

## **Select Board Meeting Minutes**

### **Monday, July 7, 2025**

Select Board Attendees: Harry, Nancy, Nate

Attendees: 16

Attendees Via Zoom: 1

Meeting called to order at 6pm by Board Chair, Harry

**Add to agenda:** Clerk Gary asked to add the Bike/Ped Scoping Study grant application to the agenda; Mary asked to add an Update on the Welcome Packet; Nate motioned to accept the amended agenda; Nancy seconded. Passed unanimously.

**Approve to Minutes:** Nancy motioned to accept the June meeting notes; Nate seconded. Minutes unanimously approved.

**2157 River Road Property Sale Bid Opening:** The sealed bids for the property at 2157 River Road we opened. The following bids were received:

Bid: \$2,513.66

Bid: \$2,600.00

Bid: \$6,969.00

Bid: \$3,500.00

Bid: \$3,000.00

Bid: \$20,051.00

Board Member Nate made a motion to accept the first bid received. A resident expressed concern over not accepting the highest bid. Residents asked what happened if the accepted bid was more than the former property owned. Any money above the delinquent tax balance would be returned to the property owner. Concern was raised that if we accept a higher amount than was owed, that it could encourage people to not pay their property taxes. Nate withdrew his motion. Board Member Nancy motioned that the Board enter Executive Session, which they did. The Board returned from Executive Session at 6:24 pm. Board Chair Harry announced that the bid acceptance would be tabled until the August Select Board meeting as the Board wants to reach out to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns for guidance.

**Delinquent Tax Property Sale:** The Town hopes to have 5 properties advertised for tax sale sometime in the next 2 months.

**NVDA Board Liaison:** Northeast Vermont Development Association (NVDA) is looking for a representative from Essex County to join their Advisory Board. RTT Chairperson, Kate Baxter volunteered to be the representative. Nancy motioned to appoint Kate as an interim representative. Nate seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Road Foreman Gregg offered serve as back up for Kate. The Board asked that we post on website looking for candidates interested. Clerk Gary will get a posting up soon.

**RTT Accessibility Trail Assessment Briefing:** RTT Task Force Chair Kate updated attendees on the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with the XYZ trail associate. RTT had submitted an application to have an accessible study done. Wanted to have it done quickly (\$3,000 value) so information could be available at Hello Summer. There would be three phases....1 = . 2 = . 3 = bridge over existing waterway and lollipop loop. These would follow ADA guidelines. Kate shared what the various construction activities would be to complete the 3 phases. Kate's question: ask permission to have the Town be the sponsor to pursue grants for phase 1. Nate motioned to approve Task Force to go after grant funding in favor of the town. Nancy seconded. Gary asked that an asterisk be added that the Select Board must approve each grant application. Passed

Lister Linda reported that she had recently walked the Dells in Littleton and hopes we end up with something like that area in Town. Harry added that a lot of the information about trails and accessibility was available at Hello Summer and thanked the planning committee for their efforts.

**Volunteer Day:** Clerk Gary reminded people that the Lunenburg bandstand is the chosen Community Volunteer Day project for 2025. Please contact Chris Lingley if interested in being involved in the project.

**Covered Bridge Week:** Clerk Gary reminded attendees that Vermont Covered Bridge Week is Saturday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> – August 10<sup>th</sup>. On Monday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, from 3-6pm, Nate's Maple Syrup of Lunenburg will be set up at the Mt. Orne Covered Bridge as part of Maple Monday. Gary also announced that red, white and blue banners will be hung on both sides of the bridge during Covered Bridge Week. XYZ volunteered and was appointed to be the Mt. Orne Covered Bridge watcher. Gary will connect XYZ with the Vermont Covered Bridge Society.

**Planning Committee:** Seeking members. Current members are Board Member Nate, Tina, Clerk Gary Gary. Contact Tina if interested. The Planning Committee hopes to do several things this year include Fire Districts assistance; Board Member Nancy nominated Liz Benoit. Road Guy Gregg nominated Nancy and Harry. Monica seconded for all three nominations. All nominations passed unanimously.

**Scoping Study:** The Planning Committee asked the Select Board to support submitting an application to AOT's Bike/Pedestrian grant funding to cover the cost of a scoping study for the network of sidewalks, crosswalks and catch basins in Lunenburg and Gilman. A draft letter of support was shared with the board. The application would be for the full \$60k grant. If funded, AOT would give the Town \$48k and \$12k would be the required match from the Town. The grant timeline is such that the match could be added to the 2026 budget as a line item for voters to approve. Nate made a motion to support the application. Nancy seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously, and the Board signed the letter of support to be including with the application.

