

Town of Danby
Select Board Meeting Minutes
July 9, 2026

Town Office, Danby, VT – 6:30 PM

<https://www.danbyvt.org/government-information>

ZOOM Meeting ID: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81328511750>

Passcode: YNc5S5

Recording available at www.peg.tv

Attendance

Select Board Members Present: Haines, Fuller, Abbott, Bender, Heaton

Select Board Members Absent: None

Public Present: Sheriff David J. Fox, Tracey Porter, Rick Porter, Matt Blouin

Virtually Present: Annette Smith, Lauren Dever, Bill Richardson, Mara Hearst, Michael Miller, Christopher Hardaway

Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

- Recited

Roll Call

- Haines, Fuller, Abbott, Bender, and Heaton present

Procedure for Remote Access and Public Comment

- Reviewed; no objections from public

Motion to Set Agenda

- Motion to approve agenda with amendments: add VTrans Municipal Mitigation Grant under structures grant discussion and remove Treasurer's Report because the Treasurer was not present
 - ***Moved by Haines, seconded by Bender***
 - ***Passed unanimously***

Public Comment

- No public comment, both in person or remote

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve June 11, 2026 Select Board minutes
 - ***Moved by Bender, seconded by Abbott***
 - ***Passed unanimously***

Information Updates

- **Collette Yrsha Retirement** Board thanked Collette Yrsha for more than 10 years of service as Assistant Town Clerk. Collette retired June 30, 2026. Lauren Keyes was identified as the new Assistant Town Clerk.
- **Act 162 - Town Forest Fire Wardens** Board reviewed Act 162, effective July 1, 2026. The Act changes the appointment process so that the Town Fire Chief is automatically designated as Town Forest Fire Warden, with authority to appoint deputy wardens as needed.
- **External Audit Update** One bid had been received and the request remains open until July 17, 2026. Another firm indicated it would not bid. Board discussed proceeding with the external audit for taxpayer confidence and due to prior financial concerns.

- **VLCT Special Meeting** VLCT special meeting regarding potential municipal health insurance savings was canceled after it was determined no savings could be achieved.

Rutland County Sheriff 2026-2027 Contract

- Sheriff David J. Fox reviewed the prior-year contract and proposed 2026-2027 contract. Proposed contract is capped at 624 total hours, equal to 12 hours per week, at approximately \$36,753.60.
- Board discussed patrol scheduling, local-road speed enforcement, and preference for coverage on Town roads rather than Route 7 except where needed. Concerns included Danby Mountain Road, village areas, and commuter-period speeding.
- Sheriff Fox stated patrol timing can be adjusted based on complaints and that a new deputy will be assigned to the area. Board also discussed access to STARS activity reports and password reset support.
- **Motion:** Approve and sign the 2026-2027 Rutland County Sheriff's Department contract for 624 hours / 12 hours per week, capped at approximately \$36,753.60
- **Moved by Fuller, seconded by Abbott**
- **Passed unanimously**

Union Dues Deduction Issue

- Board discussed payroll deduction discrepancy where the Town remitted the full union dues amount but proper employee deductions were not taken from employee pay.
- Issue appeared related to the payroll system. Required deduction of 1.45% of gross weekly wages had changed last year and unclear who made the change. Employee profiles were corrected on June 16, 2026.
- Total amount not deducted was reported as \$2,679.76. Board discussed Town Attorney guidance that repayment requests should be made in writing with supporting calculations
- For current employees, Board discussed contacting the union, providing written documentation, and obtaining written authorization for any repayment deductions.
- **Motion:** Authorize letters with supporting reports to two former employees, contact the union, and follow up with letters to three current employees regarding repayment
 - **Moved by Fuller, seconded by Bender**
 - **Passed with Haines abstention**

Treasurer's Report - Katlyn Parker

- Removed from the agenda because the Treasurer was not present

Listers Report - Maureen Staples

- Bypassed because the Lister was not present
- Board discussed concerns regarding Lister office hours, use of budgeted funds, grievance hours, and efficiency of Lister work during the off-season. No action taken.

