

Final Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, February 04, 2026, 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)
*Via Zoom

Town Officers:

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

Public:

FactTV*
David Parker (DP)
Jon Ballou (JB)*
Lee Anne Parker (LAP)*

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

MB joined the meeting at 6:51 PM for the discussion of the financials for the Town Meeting and the FEMA grant for Ellen Ware Road.

2. Changes to Agenda

None.

3. Review Draft Minutes

A. Regular Agenda Meeting January 21, 2026

MD made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 21, 2026 SB Meeting. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously by all 5 SB Members.

4. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled Members of the Public

Dan Towler could not attend the meeting. BM rescheduled the presentation by Farnum Insulators to the next SB Meeting.

B. Unscheduled Members of the Public

None.

5. Warrants

A. Payroll

MD made a motion to approve payroll warrant 2629 for \$2,245.21. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable

MD made a motion to approve payables warrant 2630 in the amount of \$8,407.26. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Old Business

A. Planning for March 2, 2026 Annual Town Meeting

MD provided an update on the preparations for the Town Meeting. The Town Warning has been posted. The auditor's report, which is included in the Brookline Annual Report, will be mailed no later than February 20th. David Jones will oversee the printing and distribution. MD described how he intends to present the financials to the Town. The SB reviewed the

final articles and noted that Valley Cares is now Valley Village. DW has invited the senators and representatives but has not heard back from them.

MD made a motion to approve the Brookline Annual Report as drafted. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MD will send out a message regarding open positions and ask the residents to consider running for office.

B. IT Contract

EB summarized the terms of the contract. The hourly rate is \$100 per hour with an estimated total of \$2,000 for the year. The SB discussed which sections of the standard contract should be removed or revised because they are not applicable to IT support. EB made a motion to agree to the terms of the IT proposal with a \$2,000 maximum to the contract and subject to finalization of other language in the contract to make it more appropriate to the services to be provided. MD seconded. Once the contract is finalized the SB will sign it. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Plans for Town Shed

The existing Town Shed is roughly 65 years old, isn't tall enough for delivery trucks to unload their product, has limited space to store road materials, and needs some renovation to shore up rotting wood. The plan is to keep it as an additional storage space. EMB provided a drawing of the proposed new Town Shed and the benefits of building a larger, taller, three-bay shed of pressure-treated lumber. Benefits include being able to stockpile and store an entire season of salt, sand, and three-quarter crushed rock – rather than having to order on demand when these materials may be in short supply. Additional benefits include protecting materials from moisture and then from freezing solid. EMB also recommended the addition of a shed dormer which would allow Town equipment to be readily available in the winter when the plowing contractors store their loaders in the existing shed. EMB will follow up with a material list and cost estimates.

The SB discussed funding sources such as whether construction grants are available. The SB took no action on the project.

D. Update on FEMA Projects

1) Ellen Ware Road

MB received information from Vermont that the Town has been approved to receive a FEMA grant for \$271,000 (\$229,000 for repairs and almost \$43,000 for mitigation work). FEMA has obligated these funds and sent the funds to Vermont. The work includes replacing the existing culvert (20 feet long, 6 feet in diameter) with one that is 40 feet long, 6 feet in diameter. If the project costs more, it is unlikely that FEMA will approve additional funding. The SB needs to issue an RFP to get costs for the project. MB will not sign the paperwork until she receives approval from the SB.

2) Stone Arch/Culvert 11

The SB needs to issue an RFP for the Stone Arch bridge on Hill Road. It may be possible to draft the RFP using material that Brian Post previously provided. Since Brian Post will not be available to work on the project, EMB has contacted someone who worked with him on the Townshend bridge.

- E. SB Authority to Borrow Funds for FEMA Projects
Tabled to next meeting.

7. New Business

None.

8. Reports and Updates

- A. Emily Beer

None.

- B. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello

- 1) Brookline Meeting House (BMH)

BM summarized his communications with Caitlin Corkins (Vermont Division for Historic Preservation) and Jackson Evans (Preservation Trust of Vermont) in follow-up to a resident's calls with them. Both Caitlin Corkins and Jackson Evans have no problems with BM's plans to insulate the Brookline Meeting House (BMH) annex. Caitlin Corkins recommended that BM work with an architect on the plans for the replacement of the annex entrance way and the installation of an ADA ramp to ensure that they are up to code. She suggested that the Town apply for a Robert Sincerbeaux Grant to cover up to half the architect costs.

- 2) Farnum Insulators

BM confirmed that Farnum will attend the February 18th SB Meeting.

- C. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

None.

- D. Doug Wellman

The Cemetery Commission has the option of buying some land on the south side of the cemetery and has requested permission to consult with the Town's attorney.

- E. Mike DeSocio

None.

9. Communications

MD had communications with Stan Noga regarding FEMA. The SB received a communication from VTRANS. EMD reached out to the Town attorney regarding a construction easement on Ellen Ware Road. DW will address the communication concerning boundaries for the census.

10. Set Agenda

- A. Regular Meeting February 18, 2026

- 1) Minutes February 4, 2026
- 2) Farnum Insulators – Jeff Dunbar
- 3) Town Shed – Estimated Costs
- 4) RFP for Ellen Ware Road culvert
- 5) RFP for Paving
- 6) Request from Cemetery Commission to use Town Attorney
- 7) Sign IT Contract
- 8) SB Authority to Borrow Funds for FEMA Projects
- 9) Other

- B. Future Meetings

- 1) Listers regarding contract with NEMRC
- 2) Review of the Planning Commission Town Plan (after Town Meeting)

3) RFP for Paving

11. Other Discussion Not Requiring Action

None.

12. Adjourn the Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk