

Town of Burke
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Regular Selectboard Meeting
Burke Community Building
June 1, 2026 - 5:00 PM

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

Guests: Esther Agnew, Geoff Boone, Jessica Carvalho, Nelson Charron, Andrea Day, Elise Lawson, Sheriff Brandon Thraillkill, George Wagner, Diane Wells

Linda Hackett-Corey: Town Clerk, Gail Weed: Assistant Town Clerk, Cathi Feeley: Town Treasurer

Dave Kaufman: Road Foreman

Mike Harris: Zoning Administrator

James Sullivan: Town Administrator

Valerie Desmarais: Minutes Clerk

Mark opened the meeting at 5:03 for the Public Hearing to adopt the Wastewater Ordinance. Mark asked for public comment on the ordinance; Mike gave a synopsis of the process; the discussion is only open for discussion to residents who will be on system.

Joe asked if people will be required to attach to the system; Mike noted that there are no expectations that residents will join the system; it is not a requirement. There will be 2 pressurized leach fields, with a main line and 2 spurs. The project is paid for via grants, and the fees are user based and for maintenance only. Joe clarified that residents can join at a later date, Mike noted that there will be a 2 year hiatus while baselines for usage are established. Mike reiterated that there is no cost to taxpayers. Jessica asked about the maintenance fees; there is a spreadsheet that goes out 20 years with incremental increases. There will be a separate fund set up to collect the fees, and which will be utilized to cover maintenance.

Dave asked to clarify the plan if a major repair is needed and there are insufficient funds, how will this be paid for? The users of the system will have a rate change to cover the repairs. Mike reiterated that taxpayers will not have to bail the system out.

Kevin Blais via Zoom asked about how to get on the system; he explained that he had specifics about where the holding tank would go; Mike explained that there is only one place for the tank to go that would not impact Mr. Blais's or his neighbor's water wells. Mike noted that if Andrea Day approved of the location, he would need to speak with her about the site. Mike also noted that there is opportunity to join the system in the future at his own expense. Mr. Blais asked about the total cost of the project which is estimated to be 4M. The ordinance does not compel the town to implement and install the facility. Jerry stated that to resolve the issue Andrea Day would need to make a site visit and clarify the options available to Mr. Blais.

Ms. Carvalho asked about billing; there is not going to be a new hire to complete administrative tasks related to the wastewater billing. George Wagner asked about delinquent payments; the selectboard is responsible for administration and management. A question arose re: the project timeline- this will be started this summer.

Joe made a motion to accept the ordinance as written, Jerry seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to close the Waste Water Ordinance hearing. Jerry motioned, Joe seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Mark opened the regular selectboard meeting at 5:26. He noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Mark asked for a motion to adopt the regular 05/04/26 selectboard meeting minutes
Joe motioned to accept as written, Jerry seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Brandon Thraikill, Caledonia County Sherrif, addressed the board with a 6 month update; he announced that the department is fulfilling all its obligations. The department is now fully staffed. The department has been extremely busy with community events and background checks / fingerprinting. The department has doubled the hours patrolled in Burke and almost doubled the incident count. Sheriff Thraikill would like to stay current with updates in addition to the information that is written for the town report. There are 17 individuals in the department; he would like to know what towns want of the department going forward. Depending on the needs and goals of the town, he would consider adding staff to accommodate the town's needs. He is working on building a patrol division to take care of the towns, this is a long-term goal and process. Valerie Desmarais asked about coverage for the "back roads"; the department does this and is aware of some of the problem areas in the town and neighboring communities. George Wagner asked about coverage during "off hours", this coverage is part of the building process for the department. Sheriff Thraikill noted that they are building staff to accommodate these kinds of coverage. Cathi asked about the stop sign at East Darling Hill; can this be monitored? Sherriff Thraikill noted that this is a known "hot spot" along with many other rolling stop areas in town.

Elise Lawson was scheduled to make a presentation on the Natural Resources Inventory, but she was not present.

Dave presented the highway report: the equipment is in good shape with the exception of the excavator which has a hydraulic leak. Mountain Road mulching will continue, Pike has reclaimed the downhill lane on Burke Hill and will begin paving this week. There will be many culverts changed out this month; closing the road while it is being worked on makes the project more efficient and safer for all. Dave asked the board about the Brook Road and Newland – Carter Road engineering plan schedule; Mike will check with Nate Sicard to see about a timeline. Dave also asked about paving grants; Jim will be checking back to see about this. Dave got trade -in value for the truck, it came in at 60k with ATG. They would want the plow and the wing for this money. Dave asked about the open position; there is a candidate that can only interview after regular business hours. Dave asked about keeping the ad posted and also post on the VT League of Towns & Municipalities website. Joe noted that the dirt roads around town are looking really good.

Brian Cussimano joined via zoom; he addressed the board regarding Victory Road and asked about paving the road further up from where the paving currently stops. Tamarack to Flower Brook Road is the area that he is asking about; Mark noted that there is a lot of paving to do on the paved roads. This would be a state grant and \$3 - 400,000 paving job. Jim noted that that stretch of road is no different than most other roads in town. Dave noted that better material would help the roads stay better longer. Jim asked about stay mat, Dave agrees that would be a wise investment and would like to apply across the dirt roads in town. Jim will look and see if there is any grant money for this. Jerry thanked Mr. Cussimano for bringing the issue to the attention of the town.

