

Final Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 6:30 PM

Present:

Selectboard (SB):

Mike DeSocio (MD) Chair
Doug Wellman (DW) Vice-Chair
Bruce Mello (BM)
Emily Beer (EB)
E. Mark Bills (EMB)

Town Officers:

Vanessa Ballou (VB) Recording Clerk
Melissa Brown (MB) Treasurer*

Public:

FactTV*
Stan Noga (SN)
Cathy Edgerly Fales*(CEF)

*Via Zoom

1. Mike DeSocio called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. Changes to Agenda

The 911 Map Book will be discussed under 7.B. MD made a motion to add discussion of the 911 Map Book under New Business- 7.B. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Review Draft Minutes

A. Regular Agenda Meeting June 18, 2025

MD made a motion to approve the June 18, 2025 SB Meeting minutes as drafted. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously by the four SB Members present at the June 18th meeting (MD, BM, EB, EMB), with DW abstaining.

B. Regular Agenda Meeting July 10, 2025

MD made a motion to approve the July 10, 2025 SB Meeting minutes as drafted. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously by the four SB Members present at the July 10th meeting (MD, BM, EB, EMB), with DW abstaining.

4. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled Members of the Public

Cathy Edgerly Fales and Stan Noga attended to participate in discussions of agenda items 6.E. and 7. New Business, respectively.

B. Unscheduled Members of the Public

None.

5. Warrants

A. Payroll

MD made a motion to approve payroll warrant 2602 for \$3,863.12 . EMB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable

MD made a motion to approve accounts payable warrant 2603 in the amount of \$25,081.79. DW seconded. During the discussion, BM noted that costs in the Cota & Cota invoice need to be allocated to applicable Town Buildings; he will follow up with Melissa Brown. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Old Business

A. Update Credit Card Payment System

EB received an updated contract with indemnification language as requested. EB made a motion to sign this agreement with Autoagent Data Solutions LLC so the Town can work with them. BM seconded. During the discussion, EB clarified that while the contract is for three years, it can be terminated with a 30-day notice. The agreement covers credit card and echeck payments for taxes and animal licenses. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Approve Sick Leave Policy

The SB discussed the revised sick leave policy and following a discussion decided to add the Vice-Chair as an alternate to contacting the SB Chair for an employee to notify if they need to take more than one day of sick leave.

DW made a motion to include the Vice-Chair for notification of sick leave. EB seconded. The motion passed with MD, DW, BM, and EB voting in favor and EMB abstaining.

MD made a motion to approve the sick leave policy with the amendment that was passed. EB seconded. The motion passed with MD, DW, BM, and EB voting in favor and EMB abstaining.

C. Sick Pay Settlement Signing

EB presented the agreement to be signed by the two Town employees who are owed retroactive pay for sick leave. The SB signed the agreement with EMB. The agreement for Guy Tanza needs to be amended to include the portion of time he worked in 2025. EB made a motion to pay out accrued sick leave to Guy Tanza for 2025 in the amount of \$147.00 and will include that in the settlement agreement that the SB has already discussed and approved. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Painting Contract Discussion/Update

This agenda item concerns the work to rebuild and paint the Brookline Meeting House (BMH) annex windows. BM explained that Momaney Painting still needs to sign the contract. Momaney will remove the BMH windows and take them to their shop for rebuilding.

E. Next Steps- Grant Writer Consultation

MD asked Cathy Edgerly Fales (CEF) for a summary/outline of her approach and scope of work and associated fee to be incorporated into the Town's standard contract. CEF asked for a person to be her primary point of contact. After a contract is signed with the Town, she would like to interview 5 to 7 key people and have an opportunity to see the Town buildings. Potential residents for CEF to interview include BM, EMB, Lee Anne Parker, Stan Noga, and DW. CEF would like to get started by August 1st and anticipates that the work will take 4 to 5 weeks. Following this discussion CEF left the Zoom meeting.

7. New Business

A. Planning Committee Status

The current Brookline Town Plan expires March 16, 2026. A new plan must be completed by December 31, 2025. Finalizing the plan requires two separate review steps, each requiring 30 days. The Town did not get a grant to cover the cost of hiring Windham Regional Commission (WRC) to prepare the updated Town Plan. Donald Woodford, Chair of the Planning Commission, has been researching possible options for getting the Town Plan

updated with minimal changes to meet the deadlines. MD suggested that the Town consider paying a consultant to update the plan to meet the deadline. The Planning Commission which has not met in a number of months will resume meetings.

