

Town of Danby
DRAFT Select Board Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2025
Town Office, Danby, VT 7:00pm
<https://www.danbyvt.org/government-information>
ZOOM MEETING ID: 813 2851 1750

Public Present – Tracey Porter, Richard Porter, Sarah Wilde, Janice Arnold, Hilda Haines, Douglas White, David Lindenberg, Lonna Burden, Drea Stoddard, Andrea Stoehr, Suzanne Crosby, Matt Blouin

Virtual Present –Gary Derr, Renata Aylward, Sharon White, Terry Parker, Chris Hardaway, Jade

- **Call to order at 7:00pm**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Roll Call (Haines, Fuller, Abbott, Heaton, Bender)**
 - Present: Haines, Bender, & Abbott
 - Absent: Fuller & Heaton
- **Procedure for Remote Access and Public Comment Statement**
 - Brad Bender summarized Remote Access statement (as paper was missing).
 - Taking Old Business off Agenda.
 - Remove transfer station relocation off Agenda as only 3 Select Board members are present.
 - Under Road Commissioner's Report have MRPG annual report to sign and the grants and aid.
 - Removing Treasurer's Report as Bushee is not present.
- **Motion to Set Agenda**
 - ***Motion by Haines to set agenda, seconded by Abbott.***
 - ***Motion passes unanimously.***
- **Public Comment**
 - All three auditors are present and will speak to the Auditors' Report.
 - No other public comment.
- **Motion to adopt Minutes of Select Board Meetings of April 10, 2025**
 - ***Motion by Haines, seconded by Abbott.***
 - One correction Drea Stoddard was not present virtually, but Andrea Stoehr was so she will be added.
 - ***Motion passes unanimously.***
- **Act 181 Presentation by RRPC**
 - Available online via ***www.rutlandrpc.org/plan2026***
 - Please see the link above for more information or PEGTV recording for details.
 - Presentation presented by Logan Solomon.
 - Comment from Haines concerning waiting until there is some interest in the development of Four Corners before we consider it a village center.

- Comment from Bender concerning the population of Quarry Hill and Scottsville roads have higher population than Four Corners. Also land on the west side of Brook Rd may have restrictions on it.
- Jaded comment (via virtual online message) that fields to east of Tinmouth Rd are soggy, soaking wet a lot of time and are not appropriate for development. The name of the presenter was also asked for.
- Bender commented addition of Otter Creek Fun Center to Enterprise Area would be good.
- Bender stated village center at four corners board not in favor.
- ***Abbott motioned to eliminate Four Corners for consideration as village center and add route 7 North with Otter Creek Fun Center to enterprise area, seconded by Haines.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***

Delinquent Tax Collector's Report: D. White

- Doug White went over six properties which are being recommended to be put up for tax sale.
- **Motion by Haines for tax sales on properties identified, seconded by Abbott.**
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***
- Doug stated it will take 2 – 2 ½ months before sale and will keep the Select Board updated.

Auditor's Report: M. Blouin: Below is a summary of discussion by Blouin, Burden, and Wilde:

- Bushee is consistently late for meetings and canceled one meeting 1 ½ hours prior.
- Bushee not prepared for Auditors' meetings results is lost time to audit records. Requests being made for each meeting via e-mail and duplicate text sent to Bushee's phone.
- Cadence of deposits (as of 5/6 last deposit made 2/27) and payments have dropped significantly. Interest lost and late fees/penalties being added to debt. Most notable is '25 Q1 IRS and VT taxes (from payroll) not paid at all. Best case the town owes \$12,429.08 with a penalty of \$491.64 on just taxes.
- Paper files physically not available or misfiled. Electronic files show over 30 void (payroll) checks since July '24 (17 on March statement). Auditors just received access to Accounts Payable records (void checks there unknown).
- Many instances of NEMRC control numbers not matching bank accounts on checks cashed. All checks issued 3/25 did not match.
- Checks missing out of sequence and no record of why.
- 85% medical insurance reimbursement for one employee missing documentation to prove it is required of the town. This issue predates Bushee by several years.
- Blouin stated that when Michelle is present, she is helpful and provides documents. As of 5/6 Bushee has provided many documents, however she was still fixing misfiled documents. Based on what we have encountered, auditors anticipate documents still may be missing from original requests.
- Auditors would like to have Bushee present during meetings to answer questions.
- Late charges and uncertain if paid or ignored. Missing bills and check to support bill also missing. Mount Tabor bill Burden could not make sense of.
- Burden had questions about trust funds (e.g., cemetery, Daniels) as when Jen was treasurer Burden had to sign a paper that she did something with these. Bushee knows nothing about them.
- Burden stated Bushee "is not getting any better and it takes a long time to do nothing."
- Wilde stated a general lack of written policies and standard operating procedures. Lots of word of mouth and often knowledge may not be there either. Seems like Bushee is responsible for on-

boarding and off-boarding employees and in general seems to be some gaps. Lack of policies makes Auditor's job a lot harder to piece things together.

