

Town of Burke
212 School Street
West Burke, VT 05871
802-467-3717
Email:burke@burkevermont.org
Burke Community Building
August 4, 2025, - 6:00 PM Regular Selectboard Meeting

Present: Joe Allard, Jerry Booth, Mark Daigle: Selectboard

Linda Hackett-Corey: Town Clerk

Cathi Feeley: Town Treasurer

Gail Weed: Clerk and Treasurer Assistant

Mike Harris: Zoning Administrator

James Sullivan: Town Administrator

Dave Kaufman: Road Commissioner

Valerie Desmarais: Minutes Clerk

Guests: Sherriff Brandon Thrailkill, Geoff Boone, Karen Goetz, Rick Hackett, John Kascenska, Carol Krochak

Mark opened the meeting at 6:00. Mark stated the meeting is accessible on the zoom platform and is being recorded.

Agenda amendments: John Kascenska came before the board on the behalf of the Burke Chamber of Commerce re: the Burke Fall Festival. Historically the town helps defray the cost of the sheriff's departments presence at the event. Last year the cost was \$840, the Chamber will split the expense. The board agreed to do this.

Request from Steve Smith to purchase a Hippo Hopper to help with dumping recyclables. Joe motioned to accept this, Jerry seconded, so moved. It is \$1200 with shipping.

Approve 07/07 regular selectboard minutes: Joe motioned to accept the meeting minutes, Jerry seconded, so moved.

Sheriff Thrailkill came before the board to update. Staffing in the department is increasing, they anticipate a total of 5 new hires; 3 full and 2 part time. The department is trying to build to constant patrols. It is going well but it's not a quick process, training is extensive and very involved. Losing Sheriff Hemond was a grave blow to the department, and Sheriff Thrailkill is making an effort to start the conversation about what the town needs. Mark noted that over the last month he has many gotten residents' calls to report speeding. The back roads are in need of patrol; the "patrol" division of the department is recognized as an area of concern and they are working towards this. Joe noted that the VT State Police are also under hours for the town, based on staffing issues. Jerry noted that he has rec'd calls on all terrain vehicles travelling on roads that are not permitted at this time. Carol Krochak noted that earlier in the season there was Sherrif patrol in Burke Hollow during the middle of the day, when there is not much traffic. Sheriff Thrailkill noted that the hours have been expanded to 8:00-6:00 from 8:00 to 4:00. The sheriff also noted that staffing impacts what hours the department can be available for patrols.

Open propane bids for new Town Garage site: Mike Harris presented quotes for companies supplying the tanks and plumbing for purchase and then estimates from Dead River and Amerigas: they would provide the tanks and the propane. He also provided info on the terms of the contracts. Mike advises going through Dead River, he has gone through all the quotes and they present the best value. It's notable that we are looking at estimates as there is no usage profile / history. Jerry spoke about Gillespie out of Northfield, and they can install the tank without a contract for the propane; they can deliver propane on a schedule as well. Jerry has been working with Gail to set up a bid process for other utilities (heating oil and on road diesel) and that creates another opportunity for aggressive pricing from various vendors. He is advocating for purchasing the tanks. Mark noted that he would like more time to review the proposals, Joe agreed. Mike asked for the board to let him know in the next 2-3 weeks.

Dave Kaufman gave the highway report: The good news is that the majority of the flood damage has been taken care. He is very concerned about the lower half of Brook Road; it is eroding now even with just surface water. There are 6 full time residences and this part of the road is the only way to access their homes. Dave wonders about large stone on the brook side. Jim agreed that preventive work there is important. Jim rec'd \$370,00 out of \$570,000 (FEMA assessed) to stabilize the bank. Nate Sicard is engineering a plan to hold the bank. Mike noted that putting in some very large rip wrap would be an asset, Nate is very busy and is attempting to tie this in with a boring job in the area. Jardon Borge (state engineer) spoke with Jim and agrees that stabilization is necessary and that large fill will work. Dave also brought up that the Marshall Newland Road / Carter Road is now passable but needs guardrails and that makes it unsuitable for 2 way traffic. Mark noted that a header is necessary. ANR and VTrans will need to be involved. It is very narrow and a long stretch of road. Jim is waiting for the declaration of disaster from FEMA; there is money that can be activated if there is no declaration of disaster; the area threshold is around 10 Million and Jim feels that the threshold will not be met. Dave asked about contacting Nate to see what he recommends; Mike cautioned that he is booked out. ANR has not looked at the site; Dave notes that we need expert assistance. Mark noted that the larger culverts and improvements ship that water to pinch points. Dave also brought up Burke Hollow paving, the road will be closed 7:30 -4:30 Monday – Thursday. He will let everyone know which week so that a road closed warning can be posted. Calendar Brook Road is also scheduled for repairs and will require a detour, which will also be posted. Legacy Lane off Kirby Road is breaking up bad, Dave will ask Norm Patoine to include a skim coat for this repair. Adrian Burrington is giving his notice, which will be effective by the end of the month. Jim has already posted the position; Dave will be out mid-September for medical reasons.

