

Town of Danby
DRAFT Select Board Meeting Minutes

May 14, 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.pegtv.com

Attendance

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

Public Present: Don Keeler, Kim Corey, Tracey Porter, Rick Porter, Hilda Haines, and Bill Payne

Virtually Present: Christopher Hardaway, Samantha Pearce, iphone3, Michael, Iphone 3, Doug R. White, Jr., Annette Smith, Chris Hardaway, Sharon White, and Gary Derr

Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

- Recited

Roll Call

- All Select Board members present

Procedure for Remote Access and Public Comment

- Discussed, but not reviewed as no objections from public

Motion to Set Agenda

- Motion to approve agenda with addition of “Elections Training 101” under Information/updates
- Motion to Set Agenda
 - **Moved by Haines, seconded by Fuller**
 - **Passed unanimously**

Public Comment

- Tracy Porter raised concerns regarding enforcement of fleet permit violations and roadway damage. Had no specifics with respect to evidence to support
- Discussion included enforcement process, documentation requirements, and escalation to DOT if necessary
- Resident encouraged to submit formal documentation to the Board

- Donation request presented by Don Keller (Danby Mount Tabor Fire Department)
 - Request for town to fund 50% of 2 signs for wildfire danger level and 2 signs for burn ban in effect signs related to burn bans and emergency communication. Mt. Tabor has agreed to fund the other 50%
 - Will be placed on June agenda so it can be warned and voted on. Steve Haines mentioned DMTFD may want 2 signs one for Main Station and one for Four Corners. Don will confirm final request before June Meeting.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve April 9, 2026 Select Board minutes
 - **Moved by Haines, seconded by Bender**
 - **Passed unanimously**

Information Updates

- **Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) Hearing**
The final public hearing for the 2026 regional plan is scheduled for May 19, 2026 at 7:00 PM with options for in-person and remote participation. The Board noted this is the final opportunity for public input and encouraged awareness of potential implications for local planning alignment.
- **Health Equity Program Update**
Ongoing issues with employee access and account management within the Health Equity system were discussed, including limitations on updating dependent information. The Board acknowledged conflicting guidance from support channels and noted that integration with Blue Cross Blue Shield is expected to resolve functionality challenges.
- **Internal Audit / External Audit RFP Progress**
Efforts to secure an external audit firm remain ongoing, with limited availability among firms willing to take on municipal clients. The Board discussed continuing outreach to additional firms while recognizing recent historical audit costs and the need to obtain competitive bids.
- **Rutland County Health Partners Mobile Clinic**
The mobile clinic has been successfully scheduled for July 7, 2026 from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM at the Town Office. The Board confirmed insurance requirements have been met and expects the provider to handle public outreach and communication.
- **VTRANS Salt Contract Communication**
A communication from VTRANS encouraged early outreach related to salt purchasing contracts, though details remain unclear until state contracts are

finalized. The Board noted the timing and guidance were somewhat unclear but will monitor for further direction.

- **Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Program**

The State has opened the 2026 Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Program, with applications due July 1, 2026. The Board emphasized that the program applies to business owners, non-profits, and rental properties within designated areas, but not to personal residences or municipal entities.

- **Elections Training 101**

The State is encouraging town officials and members of Boards and Civil Authorities to attend Elections Training 101 sessions. The Board acknowledged the importance of participation to ensure compliance with election procedures and best practices.

- **Resident Land Use Letters**

Letters From Ed Griffith, Tom Fuller and Steve and Hilda Haines regarding land use classifications and planning concerns were submitted to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, Danby Planning Commission and copied to the Board. Discussion focused on the limitations of Board action, noting that these matters primarily fall under state jurisdiction for review and consideration.

Community Syringe Disposal Program (Presentation – Samantha Pearce)

- Proposal to install sharps disposal box in town
- Program grant-funded (through Dec 2026, likely extended)
- Board raised concerns:
 - Long-term funding sustainability
 - Location feasibility (limited space, safety concerns)
 - Ken Abbott, Jr. to discuss with the fire department about using their location.
- **Outcome:** No decision; further evaluation required; revisit in future meeting

Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer absent; limited update provided
- Ongoing property tax credit processing

Motion: Transfer \$2,265.26 from Office Equipment Reserve Fund to Office Equipment account to cover computer purchases for the town.