B. Appoint 911 Assistant to Doug & 911 Map Book

DW made a motion to appoint SN as the Alternate Town 911 Coordinator. EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

In addition, the Town 911 Map needs to be updated with new 911 addresses and submitted to the state 911 office. Two new 911 addresses are needed.

C. Review Report to SB from Stan Noga- LEMT Training, FEMA Projects

1) Vermont Local Emergency Management Training

DW is the Emergency Management Director and SN is the Emergency Management Coordinator. Both will attend virtual training on August 25-26 from 1:00 to 5:00 PM. SN explained that the requirement to have an account in the Learning Management System (LMS) and a FEMA ID #.

2) Status of FEMA Projects for Ellen Ware Road and Hill Road Stone Arch Bridge/Culvert 11

The contracts with Hammond Engineering have expired. Hammond Engineering prepared the initial engineering documentation for both sites and FEMA has requested updated plans and estimates. The Town will need an updated scope of work from Hammond Engineering to provide these updated plans and costs. For the Stone Arch/culvert 11, Hammond may need to consult with Brian Post regarding dry stone details. SN will file extensions with FEMA for both projects.

3) Better Back Roads Grant Application

The application for a culvert upgrade near the Clark Gravel Pit was denied.

4) Designation of Stone Arch Bridge/Culvert 11 as Historic

SN was informed that the state will wait for FEMA to determine if the structure is historic.

5) Brookline Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)

SN is not listed in the Brookline LEMP, and he will follow up regarding having his name added.

8. Reports and Updates

A. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello

1) Suzy's Little Peanuts (SLP) is happy to have a month-to-month extension to their rental agreement with a 30-day notice.

2) Use of School Building Once SLP Vacates

BM would like to have an SB discussion on how to use the school building at the next SB meeting. A Town resident suggested asking the School District if they want to lease the school building. BM would like to schedule a Town Meeting in early Fall to get community input, and use the Town picnic to let people know about the meeting plans. EB recommended getting Leslie Zucker involved in facilitating the process of assessing community interests.

B. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

1) EMB applied 22 loads of gravel to Ellen Ware Road and has been doing roadside mowing. He reported that trees have been falling over – roots and all.

- 2) He has a potential candidate for the on-call highway assistant and will ask him to complete an application.
- 3) He has started working on the GIA grant (Grants in Aid) and has been in touch with ANR (Agency of Natural Resources) regarding hydraulic studies for town culverts.

C. Finance/Budget – Mike DeSocio

June 30 Financial Results

MD presented the General Fund financials for the year ending June 30, 2025. For the 4th quarter, tax revenue was lower than projected and other expenses were higher. For the year overall, with \$40,000 in taxes still outstanding, the general fund has a small positive balance of roughly \$800.

MB reported that the scheduled Tax Sale has been postponed.

In response to MD question about the change in the veterans tax rate from 0.0006, in the schedule of tax rates that the SB approved on July 10th to 0.0005 in the tax bills, MB explained that the veterans tax rate was changed by NEMRC from 0.0006 generated for SB approval to 0.0005 when the final Brookline tax bills were generated. At the next SB meeting, MD will make a motion to amend the veterans tax rate from 0.0006 to 0.0005.

D. Other – Doug Wellman

None.

E. Other – Emily Beer

- 1) Guy Tanza's last date of employment was week ending April 19, 2025
- 2) Rescue Inc Open House and Consortium Meeting on August 3, 2025

9. Communications

A. Letters from WRC

- B. A resident who keeps bees is concerned that she is losing bees when pesticides are used and is looking for guidance on how she can protect her bees – for example can she be informed when spraying will take place so that she can cover her bees. This issue is under the state's authority not the SB. DW will follow up with Dot Maggio regarding how this has been handled in the past.

10. Set Agenda

A. Regular Meeting August 6, 2025

- 1) Minutes for Regular SB Meeting July 16, 2025
- 2) Ideas for use of Town Buildings
- 3) Correction of veterans tax rate from 0.0006 to 0.0005
- 4) Contract for Cathy Edgerly Fales
- 5) Planning Commission/Town Plan update
- 6) Other

11. Other Discussion Not Requiring Action

None.

12. Adjourn the Meeting

MD moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 PM.