TOWN OF
TUNBRIDGE
VERMONT

Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

The Tunbridge Selectboard held a Regular meeting on October 13, 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, Robert Clark (Otter Creek), Liz York, Matt Frost, Roger Clark, Becky Hoyt, Maryann Caron, Aquene Sausville, Brenda Field, Judy Tucker, Mort Wasserman, Jodi Hoyt, Janet Wells; **Present on Zoom:** Shawn Kelley (Sanborn Head), Michael Miller, Amy Frost

Call to order
Chair Gary Mullen called the meeting to order at 6:09pm.

Agenda additions, changes
There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

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

Fixing pavement work on Strafford Rd with Robert Clark, Otter Creek Engineering
Robert Clark, P.E., Vice President at Otter Creek Engineering, Inc., walked the Selectboard through the plan to fix the issues with the paving done on Strafford Rd last year. Robert C. explained that the Town hired Sanborn Head & Associates, Inc., who specializes in geotechnical engineering, and Sanborn Head subcontracted with Otter Creek to manage the road repair. Otter Creak contracted with Northwoods Excavating, Inc. to do the work.

The repair work will include removing a section of pavement, recompacting, and milling and overlaying where the joints meet. The issues were related to compaction and site settlement and were concluded not to be related to engineering issues or issues with the road. The work will be resolved under the contractor's warranty for the work. Robert C. proposed that Northwoods, and the paving company they subcontracted, coordinate with Road Foreman Rodney Hoyt to complete the work in the spring. Rodney H. agreed with the timing. The work will be limited to the scope of the repair.

There was conversation about waiting to fix the issue along with other road work needed; however, there is no timeline available for those repairs as there is no active grant for that work. The Selectboard decided to move forward with the repairs in the spring.

Assistant Aileen Lem will work with Robert C. to write up contract on completing the work in the spring and covered under warranty.

Road Foreman report (Rodney H.)
The guardrails will be installed at Kibling Hill tomorrow morning wrapping up that work. Sand is almost completely delivered - 5,000 yards total; however, our suppler may not have sand for us next year. Rodney H. is looking at manufactured sand, for example what they have in Strafford. That sand comes from Lebanon and is $11.75 per ton where about 1.5 tons makes a yard. We are still borrowing a tractor while ours is being repaired – ours is up and running, but we don't have it back yet. The pump went bad in the transmission. The Selectboard confirmed they're fine waiting until after Veterans Day to take the flags down.

Grants: HSIP Ledge removal bids, Town Hall HVAC contract, Flint Bridge contract, updates (Maryann C., Aileen L.)
The work on Bicknell Hill is completed. Grants Manager Maryann Caron. will make sure she has the information need to complete the grant.

The Selectboard reviewed three bids for the ledge removal project funded by the Small Scale HSIP grant. The Selectboard preferred the lowest bid, submitted by Matt Loftus Construction for $38,500, and appreciated the description provided in the bid. Vice Chair Mike McPhetres made a motion to award the bid to Matt Loftus Construction. Clerk John O'Brien seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Rodney H. will follow up with Matt Loftus Construction to let them know they won the bid. The VT Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has asked us to wait on the work. Maryann C. will clarify and follow up with Rodney H. on next steps.

The Selectboard approved and signed a contract provided by Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) on HVAC work for the Town Hall. This work is funded by the MERP grant that TRORC is managing. The contract is with John Turner Consulting (JTC) who will be managing project with Peak Mechanical of Waterbury as their subcontractor performing the work. The contractor will need the space behind the Town Hall cleared of brush before beginning. Aileen L. will get in touch with the owners/abutters to get approval.

The Selectboard reviewed the contract for the Flint Covered Bridge repair project. After a site visit with the engineer on this project from VTrans, the contractor, Rodney H., and Aileen L., VTrans and updated the project specifications adding nailers/purlins to the bridge. The contractor provided a quote for the work to Aileen L. who included in the contract. The total contract amount is $144,470. Mike M. moved to accept and sign the contract with contractor Randall S Hoyt for the Flint Covered Bridge repair project. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The contractor mentioned the contract plans might not include the lumber needed for the ends of the bridge. Aileen L. will follow up with VTrans to confirm. The contractor intends to finish before the end of the calendar year, but the contract allows them to work into 2027 with a deadline of August 1, 2027.

The Town received their road erosion report. The state is impressed with the Road Crew's commitment to completing the work and ensuring that each year, there are fewer segments of road that need attention.

Planning Commission: Appointing new member, updates (Amy F.)
Planning Commission Chair Amy Frost recommended that the Selectboard appoint Kathleen Berk to the Planning Commission. Kathy Berk was Executive Director of the Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) and was involved with VSHA for 30 years. The Planning Commission bylaws allow nine members, and they have seven. The Planning Commission will check their bylaws to see if the Selectboard member appointed to attend is ex-officio. Mike M. moved to appoint Kathleen Berk to the Planning Commission. John O seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Janet Wells, Planning Commission member and Tunbridge representative on the TRORC Board of Commissioners, asked the Selectboard if they had appointed an alternate. The Selectboard hadn't. Kevin Rose will be sending his resignation letter shortly. Janet W. has someone interested in being the alternate. In the last TRORC Board meeting, they didn't get through much of the agenda and an open meeting law violation was reported, so in the next meeting they will need to address the violation and continue reviewing TRORC's recommended changes to the draft regional plan.

