

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2026

Present: Pat Harvey, Mike Teetsel, Mary Fratini

Guests Present: Julie Smith, Kristen LaPell, Orca Media, Nancy Woolley, Terry Severy, Asia Labejsza-Kennett, & Vic Ribaudó

Guests Present on Microsoft Teams: Orca, Martha Slater, Troy LaPell, Brenda Downs, Michael, Melody Balczon

Pat called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Pat confirmed the meeting met the Vermont Open Meeting Law.

Prior Meeting Minutes: Pat moved to accept the Selectboard meeting minutes from March 9, 2026. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Library Updates: Melody shared the trustees have submitted their grant. The Friends of the Library will host an event in May. She said Maya will be clearing out old books and those that haven't been checked out will be cleared up for new books coming in. Melody said they have not heard back from the IT services that are provided for the town. Julie will reach out and check in with Brian.

Utility Operator Updates: Terry announced they will be reading the meters this week. He shared how he felt the rates should be increased in July to show on the September billing. He said it had been 2 years since they were raised. He said there is work that needs to be done. He said the rates will increase slightly. The water usage rate will increase a penny per gallon as well as the sewer usage. The base rates will also increase each by \$5 per quarter. Nancy asked about what the town would do with delinquencies. The town will need an ordinance for cutting off delinquent utility bills. Julie will investigate a model ordinance through VLCT for the next meeting. Terry also felt that the Water/Sewer commissioners should be a separate group than the selectboard. The Selectboard will formally approve the increases at the next selectboard meeting.

VHI Management Updates: Vic shared that the Feeding the Valley Alliance is a local nonprofit organization that began during the pandemic. They operate one Friday a month out of the Hancock Town Hall. It was in the plan that they would have space in the HUB building once it was renovated. They, however, have run into a crunch. They serve about 50-60 families. They are scrambling to find a new home by June 1st. They are in discussions about moving into the classroom wing of the building until construction and will move to the theater section. There is no source of funding, so this is not a rental source but is a vital source to the community.

Asia shared they are hosting more private rentals as well as working with Rochester Stockbridge PTO. They have ovens and availability to host private events. Kristen asked when they have private parties and events if they are charging a rental fee and if so where do those fees go. Asia

explained that since the events and private parties are hosted under the VHI insurance those fees go to VHI. That money goes to working the building. Kristen asked if they had a set fee for the rentals. Asia said they use a form for event planning.

Selectboard Updates:

Pat said after taking a CPR class, others should also be inspired to take a class. She said its virtually a first aid class for emergency situations.

Regarding the dog situation at Kennedy Drive a penalty letter was delivered to the residence of the Homeowner. She will follow up to make sure they have received the paperwork and accept the penalty.

Pat said she is working with the Planning Commission a little bit with directions and advice to Cindy Hill, the town's legal counsel for the Cell Tower.

She had a request that the town jump in and purchase the Catholic Church property. She said the realtor has three offers in hand and doesn't seem feasible for the town to jump in with the timing. She said the process for a town to buy real estate takes time.

She said the Selectboard and Planning Board will not be participating in Tier 1 B state planning for area designations. She listed their reasons for not participating.

Mike provided an update on the recent visit this past week. He said Two Rivers provided a contractor to come into the Town Office building to do a blow test as well as an inspection, particularly the mechanics on the HVAC, to prepare a more detailed scope of work to be funded by the MERP grant. This would enable us to put the work out to bid. Kristen asked if we are going to make an amendment since we decided not to include the Town Garage. Mike explained that the amendment doesn't seem to be needed currently

New Business:

February Treasurers Report: Pat moved to accept the February Treasurers Report. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Sign updated Certification of Compliance for 2026: The board needs to sign a new updated Certificate of Compliance. The last one signed was out of date. Pat moved to approve and sign the updated Certificate of Compliance. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Sign Letter of Intent to participate in FY27 Municipal Roads Grants-In-Aid Program: Pat moved to accept to participate in the FY27 Municipal Roads Grants-In-Aid Program. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Sign Windsor County Sheriff's Department Contract: Pat moved to approve and sign the upcoming contract dated July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027, with Windsor County Sheriff's Department. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Park Use for Farmer's Market on the Park: Nancy asked if the vendors for the Farmer Market could help clean up the park. She thought it would be nice for those who use the park to help to clean up the park. Nancy said it would be nice to clean the park at the end of April, early May. Pat said the Farmers market runs every Friday from 3-6 pm May 22-October 09,2026. Asia asked about signs and how she can leave up a sign for the season. She wanted to conform to the town policy. Pat will work with the state and see what the Farmer's Market could do. Nancy asked if there is a plan to keep cars off the park across from the Skip Mart where it is dangerous. There was discussion about how to set that up. Pat moved to accept the application. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approved.

Adopt 2026 LEMP: Pat moved to adopt the Local Emergency Management Plan. Mike seconded. All in favor. So, approve. Pat thanked Chad and Mickaela Richardson for their input on this.

Public Comment- Vic made a recommendation sharing his thoughts about the MERP grant funds going into the Town Office Building, when there may be a better solution for the future of the building by moving the Town Clerks Office to the HUB. He said this would allow the town office building to be available for housing. He thought the selectboard could authorize a short duration study and plan to act on that. Mike felt this was not the time for a decision. Mike said the MERP money is for this building and improving the building. He felt the discussion about moving the Town Office is for another day or in the future. Vic asked if we do the MERP upgrade to this building in the Town Office committed to keeping the office here for an unlimited time, as a condition of the grant. Pat shared her concerns about moving the town offices away from this elevation down to where there could be a flood zone. She also feels the Valley Hub is currently in a probation period and the original agreement is after a five-year period that the Valley Hub could then take over the building from the town. Therefore, we could have a town office in a building that we don't own. She felt it was bad business. She would like to wait and see before a discussion to consider it.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Smith