

Town of Danby
Select Board Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2025
Town Office, Danby, VT 7:00pm
<https://www.danbyvt.org/government-information>
ZOOM MEETING ID: 813 2851 1750

Public Present – Dan Garceau, Tracey Porter, Suzanne Crosby, Rick Porter, Michelle Bushee, Craig Moran, Tricia Katz, Matt Blouin

Virtual Present – Bill Richardson, Lauren Dever, Gary Derr, Chris Hardaway, Terry Parker, Andrea Stohr, Janice Arnold, Beth Thompson, Annette Smith, Sharon White, Doug White, Renata Aylward

- **Call to order at 7:00pm**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Roll Call (Haines, Fuller, Abbott, Heaton, Bender)**
 - Present: Haines, Fuller, Heaton, Bender
 - Absent: Abbott
- **Procedure for Remote Access and Public Comment Statement**
 - Brad Bender
- **Motion to Set Agenda**
 - Haines and Fuller requested add executive session to discuss multiple personnel.
 - Heaton to discuss Regional Select Board meeting sponsored by Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) which was held in Castleton.
 - Purchase of trailer to be discussed.
 - ***Motion by Heaton to set agenda, seconded by Haines***
 - ***Motion passes unanimously.***
- **Public Comment**
 - Blouin returned extra payroll check issued by Bushee and requested additional Audit oversight of payroll as this error had not been caught yet.
 - Beth Thomson, Gary Derr, Annette Smith, and others have asked for live (Zoom) video be available for meetings as they are difficult to follow without it. Understanding who is talking and difficulty hearing audio make video very helpful for remote attendees. Bender commented PEGTV will be available for those who want video of meeting. Petition was provided to Select Board many years ago to ensure hybrid meetings available to public and video has not been available since March Select Board Meeting.
 - Gary Derr asked about Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance policies being discussed tonight. Bender will complete first reading. Heaton stated town's policy will be replaced. After reading public comment available prior to motion to adopt.
 - Annette Smith asked when Baker Brook Rd and Scottsville Rd will be regraded as lots of potholes. Haines commented they are working on other roads and will get to it as soon as they can. Smith thanked the Road Crew for their hard work.
 - Smith thanked Heaton for attending the Regional Select Board meeting sponsored by RRPC.
 - Some discussion was had concerning appointing Alternate RRPC. Bender stated Planning Commission requested David Powers be assigned to Alternate RRPC
 - Smith asked if town of Danby been asked to engage in mapping process. Heaton stated RRPC has not reached out to Danby Select Board yet.

- **Motion to adopt Minutes of Select Board Meetings of March 13, 2025, March 20, 2025, March 25, 2025.**
 - *Motion by Haines , seconded by Fuller*
 - *Motion passes unanimously.*
- **Motion to appoint Hilda Haines to fill Hiram Fisk's position as a conferee to the Overseer of the Poor to assist the Overseer in the distribution of income from the Gary Harrington Fund under the terms of the Harrington will pursuant to the requirements of the May 14, 1997, Rutland Probate Court Order.**
 - *Motion by Fuller, and seconded by Heaton*
 - Haines abstained
 - Bender, Fuller, and Heaton approved
 - *Motion passed.*
- **Motion to appoint Auditor to serve until Town Meeting 2026.**
 - *Motion by Haines to appoint Matt Blouin as an Auditor, seconded by Fuller*
 - *Motion passed unanimously.*
- **Motion to appoint alternates to RRPC and RR Transportation Advisory Commission.**
 - *Motion by Fuller to appoint David Powers to position of RRPC Alternate, seconded by Heaton*
 - Planning commission nominated Dave Powers for RRPC Alternate, no alternate for RR Transportation Advisory Committee.
 - *Motion passed unanimously.*
- **Treasurer's Report: M. Bushee**
 - Bundle of checks that failed to clear has been corrected. Two people missed the extra check Blouin received. Bender cosigns checks, but Bushee is responsible for accuracy in computer. Bushee is stressed over the process as we don't have an electronic way to enter checks. Fuller concerned (town) more venerable than we expected. Payroll checks entered manually for both NEMRC and the bank. Bender and Fuller agreed with Bushee that single entry method is needed. Bushee to work to resolve issue.
 - Bender has received 4 letters (3 town employees and 1 contractor). Bender commented this is not an attack on Bushee, but these concerns need to be discussed. The following is a summary of discussion:
 - Multiple employees have had checks fail to clear bank on multiple occasions. This included one instance all payroll checks failed to clear except Bushee's. Bushee was just learning (in that instance as first week as Treasurer) and she is working to ensure mistake is no longer made.
 - Multiple deposits made with wrong amount (too much and too little). This appears to have been numbers transposed (i.e. backwards). Bushee stated back then adding by hand and has been since corrected.
 - Bills and invoices not paid on-time. Others not fully paid. Bushee can only pay bills that are approved by Select Board member(s). Saturdays she sometimes comes in and access to mail not available as locked in vault. Bender suggested mail to be locked in Treasurer safe instead. Bushee agreed.
 - An auditor has had to work alone (at least once) as Bushee had to leave.
 - Outstanding check of 2 years for deceased person. Bushee doesn't know anything about this, but will work to resolve. This issue preceded Bushee.
 - Checkbook does not balance properly since July 2024. Bushee will have all cleared up by next month.
 - Union dues had not been paid. This has been fixed as of now. Bushee will pay monthly going forward.
 - Retirement deductions not distributed to employee's retirement accounts. This has been fixed.

