

Final Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, April 01, 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
Archie Clark (AC) Road Commissioner
Alyssa Schmidt (AS) Lister, Chair
Helen Holt (HH) Lister

Public:

FactTV*
Bob Fisher (BF)*
Everett Hammond (EH)*
G Michael*
Dan Towler (DT)*
Green Mountain Power
Representatives:
Tim Jones (TJ)
Don Mills (DM)
Carol Weston (DW)

1. Mike DeSocio called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM and introduced all attendees.

2. Changes to Agenda

MD motioned to add approval of warrants to the agenda after 6. Review Draft Minutes. EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

A. EB made a motion that, premature general public knowledge regarding the discussion of the Property Valuation and Review Hearing, docket number PVR-2025-1, risks disclosing confidential attorney-client communications with the public and would risk disclosing our litigation strategy unfairly or improperly prejudice the Town. DW seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. EB made a motion to enter into EXECUTIVE SESSION to discuss the upcoming Property Valuation and Review Hearing, docket number PVR-2025-1, with the town's attorney and the Listers as well, under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(E) and (F) of the Vermont Statutes. DW seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

The SB entered into the Executive Session at 6:38 PM. FactTV recording was turned off. Declaring a conflict of interest, MD recused himself. MD, VB, AC, members of the public, and Green Mountain Power representatives in attendance at the meeting left the conference room and closed the door. The SB exited the Executive Session at 7:05 PM and the other attendees returned to the meeting and FactTV recording was resumed. No actions, motions, or votes took place during the Executive Session.

4. Members of the Public

A. Scheduled Members of the Public: Green Mountain Power (GMP) Representatives
GMP Representatives provided an update on their Zero Outage Initiative Program which is ending on September 30, 2026. They are officially requesting permission to return to Brookline to finish their Grassy Brook Road project and have left copies of the maps and standard

agreement with Marjorie Ray, Town Clerk. They could start as early as April. The work would start at the north intersection of Grassy Brook Road and Hill Road and continue to the bottom of Whitney Hill Road. GMP will install new poles. There will be no underground installations. Existing poles will be left until the lines owned by the communications companies are moved to the new poles. GMP was informed of the Town's plans and schedule for paving and culvert replacement. The GMP representatives left after this discussion.

- B. Unscheduled Members of the Public
None.

5. Old Business

- A. Extensions to Hammond Engineering Contract

MD explained that the two original contracts with Hammond Engineering have expired and the Town needs to execute extensions for these contracts for services performed.

MD made a motion to sign the contract extensions for Everett Hammond Services for Ellen Ware Road and the Stone Arch Culvert on Hill Road. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously. During the discussion, MD explained that the extensions covered Hammond's services to date and that additional agreements are needed to cover new work done on these projects. The SB signed the extensions.

- B. Review of Ellen Ware Bids

Everett Hammond (EH) of Hammond Engineering provided a summary of the 7 bids received for the replacement of the culvert on Ellen Ware Road. He recommended selecting LEWCO, LLC located in Springfield, Vermont for this work based on his previous experience with the company and their competitive price. EH also recommended that the SB consider including a 5 percent (\$7,300) contingency to cover any unexpected costs during the construction – such as more ledge than expected.

MD made a motion to accept the recommendation to go with LEWCO, LLC bid subject to achievement of easements as needed, subject to the bidder being willing to meet all the FEMA contractual requirements and any other FEMA requirements, that Mike DeSocio, I, be authorized to sign the contract with the bidder, and adding a 5 percent contingency of the \$146,000 price – without having to come back to the board for approval. EB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Review of Hill/Kirsch Road Bids

EH provided a summary of the two bids received for the Stone Arch Culvert from Sam Bourne Excavating, LLC (\$242,669) and A.S. Clark & Sons (\$357,427). He had no specific recommendation regarding which company to select but did recommend that the SB conduct due diligence around the stone subcontractor and his role and responsibilities while working on the project – as well as other members of the team involved in the project. EH recommended including 5 percent contingency to cover unexpected expenses. The SB determined to move forward by talking with FEMA regarding the project costs, including a breakout of mitigation vs repair, and inviting Sam Bourne and the stone expert Jared Flynn to the next meeting to provide additional information.

