TOWN OF
TUNBRIDGE
VERMONT

Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

The Tunbridge Selectboard held a Regular meeting on September 8, 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, Baxter Doty, Maryann Caron, Mort Wasserman, Judy Tucker, Jodi Hoyt, Abigail Foulk; **Present on Zoom**: Michael Miller, Elizabeth Brown, Fred Pond, Janet Zug

Call to order
Gary M. called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

Agenda additions, changes
Aileen L. mentioned we might have to move some items ahead of the Flint Bridge and HVAC upgrade discussions if Maryann C., Grants Manager, is delayed.

Public comments and announcements
There were no public comments or announcements.

Road Foreman report (Rodney H.)
The Selectboard approved a salt contract with Cargill for $116.50 per ton for an estimated 250 tons. Last year it was around $95 per ton.

The Road Crew is working on cleaning ditches and culverts and grading before the end of the season. Rodney H. would like to rent a roller for the Spring Road project to resurface a section during the fall. As part of the Better Roads grant, the goal for next year is to get stone- or grass-lined ditches in before putting granite down. Sand continues to be delivered. Earlier this year, the Selectboard and Rodney H. decided they would go half sand and half granite (2500 yards/2500 yards) instead of 3000 yards of sand and 2000 yards of granite as in the past.

Mowing is ongoing and planned for specific areas where people park and walk to the Tunbridge Fair. The new truck order is all set, and another truck is headed to Viking for maintenance covered by Viking and warranty. Rodney H. made a note that masonry work may be needed on Foundry bridge in the near future.

Check in on Town Garage
Aileen L. will reach out to Town Garage Committee members to schedule a meeting after the Tunbridge Fair. The meeting will be at the Tunbridge Town Garage. The plan is to decide the best way to engage Andrew LaRosa, Architect PLLC, in this work and to develop a proposal for the voters at Town Meeting to discuss.

The Town Garage Committee aims to visit garages in Chelsea, Vershire, Brookfield, and Strafford. Some questions to consider: Do we build new, what are other towns who built new doing with their old garage? Would we be able to find a use for our old garage if we built new? As we think about spending money on this garage, how far down the road is the need for a new fire station? Is there a way to estimate the cost or benefit of waiting?

Flint Bridge bid next steps

At Aileen L's request, the project manager at Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) talked with the Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) about the termiticide/insecticide/fungicide coating in the project plan. The VTrans project manager suggested we take the timber coating requirements out of the project plan as it's not required and may be prohibitive, given the protections that need to be in place to keep the coating from contaminating the water, and unnecessary, given that the inspection paperwork did not identify any infestations in the current structure. The Selectboard agreed to remove the timber coating requirements from the contract plans.

Maryann C., asked the Selectboard if they would like to request an extension from the state on the grant supporting this project since the grant is set to end as of December 30, 2026.

Regarding the bid received on the project, the VTrans project manager reviewed the contractor qualification form and said the contractor seems to have plenty of experience to do the work. The project manager also explained that the decision to accept a lump sum bid is up to the Selectboard. The Selectboard looked over the Tunbridge Procurement Policy and found that they have the discretion to award or reject bids in the best interest of the Town. The Selectboard decided they would decide on awarding the bid in the next meeting after hearing from Maryann C. on the request for an extension.

Mike M. made a motion to approve signing the request for an extension of the grant supporting the Flint Bridge repair project. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Contract for HVAC upgrade in Town Office

The TRORC Shared Energy Coordinator managing our MERP grant sent the contract for the Town Office HVAC upgrades to be signed. The bid TRORC accepted is the most expensive – with ARC Mechanical. The lowest bidder left out some detail and was unresponsive to TRORC's efforts to clarify and the middle bidder called for an electrical upgrade that wasn't needed. The contract is for $35,330 – about $10k over what TRORC estimated. Accepting this contract might mean we forgo the HVAC upgrade in the basement of the Town Hall, but we should still be able to do the electrical upgrade. For the the MERP grant we need to have everything under contract by December 30, 2026. John O. commented that it's important not to leave money on the table.

