

TOWN OF
TUNBRIDGE
VERMONT

Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

The Tunbridge Selectboard held a Regular meeting on August 11, 2026 at the Tunbridge Town Office and over Zoom.

Present in person: Gary Mullen (Chair), Mike McPhetres (Vice Chair), John O'Brien (Clerk), Aileen Lem (Assistant), Rodney Hoyt, Betsy Gaiser, Chuck Ashton, Todd Tyson, Jeff Solsaa, Janet Wells, Nan Frost, Bryan Kalleberg; **Present on Zoom:** Michael Miller, Chris Battcock, Kathy (last name not provided)

Call to order

Gary M. called the meeting to order at 6:09pm.

Agenda additions, changes

Aileen L. suggested signing road work-related grant agreements received today at the end of the **Road Foreman report**. Aileen L. needs more info on the proposal to hire someone to scan in the Town Clerk's office and suggested changing that discussion to **Other business** including addressing a question from Nancy Howe. Gary M. accepted the changes.

Public comments and announcements

Public comments and announcements were addressed near the end of the meeting.

Road Foreman report (Rodney H.)

The Selectboard reviewed a revised truck body quote from Viking-Cives of Vermont. Aileen L. confirmed delivery timing of end of September or early October 2027 would not change since quoted at the last meeting. Mike M. made a motion to accept Viking-Cives quote for \$106,800. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The Bicknell Hill culvert replacement is moving along nicely. Tomorrow (Wednesday), they are expecting to put the last culverts in the ground and then will concentrate on ditching. The culvert on Spring Road is finished. Lafayette Highway Specialties will install the guardrails on Kibling Hill in September.

Road crew member Larry Wight's truck is at Freightliner getting fixed. Roadside mowing is going well and the tractor is fixed. Winter sand continues to be delivered.

Rodney H. would like to hire Bouchards Paving and Sealing to fix the paved roads. Their quote was for about four days at \$4,000 per day for a total of \$16,000. Mike M. moved to authorize Rodney H. to hire Bouchards Paving and Sealing for not more than \$16,000 to fix the paved roads in Tunbridge. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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Rodney H. spoke with Tunbridge resident Ralph Vitti who brought up concerns about work done on 129 Dickerman Hill Rd to divert water off the road before the bridge. Rodney H. agreed to fill the stone swale with hardpack so a logging truck can access Ralph Vitti's property.

Aileen L. presented the Selectboard with grant agreements from Maryann Caron, Grants Manager:

- (1) A \$20,000 Better Roads grant with a \$5,000 match for work on Bicknell Hill Rd: Culvert upgrade, grass-lined ditch, stone-lined ditch. Rodney H. will confirm with Maryann Caron if the work being done now is covered by this grant.
- (2) A \$26,000 Grants in Aid grant with a \$6,500 match for work not yet designated. The grant is for implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) and "shall be located on hydrologically connected road segment(s) that currently do not meet the DEC's MRGP." Rodney H. will coordinate with Maryann Caron and Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission to determine the work covered.

Mike M. made a motion to accept both grants and have Gary M. sign. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Updates on the Town Garage project will be on the August 25 Selectboard agenda.

Flint Bridge Repair project bid opening

One bid was submitted for the Flint Bridge Repair project by Randall Hoyt for \$148,000. The Selectboard will award the project in the next meeting on August 25. In the meantime, Aileen L. will pass the information along to Maryann Caron who will check on the qualifications of the bidder according to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

RFPs for this project were posted in three physical locations around Tunbridge (the Town Clerk's office, the Post Office, the North Tunbridge General Store), online on the Vermont Bid Registry, in the White River Valley Herald, and Maryann Caron emailed a list of qualified contractors provided by VTrans.

Updates to mowing work

Devin Cilley spoke with John O. about removing sumac and other trees from behind the Town Office. Aileen L. furnished Devin Cilley's mowing quote and asked if the work was in addition to what was quoted. John O. asked Aileen L. to get a quote from Devin Cilley on removing the sumac and other trees from behind the Town Office.

Discuss hire for scanning in Clerk's office Other business

Nancy Howe asked if she could take the quilted Tunbridge sign hanging in the foyer of the Town Hall and show it at the Tunbridge Fair. The Selectboard approved.

The Selectboard approved three liquor licenses: Flag Hill Farm, Inc. on October 3-4, Barnard Enterprises LLC on September 17-21, Pear Ridge Productions LLC on October 10.

Tunbridge Affordable Housing Trust: Willoughby project (Betsy G.)

Betsy G., President of the Board of the Tunbridge Affordable Housing Trust, presented the Selectboard with a letter for the Selectboard to sign in support of the Housing Trust's project involving the Willoughby property at 499 VT Route 110. The letter is based on a template support letter needed for the Housing Trust's grant application with the Village Trust Initiative.

In response to Mike M.'s question in the last meeting about property tax exemptions, Betsy G. explained the Housing Trust would not be looking for a property tax exemption. She mentioned the Housing Trust is using the Community Land Trust Technical Manual by the Grounded Solutions Network as their guide and that guide does not recommend pursuing property tax exemptions.

The Housing Trust is hoping to be under the umbrella of another non-profit, for example, the Preservation Trust of Vermont, while waiting for their 501(c)(3) status, which could take months. Betsy G. confirmed the Housing Trust is a charitable non-profit.

For the Willoughby project, the Housing Trust is looking into a four-unit house to start, with the possibility of expanding if the septic can be improved. They contacted Chris Leister at Hog Hill Design, LLC. to do a flow test to determine yield.

Public comments included that if this project is successful, it will create a track record for potential funders for other relevant projects. The property is an asset with fruit trees and garden space – it's a central spot in North Tunbridge that could be used for community gatherings. Progress on this project will be great for the community in general. The Housing Trust would be looking at the possibility of partnering with Habitat for Humanity. This could be a landmark effort for a small town that other towns can use as an example.

Mike M. made a motion to sign the letter committing the Selectboard to collaborating with the project team and supporting its successful implementation. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

In reference to the Housing Trust's interest in working with Maryann Caron, Aileen L. said they would work with Maryann Caron to bring a proposal for non-Town organizations to use Maryann Caron's time to the Selectboard's next meeting.

Attorney-client communications: Executive session

Aileen L. received information from the Town Attorney today on the letter the Selectboard asked the Attorney to send on their behalf.

Mike M. moved to find that premature general public knowledge of communication from the Town Attorney would clearly place the Selectboard at a disadvantage. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Mike M. moved to enter into executive session for the purpose of receiving confidential counsel from the Town Attorney with Aileen L. joining. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously and the Selectboard entered into executive session.

Coming out of executive session, Gary M. shared that no action was taken.

Adjourn

Mike M. moved to adjourn the meeting. John O. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:16pm (unanimous).

Submitted by Aileen Lem

Approved [Month DD, YYYY] by:

Gary Mullen, Chair

Mike McPhetres, Vice Chair

John O'Brien, Clerk