

Town of Burke
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Regular Selectboard Meeting
Burke Community Building
March 2, 2026 - 5:00 PM

Present: Joe Allard, Jerry Booth, Mark Daigle: Selectboard
Guests: Paul Hayes (Caledonian Record) via zoom.
Georgia Gould, Robert Gould, Ford Hubbard, Nancy Hubbard
Linda Hackett-Corey: Town Clerk
Gail Weed: Assistant Town Clerk
Cathi Feeley: Town Treasurer
Mike Harris: Zoning Administrator
James Sullivan: Town Administrator
Dave Kaufman: Road Commissioner
Valerie Desmarais: Minutes Clerk

Mark opened the meeting at 5:08 and announced that the meeting is being recorded and is available via zoom. Mark announced an agenda amendment: Georgia Gould came before the board to report that the sidewalks in East Burke need better snow removal. Mark noted that this issue is in the process of being addressed.

Mark asked for a motion to approve the regular selectboard meeting minutes: 02/02/26. Jerry motioned, Joe second, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to approve the 02/20/26 selectboard special meeting minutes: Joe motioned to approve, Jerry second, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to approve the 02/26/26 selectboard special meeting minutes: Jerry motioned, Joe second, so moved.

Dave Kaufman gave the Road Foreman report: All equipment is up to date with maintenance; the crew has been busy pushing snowbanks back. Dave is getting estimates for the backhoe repair. Dave has reached out to East Haven and their backhoe can be "on call" as back up. The wheeled excavator is very heavy to run over the back roads in the interim. Jerry questioned and Dave agrees that the backhoe may not warrant a large expense for repairs. The crew is down 2. Landon is out; Dave Frizzell (retired East Haven Road Foreman) is on board to work as necessary. Dale Hackett will also be available. Dave K. is concerned that the sudden thaw that is forecast for the end of the week is going to create a mess; if there is standing water anywhere Dave would like a call, a frozen culvert now could be very problematic. Dave will be off 03/21-31 for vacation. Dave mentioned that checking with the high schools may be a chance to recruit for personnel.

James Sullivan gave the Town Administrators report: Jim feels that there is still potential for getting funding for the July 10, 2025, storm flood damage. Jim is working with Logan Perron (V-Trans) to make sure the numbers are precise and if any money comes in, that Burke is in line for it. There were 17 applications for the road crew job opening; most applicants lack the necessary CDL qualifications. The ad will run in the Caledonian Record until the position is filled.

The Planning Commission was prepared to "hand off" the new town plan to the Selectboard; at the most recent planning commission meeting, the NVDA recommended that new mapping and related data be included in the new draft plan, adding a timeline of about 2 months. Jim notes that the town plan is a complex document; a strong plan is necessary and valuable. Jim also notes that we are well positioned for grants and funding going into summer and the construction season. The board and Dave agree that more work needs to be done at the culvert on Marshall Newland Road - once the snow melts an engineer can assess the situation and make the necessary recommendations.

Mike Harris gave the Zoning Administrator's report: Attorney Brice Simons has been appointed executor for the Bailey property. At this point the town is the most significant lien holder, the debt is more than the property is worth. Mike has spoken with Peter Koopman and Andy Bean, they are aware of the deadline for the end of the month to comply with town ordinances. Mike is continuing to work through the issues at the Williamson property. These buildings are increasingly unsafe; Joe will follow up with a letter outlining health concerns for the residents there. Mike presented a document: "Tax incentives for Housing Growth" with the stated goal of creating long term rental options. Mike would like to set up some kind of framework for accessory dwelling units for long-term rentals, and a potential to have more units on suitable properties. He is considering what tax incentives might look like for these types of living situations. There is a huge income disparity between the two towns; he is thinking about how to make both towns more livable via long-term rentals. The legislature is also working on this; Mike is asking the board to consider what issues - pros and cons - they can foresee relative to this concept. The state is working on definitions and quantifying data. Any tax reductions need to be seriously considered due to how education is funded. Mark noted that blighted properties are considered under this proposal from Craig Bolio, VT Commissioner of Taxes. Long term rental is a 6-month lease. Mike notes that there are some properties that can handle more than (1) ADU. Town garage update: the project is moving along and the longer days and warmer weather will allow for increasing gains in the construction process. The sand / salt shed bid should go out soon. The wastewater project is also maintaining its construction timeline.

New Business: Zoe Gascon submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning Commission. Jim noted that the Town Plan is an increasingly complex document; citizen volunteer boards are challenged to interpret the shifting landscape of state requirements and compliance for town planning. The planning commission will be moving forward to filling the empty seats on this board.

Cathie Wheeler: Submitted a letter of resignation from the Conservation Committee after 19 years of service.

Correspondence: Letter of Interest from Guy Herman re: interest in an appointment to the Planning Commission. Cathi Feeley noted that Mr. Herman is also running for the school board as a write-in. Mark suggested that Mr. Herman come before the board at the next meeting. Jim will set this up.

Old Business: there is none.

Visitor comments on the above agenda items: there are none.

Mark asked for a motion to adjourn, Jerry motioned, Joe seconded, so moved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:57.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Desmarais

Minutes Clerk