- **Moved by Fuller, seconded by Haines**
- **Passed unanimously**

End of FY2026 Budget Discussion

- Reviewed variances and reserve usage
- Noted training expenses, IT cost increases, and bridge project engineering costs
- Follow-up required on bridge invoice structure with VTRANS

2026 Local Emergency Management Plan

- Update limited to personnel changes

Motion: Approve 2026 Local Emergency Management Plan

- ***Moved by Fuller, seconded by Haines***
- ***Passed unanimously***

2026 Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement

Motion: Approve 2026 Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement

- ***Moved by Haines, seconded by Fuller***
- ***Passed unanimously***

Transfer Station Committee Update

- Preliminary cost estimates discussed:
 - Engineering: ~\$10K-\$20K
 - Site work: ~\$100K+
- Bill Payne to follow up with the state to secure more details on which permits we would need to secure. Town would not need to pay for permitting.

2026 Dump Day

- Discussion concluded event is not necessary
- Alternative disposal options remain available to residents at nearby facilities including East Dorset and Gleason Road in Rutland, which accept materials year-round. The Board noted that access to these locations, along with ease of use and minimal cost for common items, has reduced the need for a town-organized Dump Day.
- **Consensus:** No Dump Day in 2026

Transfer Station Backup Attendant

Motion: Appoint Bob Halligan as on-call attendant

- ***Moved by Fuller, seconded by Bender***
- ***Passed unanimously***

Road Crew Call-Out Procedure

- Discussion on need for formal escalation protocol

Motion: Road Foreman to designate alternate for call-outs in their absence

- **Moved by Bender, seconded by Fuller**
- **Passed (Haines abstained)**

Highway Department / Road Commissioner's Report

- **Current Projects (Culverts and Drainage Improvements)**

The Highway Department is actively progressing multiple culvert replacement projects, including work on Brook Road, Danby Hill, and Timoth Road. Discussion focused on optimizing drainage design (stone-lined ditch vs. underground conveyance) to ensure compliance with environmental guidance while preventing washouts and sediment transport issues. Fuller will meet with Haines and Bender to review situation along 278 and 297 Brook Rd washout.

- **Paving Grant Status and Planning**

A Class 2 paving grant application has been submitted, with an award decision expected in the near term. The Board discussed contingency plans to proceed with a phased paving approach if funding is not received, ensuring priority sections are still addressed within available budget.

- **Equipment Status and Reliability Monitoring**

The town tractor is being placed back into service while closely monitoring hydraulic performance and operating temperature to identify any recurring issues. Additional repairs to mowing equipment and minor fabrication work are underway to ensure readiness for the upcoming season.

- **Plow Equipment Condition and Replacement Planning**

An existing plow unit has developed structural cracking and has undergone multiple repairs, raising concerns about long-term reliability. A replacement cost estimate (~\$16K) was reviewed, and the Board agreed to revisit the purchase decision during the June meeting for inclusion in future budgeting.

- **Truck Fleet and Capital Planning**

The Highway Department presented preliminary cost estimates for re-bodying existing trucks as an alternative to full replacement, with costs significantly lower than new vehicle acquisition (~\$300K). The Board discussed the need for a long-term capital strategy to balance increasing maintenance costs with lifecycle replacement timing.

Fleet Permits Approved:

- New England Quality Service, Inc.
 - McElwain Contracting, LLC
- (Motion by Fuller, seconded by Haines – Passed)

Old Business

- None

New Business

- None

Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session for employee matters

- ***Moved by Bender, seconded by Haines***
- ***Passed unanimously***
- No action taken following executive session

Adjournment

- **Motion to adjourn made by Bender, seconded by Abbott**
- ***Passed unanimously***
- Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Blouin

Meeting Facilitator