

Town of Burke
212 School Street
West Burke, VT 05871
802-467-3717
Email:burke@burkevermont.org
Regular Selectboard Meeting
Burke Community Building
May 4, 2026 - 5:00 PM

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

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 Foreman

Valerie Desmarais: Minutes Clerk

Guests: Geoff Boone, Robert Gerrish, VT State Representative John Kascenska, Norman Patenaude, Diane Wells.

Mark opened the meeting at 5:00 and announced that the meeting is available via zoom and is being recorded.

Mark asked for any agenda amendments; Robert Gerrish introduced himself as running for Sheriff and is happy to answer any questions after the regular meeting.

Mark asked for a motion to approve April 6, 2026, regular selectboard meeting minutes. Joe motioned to approve, Jerry seconded, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to approve April 8, 2026, special meeting minutes: Jerry motioned to approve as written, Joe seconded, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to approve April 20, 2026, special meeting minutes, Joe motioned, Jerry seconded, so moved.

Mark asked for a motion to approve the April 22, 2026, special meeting minutes; Jerry motioned to approve the minutes, Joe seconded, so moved.

Dave Kaufman presented the highway report: Re: Pike's contract for Burke Hill, Mike added that Pike would like to combine their work in Sutton with this project. With oil pricing continuing to rise, it would be best to get the project finalized. Norm Patenaude presented the plan: reclaim the section opposite from the 2025 flood repair, then overlay to the town line. The grinds would be added back in as a subbase; there may be a need for more gravel. There would be surfacing of 1.5" hot top from the RR tracks to the top of the hill on both sides. All agree that there is a lot of traffic and some very heavy traffic too. They are aiming for a May or early June timeline. Jerry wondered about notifying the Simpson Farm about the work and hopes that they can avoid the road until this new coating settles. Mark asked for a motion to approve the project, Joe motioned and Jerry seconded, so moved. There is \$350k in the town highway budget, the project is \$154,161. Dave resumed his report: the crew is grading weather permitting, the NEK broadband cable was laid on Darling Hill. The road crew has been out on Mountain Road and the work they are doing is going to help with winter maintenance. It

is slow going due to the density of the roadside vegetation. There is a danger tree on Burke Hollow Road resulting from woodpecker damage; Dave thinks it should be taken down. There are a lot of lines near the tree, Dave will call Neil Lefebvre to remove. The crew attended MSAH training last week. There is a pile of tires at the shop from Green Up day, Jim is working on getting the rest of the green bags and roadside rubbish picked up. There is a truck cap at Bugbee Crossing that Dave will grab and bring to the shop. K&M picks up the tires and charges the town by tire size. The new 10-wheeler will be more expensive if we get the 2028 model, due to EPA standards. It is 25K more. Dave is thinking of ordering the chassis now and delaying the build as long as possible. The warranty would be re-written at that point of the final purchase. The chassis is 170-80K with a 7-year warranty. The current truck has been in service for 18 years. Mike noted that due to the length of the build-out (2 years for the body) by the time that truck is received we will need to order another one. The timeline is more towards the end of this year. Dave feels we do not want a "first year" emission system; it's better to give the manufacturer time to work out any issues. There was some discussion about where to purchase; Joe noted that we need to get quotes; Dave has 2 in hand: Charlebois (Milton – Colchester) and ATG (Advantage Truck Group), in Lancaster, NH. Joe asked Dave to get info on the value of the trade-in along with the updated quotes. Service is important; travelling to Colchester and back can take the whole day. Jerry motioned that we pursue placing an order for a truck and body, Joe seconded, so moved. ATG will be straightening the frame on the 2020 Western Star. Insurance will cover 8k; the truck will be gone for about 2 weeks. Joe noted that Carter Road is the best he has ever seen; the crown work is very good. Dave agreed that Staymat gravel does the best job. Jerry got compliments on Dave Frizzels' work; he has been running the grader and is open to staying on "as needed". The roads are dusty, we have already used 10,000 gallons of chloride. Mark noted that we need to make time to review the road crew applicants. All 5 have their CDL; there is consensus that the full board, along with Jim and Dave, need to be present. Jim will coordinate these efforts.

