sid-

a. Truck update

His truck was finished today.

b. Beaver Baffles

there is a beaver issue on Brickett's Crossing. The water was 4 inches from going over the road. He has never seen them in this location. They removed the dam and had to go back up before the end of the day to remove it again. They placed a grate and have had to clean that out already too. Steve Cox said they have sunk a pipe into Coits pond that lets the water flow even though the beavers have the pipe dammed.

c. other business

He has ordered salt and the state has already started hauling.

Lovely road will be opened Friday afternoon. He took the grader over to Lovely and got rid of some washouts that were a concern. Amy asks that since lovely is finished, we are going to need to pay for it so do we need to get some loan documents together. The board says yes.

All of the signs were stolen at the Brickettes Crossing West Shore Road intersection.

They removed the chloride out of the sawmill (recycle) on Saw Mill road which is good as OSHA paid us a visit last week and that building needs some maintenance, lighting in the basement and to reinforce the floor. That flood needs care and there needs to be lighting in the basement as the WW plant stores things down there.

Fred asked if he has ordered the salt yet, they only get it when they need it and he has asked for 800 tons. Maria asks if there are going to be car counters again. Sid says they are coming back on both sides of the creamery as well as on West Hill Pond Road as that one was not working.

8. Act 162 Burn Permits Discussion/Action

Recap of 162: Act 162 has made every towns fire chief the fire warden and not the fire warden. He has issued 17 permits and addressed 3 complaints. He will be putting the application on the fire departments site for people to fill out. He has also looked into deputizing another member of the department but only the Fire Warden (Chief) can investigate complaints. The permit webpage is not online yet. It is taking a large part of his day when he is addressing permits and has also realized that he has no identification when he is on private property but he states per statute he has authority to enter

private property to investigate complaints of unpermitted burns. Jenn wants to know if we are going to have a fee for burn permits? She is glad that he is going to deputize another member of the department to deal with permits. Peggy says any fee she sees for other municipalities are \$8-10. Mike thinks there should be a stipend for the warden. Jenn brings up that if and when a member of the fire department receives monies from the town then if and when Osha visits they would have to inspect the firehouse. Dean thinks there should be a tablet for documentation and that there should be no burning in the area of the village. Jenn understands the want for a tablet/phone as health officer. Trish Cox thinks that it would be helpful to be online and to also deputize 1-2 more to take some of the burden off dean. Who is going to get the fee, who collects it? Is there an alternate way to apply other than online. Dean answers, Town Clerk would have copies of the permits and the town clerk collects the fees. For the 48 hour turn around, he has to abide by the state fire map. A permit that is approved could be denied due to dry weather or wind. Ken Denton, asks if there is snow on the ground we don't need a permit. Dean says that is correct. He remembers that he has always called Skip or Andy and it was easy. He thinks that maybe the town clerk should be deputized and it could be a one stop and not a 2,3, or 4 step process. Keri wants to say that they are volunteers and they did not ask for the state to put this on the towns. Sandy brought up that it could be windy one minute and not the next. A fire pit/ring of 36 inches or less does not require a permit. There was talk on the wardens/health officer/etc should have tablets so they don't have to use their personal devices. Ruth has a question for skip and asks if he ever had to jump off the tractors and go and tend a fire. he says yes many times he has had to leave the farm to go on a fire call, and depending on the call it could be an hour or it could be all day. This will be on a future agenda.

9. **Volunteer Fire Department Update Discussion/Action:** Jenn wants to give an update, since July there has been discussions on the new department at 2466 Main street. There are still some things that are pending, such as signing a document that predates the flood. There have been a lot of questions, asking if the existing building can stay, can it be retro fitted, and to our parks and rec grant. All of these questions have been asked and not answered yet by the town attorney. As soon as we get an answer from the attorney there will be another discussion.

The current contract that is in place would result in a complete loss of funding. The procurement process was not followed by the federal guidelines. The town will have to come up with approx. 256,000 so far on the new building and may be refunded but there is no guarantee. Jenn is asking the board, what does the town of Cabot need and not what does the town want, what are the risks of both avenues. Until we get legal feed back we do not know. The town could put out a new RFP but if Conor contracting helps with the RFP they cannot bid, Pat Moulton is willing to help with the RFP and she is online. The building is "not modest in size or components" the states/femas not her words. The other option would be to take no money Fema/USDA and put the project out to bid, without a 2nd floor.

