

SELECTBOARD MEETING

MINUTES

September 28, 2026

- I. OPEN MEETING – Chairman Begin called the September 28, 2026, meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Those present included Dillon Begin, Alfred Buckley, Alan Leigh, April Busfield, Zachary Brown, Kevin McKinnon, and Diana Rancourt. Levis Boutin and Tony Wheeler attended representing the Fire District No. 2 Prudential Committee, and Jeffrey Richards and Jeremy Labrecque attended representing the Fire District No. 1 Prudential Committee. Mike Miller joined via Zoom.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 14, 2026, Meeting Minutes – Al made a motion to approve the September 14, 2026, meeting minutes as written, 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 – Zach added a letter of support for the Fire District No. 2 River Road Waterline Replacement Project.
- IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT – Diana requested the board's approval to contact NVDA regarding feasibility study funding for riverbank erosion along Leach Stream and the Connecticut River, including the bank near River Road. Kevin explained that a feasibility study could provide engineering recommendations and cost estimates to support later applications for construction funding. Al made a motion to authorize Diana to explore feasibility study grants for riverbank erosion affecting properties, 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. Diana promised to keep the board informed of her findings and to seek its permission before proceeding with any further action.
- V. POLICY DISCUSSION WITH FIRE DISTRICT 1 & 2 – Jeffrey Richards led much of the discussion on behalf of the fire districts regarding communication about employees working for the Town and districts. Jeff explained that the districts sometimes learned of hiring, departures, or compensation changes after the fact, making it difficult to plan within their limited budgets. He requested better communication and an opportunity to raise questions before changes affecting district expenses were finalized. Possible approaches included sharing names and resumes, exchanging notices, and occasionally attending one another's meetings. Jeff clarified that the districts were not asking to participate in every interview or personnel decision, but wanted to remain informed and have an opportunity to provide input when necessary. Jeremy Labrecque stated that the largest concerns involved decisions about wages and benefits that directly affected the districts' budgets. Fire District No. 2 representatives expressed similar concerns. Board members acknowledged the request and discussed avoiding unnecessary delays associated with coordinating all three boards. April spoke positively about Rodney Rumrill's qualifications and assistance with recent water system repairs. The Selectboard made no formal claims regarding authority over personnel matters and expressed interest in working together. The boards left with the understanding that communication would be improved. No formal personnel policy or change in hiring authority was adopted. District representatives also reported that the asset management plan draft was approximately 30% complete. They had asked that debt service, expenses, and asset values be included to support consideration of consolidating the districts. The draft would be reviewed further for information specific to the local systems.
- VI. REPORT FROM HIGHWAY –
 - a. Grant Updates – April reported that the Grants-in-Aid paperwork for the first project was complete and ready for submission. Work initially anticipated under two grants had been completed under one, leaving another grant opportunity for the board to consider next year. Zach spoke positively about Rancourt's work and pricing. Zach reported that approximately \$20,000 in Better Back Roads reimbursement would also be sought for the Fund Road project. With the highway staffing changes, responsibility for future grant applications, project oversight, and supporting paperwork would need to be discussed further.
 - b. Highway Personnel Updates – Zach reported that the full-time highway applicant had withdrawn that evening, leaving no applicants for the full-time position. Two part-time applicants remained. One interview was scheduled for Thursday at 10:30 A.M., and Zach was working to schedule the other. The possibility of offering full-time employment to an interested part-time applicant was discussed. Further personnel discussion was deferred to executive session.

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- c. Equipment Repairs and Updates – Zach reported that Jason had obtained a trucking quote of \$1,485 each way to transport the grader to the CAT shop in Richmond, or approximately \$3,000 total, before repair costs. The grader needed attention to the drive system, moldboard and circle shims, drive component oil changes, and a possible block heater. The board discussed the high transportation cost, noting that the quote came from a local company, and compared shop repairs with having a mechanic travel to Canaan, including travel time, labor, and possible lodging costs. Kevin suggested Jacob Brady as another repair option. Zach and April reminded the board of the importance and urgency of the repairs. Alan felt the urgency would lessen once winter arrived. Zach and Al explained that the grader was needed during the winter to wing back snowbanks and break up ice buildup. The board agreed to wait for the additional repair quote before deciding whether to truck the grader. No new motion authorizing transportation was made.
- d. Driveway Completed – Pending Approval – Zach reported that Jason had inspected the completed Barrup Properties LLC driveway on Canaan Hill Road and found it satisfactory. Al made a motion to approve the completed driveway and Access Permit No. 02-26 for Barrup Properties LLC on Canaan Hill Road, 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.
- e. Canaan Hill/Fund Road Box Culvert Grant Agreement – Zach reported that the Town had received the grant agreement for the box culvert project previously discussed by the board. Grant Agreement BC2465 provides an award of \$170,378.10 and requires a 10% local share. Alan made a motion to accept the Canaan Hill/Fund Road Box Culvert grant agreement, 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. Zach thanked Eric Pope for his work on the grant. Zach will work with the engineering firm to prepare bids for the project and bring them back to the board.