There was correspondence from Gloria Deth re: her decorative tree stump; it was an aged tree stump that had a carving on it. Dave thinks he may have knocked this over pushing snowbanks back last winter. The base is what would need to be repaired, Jim will ask Gloria what she would like to have done. There is a letter from Elaine Bandy (school bus driver) asking for mirrors for intersections at Burke Hollow, Brook Road and Bugbee Crossing. All agree that is a tough intersection; Greg St. Onge owns the property where the mirror would have the best effect. Ms. Bandy will need to gather more info. The request is tabled until next month.

Jim gave the Town Administrator's report: the bids have been awarded for mowing and cemetery maintenance. Rick Hackett took the fence down at Hillside; there is a lot of water running there. Before the fencing is replaced there should be a new culvert and some ditching. Mike noted that there is a large culvert on the east side of the drive that will also require an upgrade. Jim noted that the beavers in Pete's Pond are causing havoc; Jim will reach out to the wetland's conservation commission (long term solution). A small excavator can reach the dam via Jeff Lyons property. A heavy storm could cause some real problems there. The front door to the Town Office needs rehab to meet ADA requirements. Jim is exploring a grant for this, including the ramp into the office. By re-engineering the sidewalk area, the project can be made more affordable and more aesthetically pleasing. The board agrees that Jim should pursue this. Cathi asked about making the access via the Community Center room, which will help with voting and general accessibility. Jim

will get more info on both scenarios. Jim got market pricing for the mowing machines; the zero turn at \$4,500 is a fair price, and the John Deere riding mower for 4k. They have been well maintained and this pricing is competitive. The JD 350 tractor is valued at about 1k, the 2022 380 could be kept for maintenance at the garage. Dave indicated the zero turn would be a better machine for the garage. The board agrees that we keep the zero turn and sell the riding mowers. Jim will take care of the sales and marketing of the mowers. There were legal depositions last week, and there is a pre-mediation meeting on 05/05/26 regarding the Wanstall case. Jerry asked if Jim could share any details; the challenge is related to the waiver that the rider signed. The town is going to go through the process. There is more funding from FEMA (20k +/-) coming through, there is also reimbursement for Jim's time, to include managing the paperwork for the FEMA process. The Planning Commission met with Guy Herman and Nick Russo, the PC approved both candidates; Jerry motioned that both individuals be accepted. Joe seconded, so moved.

Mike Harris gave the Zoning Administrator's report: building and subdivision and rental applications are very active with inquiry and applications. Update to Town Garage construction timelines: VT Mechanical should be done with the major equipment and duct work (05 /20) the plumbing and electrical are on schedule. The pit lift is installed. The other finishing touches are all on schedule for the 06/01/26 timeline. The well was drilled and at 125 GPM will require an overflow pipe. With that rate there is a possibility of developing a small municipal water system. Morton Buildings work is nearing completion as well. There will be an advertisement re: the West Burke wastewater system. There will be a bid opening for this by May 30th; these will be examined for full compliance. There are nuances to the TAP grant that may drive up costs. The standards are very stringent. Jerry asked to clarify; Mike notes that we can work through a bid process and not accept the grant. Mike shared the natural resources assessment from Elise Lawson with the board; she will be at the next meeting to discuss. Re: Act 181, Mike has a letter prepared; he described the hierarchy and flow of communication and brought attention to areas for improvement, including additional permit experts to assist people in the process of developing their plans. Act 250 provides a good framework for exploring property development issues and land use regulations.

Hannah Burrill would like to present to the board re: Act 181. Jerry noted that many towns have taken a stance against the new laws. Mark asked Cathi what Hannah Burrill is looking for; Mike's letter can be forwarded to her and see if that suffices. Vermont State Representative John Kascensaka spoke to the board; there is a proposal to "roll back" some of the provisions. Act 250 is not going away; local DRB's will still be involved in the review process. The Tier 2 "Road Rule" and Tier 3 environmental sensitivities issues are being examined. Many municipalities had no information on this legislation and the process being considered by the legislature. Representative Kascensaka also addressed the state budget and the state's possible financial support for towns denied FEMA for flood damage. The Board feels that our town zoning and regulations are sufficient to provide the environmental protections necessary to comply via Act 250 and developmental regulations.

Re: Recycle trailer: is it for sale? Cathi asked about what the value is according to the insurance policy. The board will look at the trailer and come up with a price. This is tabled until then and will be on next month's agenda.

Public comment on the above agenda – there is none.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:59.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Desmarais, Minutes Clerk

DRAFT