- The Auditors produced a letter with the town's legal counsel's help and have all signed it. They are asking for Select Boards support to push Bushee to supply all information requested to allow Auditors to complete their job.
- Bender commented on policy and procedures that Doug White spent lots of time putting procedural manuals together that outline how and when things are done. Binders are on the file cabinet.
- Bender has told Bushee over ten times to ask for help, that hasn't happened.
- Bender read "Official Request for Treasurer Records" pursuant to 24 VSA subsection 1686(c)(1) and (2). Request included payroll and Accounts Payable records, checkbooks, bank account and investment records, itemized list of all deposits, medical reimbursement records, and records of missing payroll and AP checks. 5 business days to comply or \$100 per day fine for failure to comply if enforced by court of law (personal liability of treasurer).
- Haines pointing out Michelle is going through a lot of personal problems but town business must come first.
- ***Motion by Haines to sign request letter, seconded by Abbott.***
- Bender is sympathetic to Bushee's situation; however town business must continue to go on. If any officer can not devote the necessary time, then one needs to seriously consider resigning from the position.
- ***Motion passed unanimously.***

Request of Clerk and Ass't. Clerk to include ballot clerk pay in retirement account.

Request of Clerk for 7% retirement insurance retroactive to January 2024

- Letter from Janice Arnold read by Bender.
- ***Motion by Haines to include ballot clerk pay and 7% into retirement account(s), seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***

Letter from Clerk (Arnold) to Select Board

- Asks for confirmation of 85% health insurance reimbursement of submitted invoices. The Treasurer was unable to find documentation as requested by Auditors. Janice was taken off from BCBS in December 2018 and went on a new program in January 2019.
- Request is not to make retroactive, just to provide documentation for Auditors to continue to allow reimbursement.
- ***Motion by Haines to continue 85% health insurance reimbursement, seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***
- Auditors need statements, check paid, and account statement or cancelled check.

Note from Mark Shea concerning Rutland Solid Waste for container for compactor.

- Used compactor in town of Pittsburg and looking if another town would like (they own it) and appears they are giving it away for free.
- Abbot questioned why are they getting rid of it?
- Haines checked to see if we can use it before investing money into moving it. Stated it is 23 years old. Haines will reach out to Mark to schedule time to look at it. Will put on agenda for June if worth looking into. Haines is leaning toward a no.
- No motion on this now.

Set date, time, and rates for Dump Day 2025

- July 19th proposed.
- ***Motion for Dump Day July 19th from 7am-4pm by Haines, seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***
- Price list from last year reviewed and Refrigerators/Freezers went up to \$45 and air conditioners went up to \$25.
- Abbot questioned if mattresses and box spring cost should we go up as costs more to get rid of them?
- Automobile tires \$5 and truck tires \$6.
- Bender believes all \$5 should be raised. We continue to lose money on this operation and wants to get a little closer to breaking even.
- Abbot asked if amount in mind and Bender commented \$8 or \$10.
- Dumpsters are based on weight (carpets and desks are heavy).
- Bender suggested motion to raise price of chairs, plumbing fixtures, appliances (washers, dryers, stove, dishwashers), rugs, computer/electronic parts, dining room chairs, small wooden furniture, large tables, bureaus, desks, and metal articles (file cabinets, desks, lawn mowers, BBQ grills, to \$8.
- ***Haines motioned, seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***

Second Reading and adoption of proposed Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance.

- No changes since last reading on 4/10/25.
- Bender asked if we needed to read it.
- Tracy Porter asked for a hard copy.
- ***Motion by Haines to adoption of proposed Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance, seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***

Road Commissioner's Report:

Current projects

- Haines commented on working on Otis Road for a better detour when the culverts are replaced.
- Haines stated about four roads left on first round of grading left for this year.

Approve Fleet Permit for: Miles Lumber Co.

- ***Motion by Haines approve permit, seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***

Approve Mutual Aid Agreement for 2025

- Fuller as primary
- Haines as alternate
- Bender is the primary requesting official.
- Abbot as alternate requesting official
- ***Motion by Haines, seconded by Abbott.***
- ***Motion passes unanimously.***

Motion to approve municipal state permits.

- *Motion by Haines, seconded by Abbott.*
- *Motion passes unanimously.*

New Business: Fiscal aids and grants program

- *Motion by Haines, seconded by Abbott.*
- *Motion passes unanimously.*
- **Motion to Adjourn 8:46 PM by Haines, seconded by Abbott.**
 - **Motion passes unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Matt Blouin

Meeting Facilitator