**Welcome Packet:** Mary gave an update on the working status of the Welcome Packet for new residents. The original committee was Steve Stinehour, Mary Yackley, Chris Lingley and Debbie Thomas. Steve stepped down due to time constraints and Mary and Chris are currently the active members. The committee has drafted a listing of documents to be included in the packet. The idea would be that 2 people from committee would approach new residents, give them a packet, along with a sampling of maple syrup from one of the community's sugarers. The committee hopes to have Lunenburg Elementary School children involved in artwork for the cover and to have them involved in collating materials. Clerk Gary would alert the committee of new residents who move into town (via property transfers). The Committee has also chatted with a few new residents to get ideas. The Committee also thought it would be a good idea to have a Select Board member conduct a Lunenburg 101 event each month at a central location. This event would provide general information on life in Lunenburg. The Committee also suggest that a tab be added to the Town website for new residents. The packet will include a dedicated email for new residents as well. There was discussion about a welcome letter from the Select Board. Board member Nancy felt the welcome letter should come from the committee since it was their work that developed the packet. It was also suggested that there could be 2 welcome letters: one from the Board and one from the Committee.

**State Representative John Kazenska:** Rep Kazenska attended the meeting and provide an update on the recent Legislative session, which has adjourned. John serves on the Appropriations Committee. The Committee has met with many state agencies to get a better read on the effect of Federal cuts on funding. He reported several instances where the Federal Government put pauses for review on Federal funding to the Stat, but those have all be lifted. Every year in July there is a joint meeting with the Governor, Senate appropriations and House appropriations committee to review where the State is at mid-year in terms of funding. A lot of funding the legislature supports are multiple year projects in terms of funding. John reported that the State budget did pass at \$9 billion and the new Education Reform Bill passed. It will take 3 years for the reform to move through full executive. A Task force is assembling to look at District boundaries. John reported that the new bill calls for more than 5 districts. John was also asked if the Lunenburg Elementary school would close under the new bill and the answer was "no". Clerk Gary reported that the school district tax rate went down slightly from 2024.

### **Highway**

Gregg asked if there were any complaints about roads at this time and reminded people that the Town didn't have to close roads this year. A resident shared that he experienced 2 flat tires because of large stones. Gregg reported that they had to stop putting down material to cover the larger stones because the gravel pit plant shut down. He assured that more material is coming. The paving on River Road costs \$225k to do a mile with grinding and paving. The Town did receive an AOT highway grant in the amount of \$144k to help pay for this year's paving. New paved road is awesome.

Austin Construction started the Church Street project today. It should be completed by Thursday. Monahan Road has been repaired...just needs some additional materials.

Gregg noted that a grant for knotweed treatment is unlikely to be funded as the State is out of money for this type of projects. Gregg is going to speak with the company that Lancaster uses to treat knotweed to see the cost of treatment.

Gregg reiterated that Fire District #2 has done digging in roadways without repairing after work is completed. Gregg asked the Board to confirm in a letter to the district that expenses to repair these areas should not fall on the Town. Gregg requested a meeting with FD #2.

Gregg reported that we have 2 trucks down...the orange one has hose issues, and the blue truck has radiator fan issues. Gregg reported that he would be meeting with Planning Committee Chair Tina and Clerk Gary to discuss equipment replacement so this information can be included in the new capital improvement plan.

Gregg requested a budget committee meeting at the end of the June. Clerk Gary reported that he's working on spreadsheet that compares budget to actual expenses from 1/1/25 – 6/30/25 and will be distribute it shortly so budget committee members will have 2 weeks to review.

**Other Concerns:** Attendees were reminded that mail carrier Shelly must request her vacation time well in advance and it's important to realize it's not her fault if mail isn't delivered while she is on vacation. It was recommended that the Select Board send a letter to the Lancaster Postmaster to register concerns. One resident reported he's had difficulty in applying for a job on the Post Office's website.

**NEK Broadband Board:** We need a representative from Lunenburg to join the board. Duties are to attend monthly meetings and report any issues back to the Town. All meetings are available via Zoom except the annual meeting. It was suggested Monica might like to join this board.

**NEK Waste Management Board:** We also need a member to represent Lunenburg on this Board. Board member Harry is doing it temporarily. Pastor Brian indicated he might be interested, and Clerk Gary said he'd do an email introduction to an NEK Waste Management contact.

Residents register concerns that the Town no longer gets updates from the Transfer Station. Questions were also asked as to why the Transfer Station accepted cash as a form of payment. The Board explained that they have considered a non-cash operation at the Transfer Station. It was explained that internet service is not available at the Transfer Station. Clerk Gary ask attendees what they thought residents' reaction would be to transitioning to a coupon payment system where the only place coupon books could be purchased would be at the Town Clerk's Office and coupons would be the only form of payment at the Transfer Station. Attendees felt this would be acceptable if transitioned over a period.

The Board is considering to going to a container rental system, rather than owning instead them. Clerk Gary reported that a banner should be installed next week that lists the cost of everything deposited at the Transfer Station.

It was announced that Auditor Luke would be hosting a composting tutorial on July 12<sup>th</sup> from 9am -5pm at 1463 Bobbin Mill.

Nate motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm. Nancy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.