

DRAFT MINUTES

TOWN OF TUNBRIDGE

Tuesday December 9th, 2025 at 6:00pm via Zoom and Town Offices

Meeting called to order at 6:02pm

Present: Mike McPhetres, John O'Brien, Gary Mullen, Rodney Hoyt, Mariah Cilley, Susan Salster, Becky Hoyt, Roger Clark, Baxter Doty, Brenda Field, Evan Reiss, John Echeverria, Todd Tyson, Anna Dechart, Dave Kimball, Chris Battcock, Chase Ackerman, John Durkee, Peter Hayden

Road Report- Rodney Hoyt via Mike McPhetres

Not much to report. The GMC is still down in White River. He has called for some sand prices. Pickett's said he may have some sand available. Mullen states that it was 30 years ago this month that Rodney started working for the town. The Selectboard appreciates him and all his hard work. On Thomas's new truck the 4-wheel drive works for only 30 minutes on the road but then it stops. The company thinks it's a bad sensor, but Hoyt thinks it's the oil heater since it works when its warm in the shop and right after you start driving it. Mullen has not heard any complaints about the road. Janet Wells is wondering why the new speed sign is installed underneath the tree and it isn't working. McPhetres states that the company suggested we keep the sign shut off to let it charge up.

TRORC Representative Appointment- Janet Wells

Janet Wells is interested in being the new representative. McPhetres makes a motion to appoint Janet Wells to the TRORC Representative replacing Michael Sacca. Seconded. Wells will be the first representative and Kevin Rose will go back to being our second. All aye. So moved.

Conservation Commission New Member Appointment- Evan Reiss

Evan Reiss introduces two new members of the commission. He gives an update about the Winter Evenings, River Cleanup, Invasives Workshop and Green Up Day. McPhetres makes a motion to appoint Stewart and Peter to the Conservation Commission. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

VAST Trail Workaround Discussion

Baxter Doty comes to discuss the update in the trail work around. A VAST meeting was held last weekend and they are curious about the availability of riding on the Orchard Trail. John O'Brien is allowing VAST to ride on his land. McPhetres makes a motion to allow VAST to ride on the Orchard Legal Trail and Baptist Hill Legal Trail for a short stretch. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved. McPhetres makes a motion to allow VAST use a short portion of Dickerman Hill Road. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

The Ranger 2026 Discussion- Rachel Cohen

Cohen has reserved Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Fairgrounds for the event this year. Sunday is traditionally the day the large bike event is held. They are considering moving to Saturday but are looking to see what the town implications would look like. O'Brien asks if

Cohen has looked at other local calendars to see if there are other events on Saturday. McPhetres makes a motion to allow The Ranger to hold their large bike event on Saturday June 6, 2026.

First Branch Ambulance Contract- Chase Ackerman

Ackerman brought the new contract. Currently the contract that we are in was \$32,844. The proposed contract is \$36,754.

South Royalton Rescue Update and Budget- Dave Kimball

The South Royalton Rescue Squad has an ACT 250 permit, a building permit and are close to getting everything else lined up. The architect is hopeful they can go out to bid next month. Staffing is going well. Several EMTs went for their next certification. This increases the payroll but it is worth it to have more people who are more qualified. The landlord of their current building passed away, but they signed a one year lease with the estate to maintain where they currently are until the new building is done.

Library Budget- Anna Dechart

Dechart is here for the FY27 library budget request. Laura Ketchum looked at what it would look like if there was a 3% increase over the past three years. This will be averaged to determine the increase for FY27. It has been level funded at \$80,000 but they are looking to increase this to \$85,000. Mullen asks if the library knows of any exterior work that needs to be done to the library. Dechart states there was nothing urgent that has been noted. O'Brien asks what the state average allocation from the town. Dechart states that the library operating expense budget is 74% and the states average is closer to 80%.

Treasurer Policies- Becky Hoyt

Hoyt presents two policies regarding Homestead Declarations and Record Retention. McPhetres makes a motion to adopt the Late Fee for Property Tax Bills and Homestead Declarations and the Record Retention Policy. All aye. So moved.

Budget Meeting #1

Hoyt presents the numbers she has estimated for Highway Budget. Hoyt used a 2.8% COLA increase for payroll. The estimates for next year were discussed. More discussion will be held next meeting.

Other Business:

Liquor license is approved. Cilley presents a draft of a letter written regarding a property dispute. Cilley states that she is stepping back from the Assistant Town Clerk job and there will be a job posting going out soon. The Selectboard would like Cilley to pursue the Fidium internet service for the Town Garage.

Approve Warrants:

All warrants were signed and approved.

Approve Minutes:

Cilley presents minutes from the November 25th, 2025 meeting.

McPhetres makes a motion to adjourn. O'Brien seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Gary Mullen, Chair

Mike McPhetres, Vice Chair

John O'Brien, Clerk