Transfer Station Attendant Candidate
The Selectboard interviewed Aquene Sausville for the Transfer Station Attendance position. Giving the candidate the choice of working Wednesday 4-7pm and Friday 4-7pm or Wednesday 4-7pm and Saturday 9am-3pm, the candidate said they would prefer the Wednesday/Friday shift. The Selectboard thanked Aquene for interviewing and will discuss next steps later in the meeting, possibly in executive session.

Transfer Station task list (Aileen L.)
Aileen L. requested that the Transfer Station task list be moved to later in the meeting after the agenda items involving the Town Nurse and others present. The Selectboard agreed.

Accounts for Town Nurse donations or endowments (Jodi H., Becky H., Matt F., Liz Y.)
Trustees of Public Funds Matt Frost and Liz York and Treasurer Becky Hoyt talked with Town Nurse and Health Officer Jodi Hoyt about the right type of account to open to collect donations, grants, and endowments to help sustain the Town Nurse program.

The group talked through establishing an account with Becky H. that is funded by donations and not with Town funds. They also discussed bringing a proposal to Town meeting to establish a fund and fund with Town funds. The example given was if the Town Nurse didn't use all of her salary in one fiscal year, she could put the surplus amount in a fund.

The Trustees talked through the funds they managed being restricted by the wishes of the donor and that if Jodi H. received funds from a donor with specific wishes, they could open

an account and manage those funds on behalf of the Town Nurse program. Matt F. will verify the minimum balance required and keep the Town Nurse program in mind when talking with donors. Jodi H. can also announce in Tunbridge Quarterly and at Town Meeting.

At a future meeting, the Selectboard will consider creating a fund for donations for the Town Nurse program with the possibility of converting to accept Town funds in a Town meeting.

Gee Hill Rd and Clarksville Rd (Jodi H.)
Jodi H. talked the Selectboard through complaints about possible septic issues on Gee Hill Rd and Clarksville Rd. Jodi H. has been in touch with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation for close to a year trying to get support. Mike M. moved to approve Jodi H. to go to the properties with the state and, if needed, the Windsor County Sheriff to address the issues. John O. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The Selectboard also asked that Jodi H. look into testing the water. John O. will get in touch with the Agency of Natural Resources on how this is being managed at the state level. Other options are putting a health order on the properties which will affect renting and selling the properties.

Jodi H. requested, for future discussion, that the Health Officer position be paid with an hourly wage. She also requested that Tunbridge consider sharing the cost of the subscription to the Starlink service she has to help her complete paperwork from her car. Chelsea is currently paying for Starlink at $55/month, and with Tunbridge's support, she would increase the number of GB on her plan (costing $80 total) and Tunbridge would share the cost with Chelsea at $40 each.

Possible executive session – public health response
The Selectboard did not enter into executive session.

Possible executive session – personnel
The Selectboard did not enter into executive session.

Mike M. moved to hire Aquene Sausville at $21 per hour pending the call with the last reference. Aileen L. will complete and report back to the Selectboard.

Transfer Station task list (Aileen L.)
The Selectboard review Aileen L.'s list of questions and tasks to help improve the conditions at the Transfer Station and clarify processes. The Selectboard will look at the list and see if there's more to add. Becky H. reminded everyone that we pay for a portable toilet for the Transfer Station, so we should verify that it's still there. Gary M. confirmed that Mike Howe put up the electric fencing for the compost. John O. asked if there was a way to better estimate when the trash and recycling compactors were full. Aileen L. suggested knowledge transfer from others who worked at the Transfer Station. Other tasks discussed

were creating a binder of processes and resources to stay onsite, fixing the heater, fixing the fence, posting signs, clarifying training requirements, solidifying the process for getting a backup Attendant. The Selectboard will revisit the task list in future meetings.

Other business
Aileen L. and the Selectboard talked through the Town Hall septic and leak issues. Town Hall Manager Judy Howe called a plumber who suggested that we clean out the septic filter. Judy and Mike Howe have been unable to recreate the leak by flushing the toilets multiple times. It seems to happen when the kitchen is being used at an event. The Selectboard approved Judy H. getting portable toilet to support the events scheduled this weekend.

Aileen L. asked about a Title VI representative to take required training with the state of Vermont. Brenda Field was suggested, but no formal decision was made.

Aileen L. asked the Selectboard to consider provider them with insurance since they are scheduled to work 15 hours a week as Assistant and at least 12 hours a week as Lister for a minimum total of 27 hours per week. The personnel policy indicates people scheduled to work 25 hours per week are eligible for insurance. The Selectboard said they support paying insurance if there's enough money. Aileen L. will check with Becky H.

Approve warrants; approve September 22 and 25 meeting minutes
The Selectboard reviewed and approved warrants provided by Treasurer Becky Hoyt.

The Selectboard approved the September 25 special meeting minutes. Gary M. and Mike M. approved the September 22 regular meeting minutes, and John O. will finish reading through and approve or suggest changes another time.

Adjourn
Mike M. moved to adjourn the meeting. John O. seconded. Meeting adjourned around 9:30pm (unanimous).

Submitted by Aileen Lem

Approved 10-27, 2026 by:

Gary Mullen, Chair

Mike McPhetres, Vice Chair

John O'Brien, Clerk