- Lack of being present during tax season to collect taxes, in particular cash is a concern. Bushee agreed she will be here October 15th thru November 15th fulltime.
 - Lack of attendance at Retirement meeting this past week when input from Bushee would have been helpful.
 - Bushee will do more hours “quietly” when no one else is in office to be able to focus.
 - Fuller asked how many hours worked by Bushee. Bushee said she works about 25 hours a week. She comes in during the evening as well. Bender stated posted hours are 7 hours per week.
 - Fuller commented on payroll checks not clearing is a real issue as people depend on these checks.
 - Heaton states Bushee put her name in for this (Treasurer) and wants a comfort level that this is going to be taken care of. Bushee agrees, but there are things that are learned as you go.
 - Bender asked if there is an Assistant Treasurer. Bushee stated there is.
 - Bender would like to revisit this next month.
 - ***Heaton motion for Bender to put together letter covering issues and corrections for Bushee to work to and revisit next month, seconded by Fuller***
 - ***Passes unanimously.***
- **Review Draft Lease for Mt. Tabor Transfer Station**
 - Mt. Tabor is considering town vote concerning Transfer Station
 - Bender suggested waiting until after Mt Tabor vote for further discussion.
 - Fuller suggested a backup plan may be needed to address the issue. Buy land or other options should be considered. No money was budgeted for 2025 necessary expenditures for Mt Tabor Transfer Station.
 - Heaton had concerns on Town of Danby spending money on installing power and other expensive site improvements which would be handed back to Mt Tabor when lease ended.
- **First Reading of proposed Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance.**
 - Bender read ordinance.
 - Annette Smith asked if documents can be included in the minutes. Bender will send copies to Smith and Thompson. Beth Thompson suggested if it could have been posted on the town website or a link to access made available ahead of time would have been helpful.
 - Gary Derr stated town needs to post both Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance once they are adopted.
- **Executive Session motion by Haines, seconded by Fuller**
 - Start Executive Session at 8:32PM
 - End Executive Session at 8:40PM
 - No action taken.
- **Road Commissioner’s Report:**
 - **Approve Fleet Permits for: AmeriGas, Fuller Sand & Gravel, Bazin Brothers Trucking, Steve Newton, Kennedy Excavating LLC, Barrett Trucking, Structural Wood Corp, HOP Energy, Herrmann Construction, New England Quality Service, Inc., Cota & Cota, Inc., Camp Precast Concrete, Driscoll Brothers Exc**
 - ***Motion by Haines, seconded by Heaton***
 - ***Motion passed unanimously.***

- **Discuss Retreatment and also Structures grant applications**
 - Fuller discussed all action on Tinmouth road. From Doug Whites to Kraft Hill. Just at bottom of Kraft hill there is a bridge that needs significant work. Grant to get \$200k on each of them and we are “in-line” and have applied for the grants.
- **Class 1 & 2 roads center line striping by VTRANS**
 - Fuller stated we are going to stripe class 1 & 2 roads.
- **Sign Road & Bridge Standards, Annual Financial Plan Town Highways, Certification Town Road & Bridge standards**
 - Select Board members present signed accordingly.
- **Discuss Tinmouth Rd. Bridge Repair Bids**
 - Class 2 structures grant applied for, but the governor needs to sign so could be delayed until June.
 - Haines is going to start culverts on Tinmouth Road, but need to set up lights first.
- **Trailer Purchase Discussion**
 - Need to replace trailer. Looking to get lite duty 14000 lb Big Tex with 20 ft deck. Haines had solicited 3 bids. Can put chloride on that trailer too. Old trailer has been in use 20+ years and needs to be scrapped.
 - Quote does not include all fees associated. Need to add registration.
 - ***Fuller made motion to buy trailer for base price of \$6719 plus any other registration costs or fees, Haines seconded***
 - ***Motion passed unanimously.***
- **Old Business: (None)**
 - **No old business**
- **Greg reported on Regional Select Board meeting held by RRPC.**
 - Last night Heaton attended the selectboard meetup in Castleton held by RRPC. These meeting are going to be held quarterly with next meeting in July or August.
 - Meeting was focused on shared services. Ex. Mendon & Pittsford have a mower agreement to deal with rising cost of equipment and services.
 - Discussion on administrative help for Towns without a Town Manager or administrator.
 - Expense and complexities of reappraisals were discussed.
 - Several towns expressed interest in a future training on how to handle new ethics law.
 - Road foreman’s meeting to be held April 30th in West Rutland focused on railroad crossings.
 - Act 181 mentioned briefly. Training is to be offered 4/16 & 4/17th by RRPC.
 - These changes to Act 250 will impact Danby and other towns with no zoning.
- **Motion to Adjourn 9:46 PM by Haines , seconded by Fuller**
 - **Motion passes unanimously**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Matt Blouin
Meeting Facilitator