

Town of Burke
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Regular Selectboard Meeting
Burke Community Building
October 5, 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, Dave Kaufman: Road Foreman Jim Sullivan: Town Administrator

Valerie Desmarais: Minutes Clerk

Guests: Clark Atwell, Andrea Day, Diane Wells,

Mark called the meeting to order at 5:01 and asked for any agenda amendments; Joe asked for an update on expenses for the town garage. Joe also asked about meeting structure to address agenda items as they are listed as opposed to adding comments at the end of the meeting.

Mark asked for a motion to open the public hearing on named highways at 5:03, Joe motioned, Jerry seconded so moved.

Clark Atwell and Andrea Day addressed the board to describe the structure of the meeting which will be as a hearing.

Andrea introduced herself and gave a brief biography and listed her experiences re: the adoption of town highways. Ms. Day addressed the historical nature of the records that have referred to these roads as public highways going back many years, a map from 1875 was reviewed; the named streets were identified as public highways. The width of the public roads was discussed; it was noted that in general, there are no obstructions to the rights-of-way. Jerry asked whether there was any feedback from homeowners; there was one resident who had questions. The roads have been regarded as 3-rods wide. There are narrower roads; High St., Bridge St., and Post Office Road are identified as less than 3 rods. Mike also noted that Depot St. has a dwelling that does not have the 3-rod clearance. Mr. Atwell suggested that that house be considered an exemption and this exception will be added to the findings.

Mark asked for any other commentary: there is none.

Jerry made a motion to accept the data as presented by Attorney Atwell and Andrea Day, Joe seconded. So moved.

There is no one on Zoom.

Joe motioned to close the Public Hearing at 5:26 P.M. Jerry seconded.

Open regular Selectboard meeting at 5:26 P.M.

Jerry motioned to accept the 09/14/26 selectboard meeting minutes as written, Joe seconded, so moved.

Joe motioned to accept the 09/23/36 special meeting minutes as written, Jerry seconded, so moved.

Diane Wells of the Burke Conservation Board came before the board to report that Elise Lawson is resigning from the conservation commission but will be available to assist occasionally as necessary. Diane noted that there are 6 current members, but they can have up to 9. The Passumpsic Watershed speaker series commences 10/07/26 at 6-7:30 in the Community Building. This will be addressing the East Branch of the Passumpsic, and the history of the dam there as well as other topics of interest. They also will meet Wednesday October 14, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. and October 21, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. at the Community Building

Dave Kaufman gave the road report; Brook Road culvert installation and roadside ditching is almost complete; there are 2 more culverts to add. The excavator had electrical issues but has been repaired and is up and running. Leaf blowing is being done. Pike was able to get some small jobs done in town today, but the rain halted them. Weather permitting Pike will complete the last of their paving projects over the remainder of the week. The 10-wheeler has also been repaired. The crew is gradually moving to the new town garage; Joe asked if the crew needs help, Dave said it's going along. There is still some tidying up to do at the old site. Brook Road will be closed from Carter Road junction to the Newark town line to get the culverts in. Jerry wondered if there should be a notice to alert residents to the Mountain Road paving. Since the weather is such a variable Jim noted that it makes better sense to do this as close to the actual work as possible.

Jim Sullivan gave the Town Administrators report: Brook Road stabilization is slated for spring 2027. There is a FEMA estimate for the work; there will need to be an RFP to augment the town crew with local contractors with suitable equipment. The scope of the project is very large; it has had some revisions, and we now need a valid cost estimate. Jerry noted that the lag time between asking for the RFP's and actual work commencement will make it tough for the contractors to cost out and plan around. Valerie asked about closing the road, this seems like the plan. The Mountain Road paving grant dollar amount was raised and the project will be starting soon as per Dave's report. The road will be paved from 114 all the way to Mid Burke.

Jim met with Georgia Gould at Kingdom Trails to address concerns shared by some re: bikes stopping on the road and crossing the road without stopping. Georgia plans to add signage and more messaging about improving safety.

Jim gave an update on the employment opportunity for the road crew; he is utilizing many avenues to get more applicants. Jim also noted that there should be some conversation re: a succession plan for his role. There are some projects that will be tough to transition. Jim reiterated his commitment to the town and will do what he can to facilitate. Joe noted that Jim has done an incredible job.

Mike Harris gave the Zoning Administrators report: Permits and subdivisions stay busy, there is increasing activity on the rental applications since the notice went out with the tax bills. The town now owns the former Bailey property; Mike would like to have some conversations about plans for that property. The dry hydrant in East Burke is ready to be installed, Mark clarified that the water can be accessed, which it can. Town Garage paving will be completed this week. Salt & sand building is scheduled for next week. Once the lighting is installed Mike would like to get the blocks for that shed coated. The cold storage area is scheduled for completion at the end of the month.

The next project will be the wastewater system, scheduled for 04/27 and completed by September 2027. Mike would like to explore adding some trees to the site on the downslope side.

Mike noted that the garage project is at about 4M. The loan will be in the 2.5M area. Mike has all the expenses and they can be reviewed at any time.

Mark asked for public comments: Cathi gave an update on the legal situation with Kevin Blais; he is appealing the public records decision to the Supreme Court; he is also appealing the court's decision to consolidate (2) open meeting law violations assertions, he is requesting that these remain as (2) separate cases. This legal activity costs \$33,844.95 for this individual alone; the town budget is 25k.

Cathi noted that voter ballots have been mailed.

Jerry motioned to adjourn at 6:09. Joe seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Desmarais