

Select Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 4, 2025, 6pm

Board Members in Attendance: Harry and Nancy
Attendance: 10
Via Zoom: 1

There were no items to add to the agenda

Nancy Motioned to accept the July Board meeting notes. Harry second the motion and it passed unanimously.

Town-Owned Property Sale – 2157 River Road: Harry explained that the advertisement for the sale noted that the highest bid would be accepted. Harry made a motion that the property be sold to the highest bidder. Nancy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (side note: the property was sold to Mark Fontaine who submitted the high bid of \$20,150)

Volunteer Day Project Update: Those organizing the painting of the bandstand on the Common will have an update within the next month.

Ampersand Solar Project: Clerk Gary gave a summary of the expected proposal to be submitted by Ampersand Energy to the Vermont Public Utility Commission for a solar field on the mill property. Ampersand indicated they would be submitting their proposal on July 25th. Tina has been monitoring the Vermont Public Utility Commission's website and has not seen an announcement that the project has been submitted. Once submitted, the community will have 45 days to provide community input. Ampersand has expressed interest in assisting with a community meeting. Gregg expressed concern over how the project will affect what's located underneath the mill site property. (Water and sewer lines, etc.). Concern was also expressed over how the project would affect the landscape of Gilman. Attendees asked what the benefits to the Town would be and it was explained that solar projects provide no additional tax revenues to the Town. Luke asked if we could locate the original LURA (Land Use Regulatory Agreement) for the existing Ampersand solar field. Gary will investigate.

Knotweed: Gary explained that the Board needed to declare the treatment of knotweed as an emergency so budget money could be moved from one line item to another, allowing the Town to hire the same firm used by Lancaster to treat knotweed. It was noted that knotweed has become a significant nuisance in the community and at least one landowner has asked the Town to address knotweed located on Town-owned property that is encroaching on their land. Other areas of significant treatment need are River Road, South Lunenburg Road, the entrance to the Transfer Station and the town-owned property behind the Town Office building. The Town needs to come up with a priority list of knotweed locations to be treated and Gregg noted that he would like to compile this list and be the point of contact for the company doing the treatment. Gary noted that he expects the Attorney budget line item to come in well under budget for 2025 and that money could be moved from that line item to cover the cost of

knotweed treatment. The cost of treatment is \$2,075/day and we expect 2 days treatment would address a great many of the areas in need. Lancaster has used a company out of Massachusetts who has had success with knotweed treatment. The company has 3 days of treatment planned for Lancaster in September and it is likely that Lunenburg can piggyback on that schedule. Nancy motioned that the Town declare a knotweed emergency and authorize up to \$5,000 to be moved from the Attorney expense line item to cover this expense. Harry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Attendees asked if landowners needed to be notified or had the option to opt out of treatment. There are no requirements to notify landowners, but the Town will post information on the website once treatment has been scheduled. It was also noted that successful treatment is a 3–5-year process and we will look to include money in the 2026 budget for this work.

Mural Instillation: Gary encouraged everyone to visit the Transfer Station on Wednesday to see the Greetings from Lunenburg mural. Those who have seen it gave rave reviews. The mural is 80% complete. 8 volunteers are needed on Wednesday, August 6th from 1-4pm to complete the project.

Municipal Property Tax Rate: Gary noted that Linda had provided the municipal tax rate for 2025 and he, as Treasurer, concurred that the 2025 rate will be .727. Gary shared a couple examples of what this rate will mean for homestead and non-homestead property tax bills. Nancy motioned that we accept the 2025 municipal tax rate of .727. Harry seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Animal Control Officer: It was announced that Jeff Champine has resigned as Animal Control Officer and we're looking for someone to fill the position. Gary noted that the position pays \$166/month

Outdoor Rec, Trails and Tourism: Kate provided updates on the rail corridor. VRS has been actively clearing brush in S. Lunenburg and Gilman on the rail lines. Kate reported that she reached out to the President of VRS and they had a phone conversation. The President has stated that he will keep a line of communication open as the project progresses. Kate reported that VRS confirmed that their long-term goal is to open rail lines all the way to St. Johnsbury. VRS states that the goal is to keep the tracks running and not to use them to store cars. The railway owns a right of way of 33 feet from center of tracks on each side but will be focusing on the area that is 15 feet from center. It was noted that Property owners who have used the rail tracks to expand their property should remove all items from the rail right of way. RTT is working with VRS to have a grade crossing installed on the property in South Lunenburg so trails can be accessed beyond the railway right of way.

NEK Chamber of Commerce: Gary presented a request from the NEK Chamber for the Town to join. Kate and Luke shared their experience with the NEK Chamber and noted we would benefit from joining. Concern was shared over the NEK Chamber taking over the website of the Get NEKED campaign. Kate shared that the Chamber was looking to distance themselves from the campaign and transition the website into something more meaningful. Concern was shared

over the possibility that the Chamber would become a political activist group. The Board asked to table the decision of joining until September and Gary will follow up with the Chamber with questions.

Highway: Gregg reported that all FEMA work is completed. He also reported that FEMA has moved out of Vermont and is now coordinating efforts out of offices in Connecticut. Gregg has a ton of paperwork to submit and will get that done over the next 3 weeks. Gregg reported that the blue truck is down with air cooler, radiator, fan problems and that they're having a hard time finding parts. Gregg noted that the Highway overtime budget has been maxed out for 2025 due to extensive weekend work as a result of storms. Gregg, Gary and Tina are working at long-term plan to replace equipment and get as much grant funding possible. Gregg noted that he is aware of large stones on some roads that had to be used during mud season. The crew is currently working on putting materials over the stones.

Town Clerk: Gary reminded attendees that property tax bills would be mailed the week of August 25th. He also reminded that there is a new online option of paying property tax bills on the Town's website.

Community Concerns: Mark Fontaine asked if highest bid was accepted for the property at 2157 River Road and the Board confirmed that the highest bid was accepted.

Attendees asked about Old Home Day and expressed a concern over vendors who might have been turned away from participating. It was noted that, due to problems in past years with vendors who committed to participate not showing up as promised, resulted in changes in this year's vendor policy. Many noted they had a great time at Old Home Day and thought it was a great success. Attendees asked who organizes Wednesdays on the Common and Nancy noted that she and Carroll Macie assist with coordination. Nancy noted that Wednesdays on the Common are open to anyone who wants to come. There is no fee. If you let Nancy know that you'll be joining ahead of Wednesday, she'll advertise your participation.

Mark Fontaine reported that he took a picture of his vintage car in front of the covered bridge and offered to have it on the front of the Town Report. Luke will be soliciting people for cover photo submissions for the 2026 report.

There were no more community concerns and Harry motioned to adjourn the meeting. Nancy seconded the motion. It passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 7:10pm