

Select Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 5, 2025, 6pm

Board Members in Attendance: Harry, Nancy, Nate

Attendance: 10

Via Zoom: 2

No Items were added to the agenda.

Board Member Nancy made a motion to approve the December Select Board meeting minutes. Board Member Nate seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Coe & Coe Community Room ADA Presentation: James from Coe & Coe presented updated drawings on the planned ADA renovations for the Town Office Building. Diagrams and a detail construction budget are available in the Town Clerk's office for reviews. James reviewed the plans for the Community Room, the parking lot out front and the side entrance to the building. Current cost estimate is \$286,000 for all work, with \$200,000 designated for interior renovations and \$40,000 each for outside and side entrance work. Budget breakdown includes \$17,000 of management costs for the project; \$25,000 for general business costs (dumpster, port-a-potty, rental equipment, etc.); \$30,000 built in for contractor profit; \$40,000 for contingency. Question: Can more of MERP funds go towards the ADA project. Clerk Gary reported that the MERP grant has a 20% ceiling of total funds for ADA projects, which equals \$80,000. The library is expected to use \$15,000 of that funding, leaving \$65,000 towards the Town Office project.

Transfer Station: Transfer Station Rick asked to have 3 things addressed: Semi-trailer and Art cart need to be moved for Winter plowing. It was reported that Tim Meek is going to move the trailer. Rick reported that Jim has a vacation coming up and her has a surgery scheduled. Rick suggested the Board search for a 3rd on-call person for these types of instances. The Board will put out feelers. Replacement would need to be trained and would fill in when needed. Rick also asked about uniforms and reported that they were not getting the clean uniforms that they're supposed to get each week. Board Member Harry noted the Board will reach out to get information on deliveries. Gary reported briefly on the MERP grant and rebuilding of the office at the Transfer Station. There is a MERP Committee meeting on Monday, January 19th to discuss project and determine what needs to be done to move things forward. Gary will reach out to Derrick Williams has stated that he can rebuild the Transfer Station office in 2026. Clerk Gary will reach out to get an estimate and written commitment from Derrick that the work will be done in 2026.

Karen Sargent reported that her trash hauling company, R&S, is being told they can no longer deposit trash at the Transfer Station and wondered why since when another company (Wayno's) is allowed to do so. Rick reported that R&S was not following the procedures at the Transfer

Station and that's why they were not being allowed to deposit trash there. The Board will reach out to Sean from R&S for more information.

Snowmobile and ATV Ordinance: Board Member Harry and Polar Bears Mike presented both a snowmobile and ATV ordinance. They noted that Ordinances will make laws easier to enforce. There's a speed limit in the ATV ordinance. There are also fines for violations of the ordinance. After review, Board Member Nate motioned to approve both ordinances as written. Board Member Nancy seconded the motion. There was no discussion and both Ordinances were adopted. Clerk Gary will take care of the necessary advertising and notifications that govern new ordinances.

Candidate Petitions: Clerk Gary noted that petitions to be on the Town Meeting ballot for 2026 are due by 5pm on January 27th. Several petitions were circulated throughout the meeting.

Recreation, Trails and Tourism (RTT): Clerk Gary shared information that RTT Task Force Chair Kate Baxter had prepared. This provided updates on two different grant funding opportunities. The Town has been invited to submit a final application for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) which would fund work on the South Forest Loop at Fox Field & Forest. RTT also asked the Board for approval to go for a \$20,000 Tillotson Local Community grant for the loop track around Fox Field and improve accessibility at Fox Field & Forest. Board Member Harry made a motion to approve moving forward with an application for Tillotson Grant. Board Member Nancy seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The monthly RTT meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 14th at 6pm in the Community Room at the Town Office Building.

Better Connections Grant: Clerk Gary provided an update on the Better Connections grant that the Town has been awarded. This grant funding provides \$75,000 for a Gilman Village Revitalization Plan focusing on transportation, the return of rail traffic to Gilman and economic development for the community. The grant funding also includes \$30,000 in funding to study storm water runoff on the roads and the entire system of storm drains in Gilman. Planning Committee Member Tina noted this was an extremely important grant project for Gilman...probably one of the most impactful the community has seen since the mill closed. The grant funding match is \$7,500 and Tina noted the community needs to vote to fund this match. This line item appears in the 2026 proposed budget to be voted on at Town Meeting. Tina noted that a Steering Committee was being assembled and it does include a representative from Ampersand. Gary reported that Vermont Rail Systems is unable to provide a representative to join the Steering Committee but assured that they would continue to follow the process. VRS President Seldon and Road Crew Foreman Gregg have spoken, and they will work together to assure the large number of culverts that VRS needs to replace as part of their track improvements do not interfere with road water run-off.

Unfound Delinquent Taxpayers: DTC Cindy reported on her efforts to collect funds from long past due taxpayers. She reported that we have some taxpayers who owe small amounts of past due property taxes and that she has exhausted all means of trying to find them to make payment arrangements. Since these are old delinquent taxes, some of these taxpayers have

moved, may have died and might have never realized that they had a delinquency. Cindy shared a few of the scenarios that exist and asked the Board to adopt a policy of how to handle these taxpayers. After discussion, the Board decided these would be best handled on an individual basis. Cindy shared that there are \$189.49 delinquent from J&B Associates from years ago. Numerous attempts have been made to collect this debt to no avail. Board Chair Harry made a motion to abate \$189.49 delinquent taxes for J&B Associates. Board Member Nate seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Highway: Road Crew Foreman Gregg met with representatives from the State and Austin Construction regarding the Baptist Hill culvert project. The latest report is that Austin is in hopes of opening a single passable lane by January 20th. Weather has hindered operations. Gregg noted the S. Lunenburg bridge construction project is expected to begin in May and that Baptist Hill must be fully open by that time. Gregg is tracking the extra cost on the Highway budget due to the continued closure of Baptist Hill in hopes that we will be compensated.

Gregg noted it's possible that we will be out of Salt by February due to supply shortages. The State has asked highway crews to limit salt where possible. Gregg noted that we're halfway through our salt inventory and the crew is trying to limit salt applications in as many instances as possible to help stretch our supply.

Gregg reported we continue to do very well with grant funding. He noted that 2026 will be a maintaining and rebuilding year if we don't experience any catastrophic storms. Gregg reported that new hire Harvey Call is doing a great job.

Town Clerk: Clerk Gary reported that he had nothing to share at this meeting.

Community Concerns:

Question was raised as to when department and organization reports for the Town Report are due. We think that date is January 12th, but it was noted to reach out to Auditor Luke to confirm that. The next 2026 budget meeting is Monday, January 12th.

Polar Bears Mike noted there was some confusion at the last meeting regarding snow bikes. He noted that VAST has created a resolution to address noise from trails and there might be an issue with the mufflers on snow bikes.

Road Crew Foreman Gregg reported that there has been a heavier presence of State Police and Border Patrol in our community, especially in Gilman. It was suggested that the Board reach out to Sheriff Trevor to get more information.

Board Chair Harry motioned to adjourn at 6:55pm. Board Member Nate seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.