Trish- There was information at the informational meeting if the FEMA money doesn't come though do we still get the USDA money, she was told not as much. If this is the case the board (chair) said that we would not be liable for the building of this new department. Jenn says whatever we chose there will be risks. Amy says that she has been involved in every FEMA meeting, we have made assumptions and been told things that don't seem to be true now and now that they are finally getting to the end of the process, that the building in question, as currently designed will not be 100% paid for. At this point we don't know how much would have to be voted on.

Ruth says that we are in support of our fire department but what we want isn't always what we need.

Pat Moulton is saying that we need to go back out for a competitive bid process. She believes there is light but we need to do this carefully.

Trish asks if there is a list of this is what I want and this is what I need and what is ACTUALLY required and start there, not a wish list.

Dean says to keep in mind that we have the architect went though everything that was required. NFPA

guidelines dictate what we need? Connor Contracting has donated 9 years of work to the town, and they can bill us for that because we are not going forward on the contract, that was not procured correctly) at 2466 main.

Sandy said she heard that the USDA is not in Vermont, Pat Moulton says that they are still here but their staff has been reduced.

Peggy says that she wants to say again that is a temporary building and cannot be used going forward. 2nd she thinks that the non-binding vote was misrepresented because people thought we already had a new fire station.

Doug Cooke says that he has heard a lot about the town attorney but he has not heard of any action by the town attorney and at what point do we look for a new town attorney. Contract was brought up, we do not think we have one, this will be brought up again.

10. **Water and wastewater**- Started work on the Wastewater plant, there were 3 trees removed that were very close to the building and the trees were removed from the well house.
 - a. Meter Update- 3 meters left to install at the creamery.
 - b. Other business- new hookup on Elm Street for water and wastewater. They also dug up where the water was coming up by Talberts and there was no issue found. We are still waiting for the correct back flow preventors.

Discussion on roads and why does the state do 214, 232 and other major connectors that the state maintains but 215 is maintained by the town, the amount truck traffic that the creamery sees is a lot, especially with 2 creameries that just closed. They are not paying enough to maintain the roads. Maria wants to know what the next steps are on that, Mike says there have been talks, nothing has happened and talks are still happening. Then talked about the necessity to bond for improvements for the wastewater plant.
11. **Town Clerk's Office**
 - a. Orders –Orders were signed
 - b. Other Business- VOSHA update, they made a visit, first time ever to our knowledge to the Municipal buildings. We are awaiting the report. There were some little things that we are taking care of and will be cured prior to receiving the report.
12. **Other Business**-dog issue on lovely road Ruth received a complaint about a dog that wanders around. She said the owner is sending a letter and Brittany will receive the letter as well. This may come to a dog hearing.
13. **Zoning** -Brittany has an issue that she needs some advice from the town attorney. Jenn says to CC her on the email and mike and ask him the questions.
14. **Impact fees**- Looked into impact fees, but they can only be used for new development. So we need to find new ways to get the money needed for paving. 330,000 per mile and we have 7 miles of 215. Fred believes that the state should be helping us as should the creamery. Ruth invites anyone to take a ride in the ambulance to see the road conditions.

Maria asks when our taxes are raised are the creamery's taxes raised. Jenn and Mike are meeting with the creamery next week. The reason is not the condition of the roads etc but are they staying here because if they leave we all have to come up with what they pay in taxes which is a considerable amount, but still not enough to pay for the paving of the roads.

Morgan says it has been 30 or more years that we have not paved and in 30 years we have not budgeted for the things we need. Planning. There have also been talks that the creamery may be pulling out like all the other creameries. Fred wants to know why does plainfield and Marshfield get their connecting arteries paved why don't we. Amy says we need a line item every year for a capital fund or whatever

fund. What should that amount be?

15. Motion to Adjourn by fred and 2nd by Skip all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:25