VTrans Structures Grant - Tinmouth Road Bridge Repairs

- Board discussed VTrans Structures Grant for Tinmouth Road bridge repairs. Maximum grant award reported as \$67,500 with a 10% local match of approximately \$6,750.
- Board discussed expected scope including concrete work and excavation, in-kind Town work, and solicitation of at least three vendors under Town procurement policy.
- **Motion:** Sign the VTrans Structures Grant for Tinmouth Road bridge repairs
 - **Moved by Fuller, seconded by Haines**
 - **Passed unanimously**

VTrans Municipal Mitigation Grant

- Board discussed added VTrans Municipal Mitigation Grant, described as approximately \$17,000 with an estimated 20% match, related to drainage and road mitigation work such as culverts, grading, gravel, and hydraulically connected road segments.
- **Motion:** Sign the VTrans Municipal Mitigation Grant
 - ***Moved by Haines, seconded by Fuller***
 - ***Passed unanimously***

Tinmouth Road Paving Bid

- One bid was received from Fuller Sand & Gravel. Bid included hot mix at \$88 per ton, reclaimed compaction and grading at \$2.00 per square yard, 704.05 fine gravel at \$10 per ton, and shoulder gravel at \$5 per ton.
- Calculated total was \$345,104.00 for approximately 1.2 miles.
- **Motion:** Award Tinmouth Road paving bid to Fuller Sand & Gravel for \$345,104.00
 - ***Moved by Haines, seconded by Abbott***
 - ***Passed with Fuller abstention***
- Board also discussed additional blacktop shimming or patching needs at other Town road locations, provided work remains within the retreatment budget.
- **Motion:** Hire Fuller Sand & Gravel to shim sections of blacktop before winter, not to exceed money available in the retreatment budget
 - ***Moved by Haines, seconded by Bender***
 - ***Passed with Fuller abstention***

All-Way Plow Purchase

- Board discussed purchase of a new all-way plow at quoted price of \$16,244. Quote had expired, and Road Commissioner will confirm whether the vendor will honor the price. If the price increases, the matter will return to the Board.
- Board discussed ensuring the plow can be used across Town trucks, including required hose and connection setup.
- **Motion:** Authorize spending \$16,244 for the new all-way plow
 - ***Moved by Fuller, seconded by Abbott***
 - ***Passed unanimously***

Road Crew Open Position

- Board discussed vacancy created by departure of newest Road Crew member and the need to move forward with hiring. Board noted the importance of having at least a three-person crew before winter.
- Position will be posted through VLCT at no cost and through Indeed, with applications also accepted through the Town Office.
- **Motion:** Spend up to \$1,500 for Indeed advertising for the open Road Crew position
 - ***Moved by Fuller, seconded by Haines***
 - ***Passed unanimously***

Highway Department / Road Commissioner's Report

- **Flood Debris Removal - Smokey House Road and Brook Road** Heavy rain caused debris and a log jam near Smokey House Road and Brook Road, contributing to flooding and blocked water flow. After communication with Smokey House and permitting, debris was removed. Work was completed before the paper permit was received after verbal authorization to proceed.
- **Current / Planned Projects** Board discussed current and planned culvert work, including Westside Road culverts and a culvert. Westside Road culvert work remains prioritized, with culvert by Seth Arnold's kept on the radar due to flooding concerns.

- **On-Call Mowing Assistance** Riley Lewis, previously hired as on-call help, reached out regarding mowing assistance. Board supported using Riley for mowing when available. No formal motion made.

Review Fleet Permits

- Abbott Construction
- **Motion:** Approve fleet permit for Abbott Construction
 - ***Moved by Fuller, seconded by Haines***
 - ***Passed with Abbott abstention***

Old Business

- **Health Equity Issues** Board continued discussion of Health Equity issues. Chair reported that he and the Treasurer contacted Health Equity and were told the Town cannot receive a dedicated representative unless the account has approximately 1,000 enrolled participants. Health Equity advised that account access, lockouts, and similar issues must be handled directly by employees.
- Board discussed ongoing employee difficulties with portal access, beneficiary and dependent information, unpaid claims, and lack of support from Health Equity.
- Board expressed that the Town should not continue using Health Equity after the current year if possible and discussed seeking guidance from VLCT regarding how to reimburse employees for eligible unpaid claims without creating tax or reporting issues. No action taken.

New Business

- None

Motion to Adjourn

- **Motion to adjourn made by Haines, seconded by Fuller**
- **Passed unanimously**
- Meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Blouin

Meeting Facilitator