VII. REPORT FROM WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT –

- a. State Inspection – Recap – April reported that the September 24 state inspection went very well and was one of the best inspections she had experienced. Zach participated throughout the inspection. The inspector reviewed plant operations, staffing, and the budget. The principal recommendation discussed was to place confined space stickers on the valve vault hatches at the pump stations. Staffing needs were also reviewed. Kevin stated that such a successful inspection reflected the value of April's work and that most inspections did not go so smoothly. The board thanked April for her work.
- b. Update on Assistant Operator – April reported that Rodney was knowledgeable and a go-getter who did not wait around for instructions, found work that needed to be done, and remained busy and productive. She described him as a great addition to the department. He had helped prepare for the inspection by pressure washing, weed trimming around the lagoons, and cleaning the buildings. April also noted his assistance with the recent Fire District No. 2 water system repair.
- c. Joint Sewer Commissioners Meeting – October 13, 2026, at 5:30 P.M. – Stewartstown Office – Zach reminded the board of the upcoming meeting. April discussed whether a plant walk-through would be necessary given the recent successful inspection and the competing demands on staff. Arrangements would be considered closer to the meeting.

VIII. REPORT FROM SOLID WASTE –

- a. Commercial Hauler/Curbside Pick Up of Solid Waste – The board reviewed the information provided by Alyssa Eiklor concerning hauling permits and recycling requirements. Zach recommended making the information available to interested private businesses while leaving operation of a curbside service to a private provider. Board members agreed with that approach. The discussion noted that a hauler would need the appropriate permit and would also have to provide recycling service. No Town-operated curbside collection program was authorized.
- b. Transfer Station Personnel Updates – Zach read Daniel Hughes's September 17 resignation letter at Danny's request. Danny stated that his last day at the transfer station would be October 1, 2026, and expressed interest in continuing mowing and other work with April. The letter described his dissatisfaction with an exchange with Chairman Begin about a raise. Chairman Begin disputed the description that coins had been rubbed in

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Danny's face, stating that Danny had first taken out his wallet and that he had rubbed coins in his own pocket. Zach reported that subsequent conversations had addressed the situation, but Danny still intended to resign from the transfer station. The possibility of continued mowing, rounds, miscellaneous highway work, and backup transfer station coverage was discussed. An applicant was available for the transfer station vacancy, with further discussion deferred to executive session.

- c. HHW Material Transportation – Zach reported that, with Kevin's assistance, a hauler working with NH Recycles, formerly NRRA, was able to accept Vermont household hazardous waste. The written quote totaled \$2,645.50 for transportation, disposal, and fees, which Zach reported would be covered by grant funds. He had also requested a quote from Republic but had not received a response. Arrangements were proceeding for pickup. Kevin and Zach emphasized the substantial cost savings and credited April's diligence for helping achieve them.

IX. NEW BUSINESS –

a. 2026 Town Appointments –

- i. Zoning Administrator – Zach reported that the position had been advertised in the newspaper and that Michael Daley was the only person willing to accept the appointment. Alan made a motion to appoint Michael Daley as Zoning Administrator, 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. The appointment document was presented for signatures.
- b. Municipal Ethics Complaints – Five Pending – Dillon asked about progress on the five pending ethics complaints. Alan nodded and stated that he was working through them.
- c. Alice Ward Library Carriage House Renovations – Zach reported that the first construction payment of approximately \$230,000 was included in the warrant. A transfer of funds from Community National Bank had been sent to the Town's account at that bank rather than to its Bangor account, and Zach was working to resolve the issue so payment could be made. He also reported that Daniel Hebert Inc. and the library trustees were concerned about completing the project by the December deadline and were working with the State to seek an extension similar to the MERP extension. Zach told the board that the trustees fully intended to keep the work funded solely by the grant and would work tirelessly with the consultants, engineers, and Zach to determine the best path forward within the available funding.
- d. Economic Committee Updates – Zach and April reported that Bill and Ursula Johnson were willing to meet with the committee to discuss the field and other matters. A meeting would be arranged when the committee was ready to reconvene.
- e. Tax Update – Zach reported that tax payments were coming in well, although a number remained outstanding, as was typical near the due date. Taxes were due October 1, with a five-business-day grace period through October 8. Payments made within the grace period would avoid penalties, with penalties applying beginning October 9.
- f. Halloween Official Trick or Treat Time – Al made a motion to set Halloween trick-or-treating hours for Saturday, October 31, 2026, from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M., 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.
- g. VLCT PACIF Board of Director Elections – Zach explained that members could now vote absentee rather than attending the annual meeting in person. Four candidates were seeking the four available positions: Charles Safford, Aaron Frank, Erik Wells, and Bruce Urie. Alan made a motion to vote for the four candidates for the four available PACIF Board of Directors positions, 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.
- h. General Election Updates – Zach reminded the board that the general election would be held on November 3, 2026. He explained that, because the five Justices of the Peace were seeking reelection, he wanted one Selectboard member to remain after the polls closed to assist with tallying and reporting the results. Polls close at 7:00 P.M., and the work could continue until approximately 10:00 or 11:00 P.M. The discussion indicated that Alan or Dillon could likely assist, with arrangements to be confirmed.

