

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2026

Present: Pat Harvey, Chad Richardson, and Mike Teetsel

Guests Present: Julie Smith, Kristen LaPell, Asia Kennett, and Michaela Richardson, Dave Harvey

Guests Present on Microsoft Teams: Orca, Martha Slater, Brenda Down, Melody Balczon, Jeff Gephart

Pat called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Pat confirmed the meeting conformed to the Open Meeting Law.

Pat moved to approve the January 12 Selectboard meeting minutes. Mike seconded the motion. All in favor. So, approved.

Pat moved to approve the January 20 Special Selectboard meeting minutes. Mike seconded the motion. All in favor. So, approved.

Library Updates: Melody Balczon, library trustee shared the library is applying for a HUD grant to be submitted by March. They have questions for the board and will be addressed at the next warned meeting as an agenda item. This grant is for improvements to the building. She also shared the Library and started conversations with Pierce Hall and the HUB to coordinate cohosting future events.

Energy Coordinator Updates: Jeff Gephart shared in an email to the board some of the issues outstanding with the Municipal Energy Resiliency Program (MERP) Grant. He shared that Kristen had filed the quarter 2 report. He drafted a cover memo to contractors regarding a draft MERP scope of work to see if they are interested in negotiating with the town on a contract to improve the Town Office and Town Garage. He said there is a revised scope with changes made by Mike Teetsel and himself and a list of MERP contractors, which in order to be in compliance with the State's requirements to have efficiency certifications represented. He said he went to Efficiency Vermont's website and their energy excellence network to find qualified contractors with these certifications. Out of 13 companies on that list, most are small firms specializing in small projects. There were 3 that could be potential as a whole and general contractor to the project. He would like to set up meetings and see where it leads too, especially by keeping the town office operational during construction. He would like board input. He said in discussion with Two Rivers Ottauquechee that 20% of the MERP funds (\$76,880) can be used for soft costs and could include Clerk of the Works. He would like to get a contractor selected and step out of the way. Mike said having a professional contract manager using the 20% soft costs, is very appealing. He would like to work with Jeff and the rep of Two Rivers and work on that issue a little bit more. Mike thanked Jeff for a great job for all he has done.

VHI Management Updates: Asia Kennet shared the boilers are working. She said volunteers went in to put plastic on the big windows in the shop and that has helped with the heat. She shared the kids had their winter concert and was well attended. She said there are many events coming up, including Winterfest. She said they are doing a lot more collaboration with other organizations in town. She said they are meeting with Pierce Hall and the Library board to meet the needs of the people in the valley.

Selectboard Updates: Pat shared at the last meeting there was discussion about a dog issue. She said the board has received additional letters from concerned neighbors. She said they want to reassure the public that they are acting upon the seriousness of the issue. She said certified letter had been mailed. She is hopeful for a resolution. She shared, the property had been visited by the Sheriff's Department and nothing extreme was noted by them.

Cell Tower Issue: Pat shared there have been a lot of Public Utility Commission statements back and forth on the PUC website. She shared a lot of individuals submitted for notice of intervene and the Public Utility Commission has rejected their status and they have until February 9 to respond back to the PUC. She said basically the PUC feels the issues were covered by the Planning Board and Selectboard and the individual comments were just repetitive. She said the town has retained counsel as advisory. She said they will be attentively meeting with that counsel on February 9 Selectboard meeting.

Approve Tax Map Maintenance Proposal (4/01/2026-3/31/2027): Pat moved to approve the contract with CAI Technologies in providing the town with the updated Tax Maps. Mike seconded the motion. All in favor. So, approved.

Approve the December Treasurer's Report: Pat moved to approve the December report. Mike seconded the motion. All in favor. So, approved.

Public Comment: Alvina Harvey thanked the board and Planning Commission for their letters submitted and support of the Town Plan. She voiced her concerns with the board about the cell tower and it being lit at night. She was also concerned with the Water Issue with the Cell Tower. She said they state public water supplies, and she is concerned with the private wells supply in the neighborhood and its impact. She said the town plan mentions public water supply and would like clarification on that issue. She is also asking about blasting and the impact on private wells. Pat shared that during the public hearings it would be a good time to bring up these concerns.

Meeting adjourned at 5:29 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Smith