The Selectboard asked if Maryann C. has come across any grants supporting town garages, and she hadn't yet, but would continue to look.

Upcoming closures/coverage for the Town Clerk's office (Bonnie M.)
Town Clerk Bonnie McCrillis talked the Selectboard through her office's schedule for September. The Town Clerk's office will be closed September 9, 23, and 30. Bonnie McCrillis post when she's closed.

The week of the Tunbridge Fair, the Town Office will be closed Thursday and Friday and the Transfer Station will be closed Friday. Aileen L. will help spread the word on Front Porch Forum, the website, and the listserv for the closures in September.

Fund management and reporting for Tunbridge Area Cats program (Janet Z.)
Janet Z. answered the Selectboard's questions on how she manages funds for the Tunbridge Area Cats fund clarifying that the fund is funded by donations and that donations are tracked. The program policy, as currently written, says the designated veterinarian charges the Town directly, but Janet pays the veterinarian and applies for reimbursement.

Janet Z. shared that she is now adopting cats out and has developed a form for that process. She commented that most of the donations come from people who've adopted cats. Janet Z. will share her forms with Aileen L. and Aileen L. will help revise the policy and share with Janet Z., Treasurer Becky Hoyt, and the Selectboard.

Discuss establishing Town trust to fund Town Nurse program (Jodi H.)
Tunbridge Town Nurse Jodi Hoyt, along with Mort W., Abigail F., and Judy T., asked the Selectboard for guidance on how to set up funds to accept donations supporting the work of the Tunbridge Town Nurse. The group discussed different types of funds Jodi H. might use, including a Town fund that accepts donations – like the Tunbridge Area Cats fund – and a fund set up with the Trustees of Public Funds for donations from certain foundations.

John O. asked Jodi H. to talk through what the funds would be for and Jodi H. mentioned salary and mileage support. Further discussion identified a goal of sustaining the Town Nurse program in case of funding shortfalls.

Gary M. suggested that Jodi H. start with Treasurer Becky Hoyt. The Selectboard ultimately decided that putting this on a future agenda where Becky Hoyt and Trustees of Public Funds Secretary/Treasurer Liz York could attend with Jodi H. would be helpful to all.

Jodi H. mentioned that Chelsea paid for a Starlink for her car that helps her complete paperwork after visiting residents. A future proposal might be that Tunbridge share the cost of the Starlink.

Discuss use of surveillance technology in Tunbridge and Flock Safety
At the suggestion of the Chair, Aileen L. checked into possible uses of surveillance technology in Tunbridge in general and specific to license plate readers. Aileen L. is waiting to hear more information on the electronic speed signs in Town but was able to confirm:

From the Vermont State Police:
"VSP does not use Flock cameras or any other license plate readers. The carts or sensors that are used for speed enforcement do not track specific vehicle information. They track the speed of the vehicles going over the sensors. We do not have any database that collects photos of vehicle registrations or the vehicle itself."

From the Windsor County Sheriff's Office:
"At the sheriffs department, we do not make use of either one of those technology items. Years ago we had a license plate reader at the department, but we learned that the State frowned on using those. We do not have any connection or do we use flock safety either?"

Other business
The Selectboard aims to migrate to Microsoft65 emails by the end of the calendar year.

The Tunbridge Planning Commission is meeting tomorrow, Wednesday, September 9th at 6 pm at the Town Office to review the TRORC draft regional plan and the responses and comments to it. To see TRORC's responses and their suggested changes, go to trorc.org. The next TRORC Board meeting is scheduled for September 30. A printed copy of TRORC's response to the joint letter from the Planning Commission and the Selectboard is in the Town Office along with a printed spreadsheet of TRORC's suggested edits to the draft plan.

Review and approve August 25 meeting minutes
After a minor edit, the Selectboard approved the August 25 regular meeting minutes.

Adjourn
Mike M. moved to adjourn the meeting. John O. seconded. Meeting adjourned around 8:45pm (unanimous).

Submitted by Aileen Lem

Approved September 22, 2026 by:

Gary Mullen, Chair

Mike McPhetres, Vice Chair

John O'Brien, Clerk