Jim Sullivan gave the Town Administrators report, July 10th brought another devastating storm and everyone stepped up to get the roads opened. Regarding last year's 07/10 storm, the cost was \$187,131, not including the repairs for Brook Road. \$140,348 is slated to be received from FEMA. The Mountain Road project has been reimbursed: total cost= \$159,888 with reimbursement of \$155,699, the cost to the town is (1%) \$ 4,189. There was a tree struck by lightning at the Burke Green Cemetery; Jim got permission from the landowner to clean this up. Jim received a call from a Brook Road resident who is concerned that there is a clogged culvert at

the access to her property. Dave is aware of the situation. Jim filed a permit to remove a tree from Calendar Brook by the bridge; ANR has granted permission.

Jim also filed for a permit to upsize a culvert on Burke Hollow Road, he expects the permit any day now.

The time limit for the ATV ordinance is now final. Signs are needed and will be posted in the roads that allow them. He will reach out to Ethan Hill (VASA) for the signage. Karen asked about publicity for this, Jim agrees that something should be made public, to specify just which roads are available. Joe commended Jim for the communications re: FEMA and the progress of grants.

Mike Harris gave the Zoning Administrator report: Permits and subdivision staying steady. Mike noted that wetlands and river corridors require permission from ANR before any permits can be issued. West Burke Park improvements are in place; there is a framework for the "pour in place" material but the installation has been delayed. Joe noted that there are new picnic tables too. Re: Town Garage- everything is moving along, the foundation is due for backfill and compression. Mike feels that all is on track for Morton Builders to get started in September. The first section will be the 3 bays for equipment etc. There is a lot of detail in this structure and probably will require 6-8 weeks to complete. Mike feels that everyone is doing excellent work, it is an amazing amount of work and is running true. Mike is in constant communication with the subcontractors and the job is being orchestrated with all parties aware of the consecutive timelines. There is wi-fi on site, that is password protected. The water well will be out to bid soon, and looking like within the month should be set up. There is a lot of material for Jake Simpson to process into gravel. Mark asked if Dave would like a denser grade, inch and a quarter would be preferred. This can be stockpiled at Simpsons' site. Bridge 26 - Brook Road; the board will get estimates from the contractors list. The Church – Library building in West Burke has been upgraded, there are new restrooms and heat pumps. Mike would like to have a grand opening, the building came out really nice and the goal is to open this up as a more public space. Joe asked about all the skis outback; they're for the ski swap, Mike will check. Mike is also working on estimates for a fuel tank for the town trucks. The best site is on the RT 5 side of the building. These will be 1000 gallon tanks. These and the propane tanks require permits.

New Business: Mark read a letter from Lynn Norris seeking an appointment to the Planning Commission. Jim noted that the PC was in favor of this appointment. Joe motioned, Jerry seconded, so moved.

Brian Pilcher, Gaskell Hill Road submitted a letter to be appointed an alternate to the NEK Broadband board. Jerry made a motion, Joe seconded so moved.

Discussion to move September Selectboard meeting to 09/08. Joe motioned, Jerry seconded so moved.

Cathi Feeley came before the board to present the new town tax rate: .7199 which is an increase of about 13 cents. The property prices are impacting the CLA. Jerry motioned to accept the municipal tax rate of .7199. Joe seconded. So moved.

Old Business: NA

Correspondence: Burke Sub Forest Committee: thanking the board and the road crew.

Mark asked for visitor comments: there are none.

Executive Session – Legal /Personnel matters: there are none.

Review & Sign: Take any action

Overweight permit
Cemetery lots
Payroll and Accounts payables

Joe motioned to adjourn the meeting, Jerry seconded, the meeting was closed at 7:31 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Desmarais-Minutes Clerk

DRAFT