SELECTBOARD MEETING

MINUTES

August 20, 2026

I. OPEN MEETING—Chairman Begin called the August 20, 2026, meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Those present included Dillon Begin, Alfred Buckley, Alan Leigh, April Busfield, Jason Busfield, and Zachary Brown. Mike Miller joined via Zoom but did not participate in the meeting. No other members of the public joined via Zoom or in person.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 6, 2026, Meeting Minutes – The August 6, 2026, meeting minutes were distributed and reviewed by board members before and at the meeting. Al made a motion to approve the August 6, 2026, meeting minutes with the correction to the dollar figure under VIII. New Business, subsection e. MERP Grant Bids and Updates to reflect $7,187.07 instead of $71187.07 , and Alan seconded. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative.

III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA—Dillon added one addition to the agenda, a discussion on commercial trash pick up and disposal. This will be discussed under VII. Solid Waste. No further additions nor deletions were made to the agenda. All board members were fine with the addition and its placement.

IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT – No public participated in the meeting.

V. REPORT FROM HIGHWAY –

a. Grant Updates – Jason reported that the two Grant In Aid Projects for Judd Road were completed and are looking great. Zach displayed the "after" images for the board to review. Jason said this project went very well and the finish grading happened this week. Jason told the board that the Fund Road Better Roads grant project had started today. Jason reviewed the project with the board. He noted that anywhere where there was not erosion stone installed, he will be hydroseeding soon.

b. Roadside Mowing – Jason told the board that the roadside mowing was mostly done and seems to be staying within the quote. Zach asked if any class IV roads were done. Jason told that most class IV roads were done only at the ends. Zach told Jason that a complaint came in for School House Brook Road. He noted that the complainant would like something to be done, as nothing has occurred for the last few years. Jason said he would go take a look at it. A short discussion was held surrounding tree trimming, that will be done in house.

c. Discussion on Class III and Class IV Roadways – A lengthy discussion surrounded the two roads in Canaan up for reclassification. Zach informed the board that he has received all but one of the certified notices back. He distributed a letter they received from one of the residents. He noted that he has been getting some push back on these and has had several requests for information, that he is parsing through. For background he noted that Cook Street first appeared as a town road in the VTrans maps from 1963 as 0.07 miles long. Then in 1980 it appeared with the mileage it is now 0.10 miles. Penn Road first appeared in 1945 as 0.17 miles long then in 1979 it appeared as 0.55 miles long and finally in 2003 it appeared as it is now at 0.90 miles long. He did note that he was unsure on any of these what classes they were started at and if and when plowing began. So far he cannot find anything in the minutes that discuss plowing. He has been parsing through the 1968 -1980 records. Zach asked the board how they would like to continue. A lengthy discussion ensued surrounding what the best path forward would be: place it as a vote at town meeting, keep it as is with the hearing scheduled for August 31st, or to cancel it. Al was in favor of just keeping it all the same. Alan and Dillon leaned towards postponing it until town meeting. Zach did note that these things have to follow the statutory procedure laid out by VTrans, so he would need to research more if it went to Town meeting. He did note that no matter what a site inspection would need to occur. He also highlighted that this is a selectboard decision, where the public has the right to appeal afterwards, which could result in a townwide vote. Zach also wanted to clarify for the record that this should not solely be about whether or not a road should be plowed or not. It needs to follow statute and the statutory vices for such reclassifications, or not. The board reviewed the highway management plan prepared by Kevin McKinnon. Alan made a motion to rescind the previous hearing and site inspection planned for the possible reclassification of Cook Street and a section of Penn Road, until further notice and to address it at town meeting to see what direction the public would like. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative.

d. Part-Time Highway Assistant – A lengthy discussion was held on the part-time highway assistant, or lack thereof. The board needs to consider what they will do in the worse case scenario if there is no highway assistant. The main being to contract out parking lots, and potentially roads. The board will begin looking for potential candidates. The board considered potentially finding a winter assistant and a summer assistant. A short discussion was held on the rumors that the Town, specifically April and Jason, just hire their friends. The board agreed that this is not the case, but it becomes hard to hire someone in a small town that you do not know.

e. Driveway Permit Application – Zach submitted a driveway permit application from Barrup Properties LLC. The board reviewed the application. Al made a motion to approve the notice to proceed for this driveway permit, subject to the normal regulation and the purchase of the property by Barrup Properties LLC. Alan seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. Jason noted to have the applicant reach out to him directly, that way he can ensure they meet all of the requirements.

f. Equipment Repairs and Updates – Jason led the board through an extensive discussion surrounding the backhoe, grader, and their needed repairs and maintenance. Jason noted that the Backhoe needs new tires and has found a potential new option, that many towns have begun using. The board asked him to get numbers for both and they would review them. The grader needs some attention, and Jason would appreciate having the grader completely gone over. He noted that the differential lock is stuck on, the drive motors' oil needs to be changed, the grader needs a block heater and is in need of front chains. A lengthy discussion was held about hiring someone local to complete the work and to provide estimates for what repairs the grader needs or to go directly to CAT. Ultimately the board asked Jason to look at every alternative, but if CAT was going to be responsive to go with them, essentially it was up to him to what needed to be done, under $5,000. Jason will reach out to a few different people. At this time Jason also reported to the board that he had taken a grading course and would be doing the hands-on portion with an experienced grader operator soon.

VI. REPORT FROM WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT –

a. Part-Time Assistant Operator – *See Executive Session.*

b. Pump at Houle Station – April reported that the model of pump that is needed is no longer being manufactured. She noted that the pump specialist is still working on it but there have been no updates since the last meeting. She will keep the board updated when she can.

VII. SOLID WASTE –

a. Coos County Recycling Center Meeting – A short discussion was held on this topic. Alan noted that a subcommittee was being formed for the Coos County Recycling Center, with the core towns, to discuss situations facing the center. The next meeting will be on September 8th at 5:00 P.M.
b. Commercial Curb Side Trash Pick Up – A lengthy discussion was held on this topic. Dillon and Alan pitched the idea to have private, commercial trash pick up for residents, which would not cost the Town, but the resident. Zach and April poised several questions to the board that will need to be answered, if this goes through. However, they noted the top two would be what the State will require of this hauler and how it will not cost the Town any additional funds (stickers, pricing, etc.) No action was taken. Dillon will discuss the possibility with State partners.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS –

a. 2026 Appointments – No new appointments were made. Zach ran through the list of vacancies. Zach also noted that Vernon Crawford has resigned from the Rec Park Committee. He noted that the committee is looking for potential candidates but asked the board to do so as well. He noted that there is a good mix of representations on the board as it is. He also used this as an opportunity to relay the complaints he has received from individuals on these committees that they are not aware of the appointments before they are made. Several members have expressed that they should be explicitly involved in this process. A short discussion was held, the board felt like they cannot pass someone up who volunteers to join one of these committees, and they have the sole power to appoint members.
b. Municipal Ethics Complaints – Five Pending – Zach noted that there are still five pending. No further discussion.
c. Alice Ward Library Carriage House Renovations + Short Term Financing – Zach told the board that work had begun. He noted that the first construction bill would be coming in September.
d. MERP Grant Bids and Updates – A lengthy discussion ensued on this topic. Zach noted that contracts for all of the work need to be done in September. He said if they are not the fund as lost. Alan will reach out to Jason Belknap to review his quotes and ask some clarifying questions. Zach asked the board to make a final decision at their August 31st meeting. He noted that Larry Ruggles of Ruggco is putting together his contract and will present it to the board in September.
e. Economic Committee Recommendations for a Brownfield Study – A short discussion was held. The economic committee has recommended to the selectboard to approve a level one brownfield study application for the finishing building at Ethan Allen. Zach distributed the application to the board. He noted that he completed it to the best of his knowledge but the economic committee or board would need to gather the rest of the information and complete it. Alan made a motion to approve the level 1 brownfield study at no cost to the Town. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative.

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IX. OLD BUSINESS – No action or discussion.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel – 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3) – Alan made a motion to enter into an executive session at 6:55 P.M. to discuss personnel matters. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. The board entered into an executive session at 6:55 P.M. April, Jason, and Zach were invited to stay. Alan made a motion to exit the executive session at 7:48 P.M. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. The board exited the executive session at 7:08 P.M. with no action taken. Outside of executive session, Alan made a motion to hire Rodney Rumrill to be the assistant sewer operator for approximately 24 hours per week at $25 per hour. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative.

XI. SORT MAIL/SIGN WARRANT—The board signed and executed Warrant 17-26 for $126,696.04.

XII. ADJOURN MEETING—Alan motioned for the meeting to be adjourned, and Al seconded. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. Chairman Begin adjourned the August 20, 2026 meeting at 7:35 P.M.