Elise Lawson presented to the board regarding the Natural Resources Inventory summary. On June 10th there will be a formal presentation at the Planning Commission meeting. She looked at a variety of natural resources

in the town, e.g. habitat types, wetlands, forest stands and geology. There is a lot of GIS data and that the data belongs to the town. The Conservation Commission and the Planning Commission would oversee “next steps” in town planning. Jim noted that the information is very helpful and there is a lot of value in the report as it relates to the Town Plan. The information can help the town make informed decisions and be in a proactive position; Mike noted that the data gives a broader context and is helpful to the DRB as well. Mike would like to include the summary for residents as part of their permit packet. Cathi asked about what types of animals were noted in the survey, beavers especially. Ms. Lawson noted that the report is just a snapshot in time; beaver populations fluctuate and that they seem to be at a high point in the cycle now. Cathi noted that there are baffles that can be implemented to mitigate their impacts on the environment (roads and infrastructure particularly).

Jim Sullivan gave the Town Administrators report: The flagpole was installed at the meeting house. The culvert at Hillside Cemetery was upsized and reset. Rick Hackett has replaced the fencing there. Jim is looking for input for the beaver problem at Pete’s Pond. If the water becomes unmanageable it will impact George Wagner’s pit. Jim is trying to be proactive; the board agrees that Jim should move forward with pursuing an intervention. Jim noted that he applied for the ADA Access Grant to improve the entrance to the Town Clerks Office. The doors need to be widened, he is still looking at what the costs might be for this. The lawn mowers have been sold, with the exception of the 2021 and Jim is wondering if the cost should be adjusted. Jerry noted that 3500 is a fair price. There was a FEMA inspection in May; this entailed sample work from various projects from the 2024 storms. There was also a questionnaire; at the recommendation of FEMA, Jim is working on the verbiage for the policies currently in place. Jim has 45 days to make the edits; he will bring back to the selectboard for approval before submitting. Speeding on Brook Road and Bugbee Crossing is an ongoing issue; Jim is fielding more calls for these roads. He is working with the Sheriff to increase visibility for these roads. Mark asked about the signage for the posted speed at Burke Green; there is a discrepancy between the ordinances and the actual signage and this needs to be addressed.

Mike Harris gave the Zoning Administrators report: he welcomed Andrea Day to the meeting. She noted that there are a few permits that need to be obtained for the wastewater facility. Mark noted that there were questions about set backs from wells, Ms. Day replied that is generally 50’ but a variance can be issued (this comes from the state) closer pipes get an extra sleeve. Jim asked about Mr. Blais concerns; Ms. Day stated that there are still issues that Mr. Blais needs to address.

Mike noted that he is very busy with permits and general questions. The Bailey property will go to auction soon. The Town Garage is on schedule for all the systems construction and installation; the building is insulated and the completion date may be the end of June. Mike would like to have an Open House at some point in July. General site work is being completed; then the aprons and walkways will be paved. The Sand and Salt shed bid opening rec’d no bids. The requirements of the grant and the bonding are complicated; Mike has reached out to 3 companies for quotes for the building and also for site work (grade work and paving). Mike is hoping to have those numbers to submit to the board by the end of this week. Mike also wondered about a section of sidewalk in East Burke; he has a quote from Gray’s Paving. Jerry asked about Pike; this would be a very small job for them. Jerry motioned to accept the bid from Gray’s, Joe seconded this. The board is in agreement that this needs to be taken care of, so moved. Jerry asked if we are on budget with the town garage, Mike noted that we are.

Cathi Feely presented to the board re: the Kingdom East School Budget situation. There is another vote on June 11; with no school budget approved the tax bills cannot be generated. There may need to be two tax billings; an interim and a supplemental bill. This is very problematic and can cost the town more to administrate

the billing. The late billing would shorten the window between citizens receiving their bill and the deadline for payment. The next vote would be in August and coincide with the general election and tax billing for the town. Joe asked how many votes were cast; in March we had 279, in April 206.

Correspondence: Cameron Duda looking for the boards response regarding the boards stance re: Act 181. This is tabled again as the board has not discussed a position on this.

Review and sign LEMP (Local Emergency Management Plan). There are no changes from last years plan. Joe motioned to sign the plan, Jerry seconded, so moved.

Review and sign Public Records Request policy: Cathi noted that the request process has been streamlined and a fee schedule has been attached to the policy. Mark asked for a motion to approve as written; Jerry motioned, Joe seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Mark asked for Visitors / Public comment on above agenda items only: George Wagner asked for clarification for the Sand / Salt Shed grant; Mike explained that there was a federal grant awarded for 300k. There is a long list of requirements involved in meeting the conditions of the grant. The amount and type of the requirements are adding to the complexity of the specifications. There was also a concern that this added to the potential cost of the structure. There is also the bond to consider. Consequently, Mike has pivoted to working through other vendors to get pricing and consider other options. Clearspan, Iron Horse and Greg Lussier are vendors for this type of building and will be getting pricing to Mike. Joe asked about Stantec, Mike explained that this was for the project manager. Not being able to get a bid is the root of the issue forcing Mike to consider these other options. We can be in compliance; any modifications will be approved for the correct specifications. Jessica asked for clarification of the original estimations – this was in the 600K range 4 years ago.

Mark asked for a motion to go into executive session; Jerry made a motion to suspend the regular meeting at 7:15, Joe seconded, so moved. Jerry motioned to enter executive session for a personnel matter. Joe seconded, so moved.

Jerry motioned to end the executive session at 7:28 PM. Joe seconded, so moved.

Jerry motioned to reconvene the regular selectboard meeting at 7:29. Joe seconded, so moved. Mark noted that no action was taken.

With no other business before the board, Jerry motioned to adjourn the regular selectboard meeting, Joe seconded, so moved. The regular selectboard meeting was adjourned at 7:32.

Review and sign Stifel Nicolaus Trust Account
Review and Sign Payroll & Accounts Payables Warrant
Sign Road Access Permits
Sign Cemetery Lot
Sign Overweight Permits
Budget Matters – no action taken

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie Desmarais, Minutes Clerk