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- i. Fire District No. 2 Letter of Support – Zach presented a letter supporting the River Road Waterline Replacement Project and the pursuit of additional funding. He explained that the district planned to expand the work to replace the remaining asbestos-cement and galvanized waterlines while construction was underway. Additional grant funding would help avoid the need for further bond funding. Al made a motion to sign the letter of support for the Fire District No. 2 River Road Waterline Replacement Project, and Dillon seconded. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative.
 - j. Recycling Options – Kevin McKinnon reviewed alternatives to the existing county recycling arrangement, including continuing with the county, having the participating towns assume the operation, contracting with a private company such as Casella, or establishing a local recycling operation. Kevin drew on his experience running recycling operations in Colebrook, where two part-time employees handled transfer station operations and baling, with additional administrative work needed to find markets and arrange shipping. He discussed equipment, storage, labor, trucking, and startup costs, as well as the savings from diverting material from the landfill. April noted her experience working with Kevin on that program. Kevin explained that towns could coordinate partial loads and use NH Recycles for assistance with markets and pricing. Participants discussed uncertainty surrounding county operations, the limited availability of inmate labor, and the difficulty of reaching agreement among the participating towns. Kevin estimated that a small outside study could cost approximately \$10,000, but offered to help the Town consider its options. The upcoming county recycling meeting on September 29 was noted. No change in the Town's recycling arrangement or expenditure for a study was approved.
 - k. Recognition of Zachary Brown – This item was taken out of order following the personnel votes. April reported that Zach was among the top ten nominees for the 2026 Vermont League of Cities and Towns Municipal Service Award. April Busfield and Diana Rancourt had nominated him. In a September 24 letter of commendation, VLCT Executive Director Ted Brady thanked Zach for his commitment to local government and stated that his nomination had advanced to the VLCT Nominating Committee from a field of more than twenty nominations. Although Zach was not selected for the award, the committee was impressed with his accomplishments. On behalf of the VLCT Board, Ted specifically recognized Zach's six years of service, grant-writing skills, leadership, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to the community, and thanked him for being an exceptional local official. April presented Zach with the accompanying five-year service pin, issued in five-year increments. The board thanked Zach for his service and dedication and thanked April for her hard work in bringing forward the recognition.
- X. OLD BUSINESS – No old business was discussed.
- XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel Updates and Issues –
- a. Executive Session – Personnel – Al made a motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel at 6:55 P.M., under the personnel provision identified on the agenda as 1 V.S.A. § 313(3), 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. Zach and April were invited to remain. Alan made a motion to exit executive session at 8:15 P.M., and Al seconded. Chairman Begin called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. No action was taken in executive session. The following motions were made in open session.
 - b. Danny and Dennis Compensation – Al made a motion to increase Danny Hughes's and Dennis Wright's wages to \$20 per hour, effective immediately, following completion of their probationary periods, 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.
 - c. Transfer Station Hiring – Al made a motion to offer Alain Dupont employment at the transfer station at \$18 per hour, effective immediately, for a 90-day probationary period, including other duties at the facility, and Dillon seconded. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed 2–1, with Al and Dillon voting in favor and Alan voting against.
 - d. April Busfield Compensation – Al made a motion to adjust April's salary basis from 41 to 45 hours per week, effective immediately, for the additional work, with two additional hours charged to the transfer

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station and two to the highway department, 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. The board thanked April for all of her hard work.

- e. Zachary Brown Stipend – Al made a motion to provide Zach with an additional \$5,000 stipend, effective immediately, for the extra work and hours he has been performing beyond his agreed-upon hours, with the expense allocated among the departments for which the work was performed, 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. Payment details and specific departmental allocations were not finalized. The current intention was to pay the stipend in a single payment.

XII. SORT MAIL/SIGN WARRANT – Warrant 20-26 for \$273,355.26 was presented for signing.

XIII. ADJOURN MEETING – Alan made a motion to adjourn the meeting, 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 September 28, 2026, meeting at 8:20 P.M.