MD made a motion to table action on the Hill/Kirsch Road bids, to invite Sam Bourne and Jared Flynn to the next meeting, and to put out notices to the Town that the meeting is going to

take place or is on the agenda before we make a decision. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The SB acknowledged that FEMA will want to see the costs broken out by mitigation vs repair or replacement for Ellen Ware Road. EH left after this discussion.

D. Review of Paving Bids

The Town received two bids for paving: one from Blacktop, Inc. for \$385,465.28 and the one from Bazin Brothers for \$285,510.00. The SB and AC discussed how to maximize the road mileage to be paved to take advantage of the paving grant as the Town is only eligible for a paving grant every 10 years. The RFP included the option to negotiate with the contractor regarding the amount of paving to be done. The SB would like to have the contractor return to measure additional increments and provide estimated costs.

EMB motioned to accept the bid from Bazin Brothers Trucking for \$285,510. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Update on the Building Planning Workgroup Process

Information regarding the Brookline building planning and the April 18th open building day has been posted on Facebook, on the Town's ListServe, and will also appear on Front Porch Forum.

F. Ethics Liaison Appointment

MD motioned to table the ethics liaison appointment and signing the updated purchase policy. EMB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Sign Updated Purchase Policy

See F. above.

H. Proposal for Funding Improvements to the Town Garage

BM made a motion for a special Selectboard meeting to approve the use of FEMA funds to pay for materials for the town shed concrete floor and materials for the three-bay equipment shed proposed and shed dormer for the equipment shed. Dollars spent would be \$24,000 and \$11,000 for the floor and the use of \$8,000 already in a fund. DW seconded.

During the discussion, MD made a motion to modify the motion from Selectboard to Town Meeting. DW seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Following a discussion of the amended original motion, DW motioned for the SB to table the Special Town Meeting discussion. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Review Draft Minutes

A. Regular Agenda Meeting March 18, 2026

MD made a motion to approve the minutes as edited by BM for the March 18, 2026 SB Meeting. EMB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. March 18, 2026 Public Hearing

MD made a motion to approve the minutes as edited for the March 18, 2026 Public Hearing. EMB seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

C. March 30, Special Meeting

MD made a motion to approve the minutes as edited for the March 30, 2026 Special SB Meeting. BM seconded. The motion was approved by the 4 SB Members (MD, BM, EB, EMB) in attendance at the meeting with DW abstaining.

7. Warrants

A. Payroll

MD made a motion to approve payroll warrant 2638 for \$7,951. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable

MD made a motion to approve payables warrant 2639 in the amount of \$42,583.94. BM seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Reports and Updates

A. Emily Beer

The Southern Vermont Municipal Leaders Network is holding a meeting on June 11th in Townshend regarding building community through better public engagement.

B. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello

No update.

C. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

EMB reported that the roads were in good condition for mud season; he has put stone down, has scraped roads, and done some tree work. EMB provided an update on the status of the easements needed from the landowners for the Stone Arch Culvert on Hill Road project and for the Ellen Ware Road project.

D. Doug Wellman

No update.

E. Mike DeSocio

MD provided an update on the Hammond Engineering costs to date for the Ellen Ware Road and Stone Arch Culvert on Hill Road projects as well as whether the costs are reimbursable by FEMA.

9. Communications

Nothing of note received.

10. Set Agenda

A. Regular Meeting April 15, 2026

- 1) Scheduled Members of the Public: Green Mountain Power
- 2) Minutes from April 1, 2026 Regular SB Meeting
- 3) Paving Options
- 4) Update on the Building Planning Workgroup Process and Planning for April 18th Open Building Day
- 5) Ethics Liaison Appointment
- 6) Sign Updated Purchase Policy
- 7) Agenda for Special Town Meeting for Funding New 3-Bay Town Shed with Shed Dormer and Concrete Floor for Existing Town Shed
- 8) Vermont Council of Rural Community Visit Project

11. Other Discussion Not Requiring Action

None.

12. Adjourn the Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk