

Final Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, September 2, 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*
Michael Miller (MM)*
Alex Stradling (AS)*
Jon Ballou (JDB)*

1. **Mike DeSocio called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and introduced all attendees.**
2. **Changes to Agenda**
None.
3. **Review Draft Minutes**
 - A. Regular Agenda Meeting – August 19, 2026
MD made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the Regular SB Meeting on August 19, 2026 as drafted. DW seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously by the 4 SB Members present. After BM arrived, he identified two edits to the minutes. BM made a **motion** to accept the edits. MD seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously by all 5 SB Members.
4. **Members of the Public**
 - A. Scheduled Member of the Public-5 min
Laurie Nau-Martocci- Brookline Historical Group could not make the meeting, however, she and MD communicated regarding the use of Town assets, and MD presented her comments later in the meeting.
 - B. Unscheduled Members of the Public- 2 Min
None.
5. **Warrants**
 - A. Payroll
MD made a **motion** to approve payroll warrant 2708 in the amount of \$2,547.34. EB seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.
 - B. Accounts Payable
MD made a **motion** to approve accounts payable warrant 2709 in the amount of \$449,310.76. BM seconded. The largest payments were for the education taxes (\$286,267) and to Sam Bourne Excavating for work on the Stone Arch Bridge (\$150,234). The motion **passed** unanimously.
6. **Old Business**
 - A. Building Use Workgroup Update
EB and MD summarized the Workgroup's plans for the September 12th public meeting. The Workgroup will present the building options, benefits and risks, as well as estimated costs based

on financial modeling. This presentation will be followed by a public discussion. Near the end of the meeting, the Workgroup is considering asking for an informal show-of-hands to gauge where the public is leaning regarding the building options. The SB also discussed some of the public's comments from the August 18, 2026 meeting and new information since the August 18th meeting, including that if the Schoolhouse is rented, the property may become subject to property taxes with much of the tax going to the State and less revenue coming to the Town. The groups acknowledged the wisdom and benefit of not rushing into a decision until sufficient due diligence has been completed.

B. Town Lister Update

EB **motioned** to table action on the Town Lister Update. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

C. Hill Road/Ellen Ware Update

Hill Road Historic Stone Arch Bridge

Work has been completed on the historic Stone Arch Bridge, and Hill Road is now open to traffic. However, adjustments need to be made to the guard rail on the south side (outlet side) to accommodate snow plowing. MD reported that the Town has received final approval from FEMA, but he needs to reconcile FEMA's description of the project with the actual scope of work.

Ellen Ware Road Culvert Replacement

The replacement culvert has been installed, and the work is expected to be completed soon.

Cash Flow & Line of Credit

The SB discussed the timing of payments for the highway projects, including the paving project, which is scheduled to begin shortly, and the timing of grant reimbursements. EMB identified segments of town highway that would need paving before the next 10-year paving grant and the SB discussed how much additional paving it could add to the existing paving contract to take advantage of the equipment mobilization. The Town will need to use the line of credit with the expectation of paying it off by November.

D. Cemetery Discussion

The Cemetery Commission has not meet since before the last SB Meeting. DW **motioned** to table the cemetery discussion. EB seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

E. Request for SB Support of Ellen Ware Property Grant- October 7

MD reported that the Bull Creek Common Lands group is not planning to make a tax waiver request. They will attend the October 7 SB Meeting to make a presentation to the SB.

F. Paving and expense approval

EMB **motioned** for the Town to spend up to \$370,000 for the paving – including an additional 1,570 feet for an extra \$70,000 on top of the original contract. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

G. Approval of bridge repair near the driveway of BW

The state has said that the bridge (B5) on Grassy Brook Road does not qualify for an emergency grant. Meghan Brunk (Vermont Agency of Transportation) contacted EMB and offered a structure grant for short bridges for \$25,000 (90/10 matching grant) good through 2028. Scott Jensen from the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) had inspected the bridge and recommended

that repairs should be made “the sooner the better”. The SB acknowledged that it was unlikely that they could issue an RFP, finalize a contract, and actually have the work completed by the end of September – with a possible extension to early October 2026. They discussed whether the project meets the Town’s criteria for Emergency Purchases in the Town’s Purchase Policy. BM **motioned** to move forward with bridge repair under the Emergency Purchase section of the Town’s Purchase Policy. After further discussion about whether the situation meets the criteria for an emergency and questions about how much the repair may cost, the **motion was withdrawn**. EMB will ask at least 2 or 3 of the Town’s qualified vendors about the project’s timeline and potential costs. Then the SB will schedule a meeting to approve the repair of bridge B5. The wording of the motion for an emergency repair will include that the Town is moving forward under the guidance of the ANR who said to do it as soon as possible.

7. New Business

A. Emergency repair of bridge on Grassy Brook Road – Culvert 57

EMB **motioned** to approve an engineering grant in the amount of \$18,000 to design a replacement for a rusted-out culvert (C57) on Grassy Brook Road. DW seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously. EMB and EB will work on preparing an RFP for the engineering design work. The grant is a 90/10 matching grant.

B. Policy for Town Buildings/Assets Use

The SB discussed the draft policy for the Brookline Meetinghouse (BMH) provided by Jon Ballou along with input provided by Laurie Nau-Martocci and MD. The SB discussed other considerations to be included such as a mechanism to avoid conflicts (double booking) in timing of use. Members of the SB requested additional time to look at the draft and also to look at what other Towns do. MD **motioned** to table discussion of the policy. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

C. Ordinance for Recycling Bin Use

EB reported that Towns that have an ordinance for littering, include it within a section of a large document that covers solid waste management and also addresses fines and enforcement. The VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) has a legal drafting service that will prepare ordinances for a fee. EB has asked for details about how this service works, what would an enforceable ordinance crafted for Brookline look like, and what the costs are. EB **motioned** to table discussion of the ordinance for the recycling bin use until she hears back from the VLCT. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

D. RFP for Plowing and Sanding

EMB has some additional paragraphs to add to last year’s Request for Proposal (RFP). MD **motioned** to table action of the RFP. DW seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

8. Reports and Updates

A. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello

BM is still planning to meet with Kerry Bourne. He reminded the SB that roughly \$3,300 remains from the energy mini-grant and he proposes spending it on storm windows for the Brookline Meetinghouse. The funds must be spent by the end of 2026. BM and EMB to do some maintenance on the Schoolhouse. Mary Hicky will be meeting with another realtor. Finally, BM passed along observations from an email sent by Stan Noga who meet with local realtors and

who has had extensive experience with the real estate business: that a sale of the Schoolhouse will likely take several years, that established businesses are more likely to need space than new businesses, and that given the location the Schoolhouse was unlikely to get market rental prices.

B. Emily Beer

EB asked about the location of the Town's projector for the Building Use Group's September 12th Meeting. BM reported that it is in the Town Office basement.

C. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills

EMB is researching salt prices.

D. Doug Wellman

Based on state-wide feedback, the state is backing off on having the Fire Department Chiefs appoint fire wardens. Brookline's fire wardens are Mike Fontaine and Mike Winot, as previously appointed.

E. Mike DeSocio

No update.

9. Communications

- The Town has received a letter of resignation from Laurie Nau-Martocci who is moving away from Brookline. MD **motioned** to accept with regret Laurie Nau-Martocci's resignation from the Cemetery Commission, as Justice of the Peace, and from the Historic Round Schoolhouse Committee. DW seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.
- SEVEDS has requested time to be on the agenda.
- Communication from Cota & Cota regarding contracted service work.

10. Set Agenda

A. Regular Meeting September 16, 2026

- 1) Minutes from September 2, 2026 Regular SB Meeting
- 2) Minutes from Special SB Meeting -repair of bridge (B5) on Grassy Brook Road
- 3) Ordinance for Recycling Bin
- 4) Policy for Use of Town Buildings and Assets
- 5) Town Lister Update
- 6) Hill Road and Ellen Ware Road Update
- 7) RFP for Plowing and Sanding
- 8) Cemetery Commission Update
- 9) Paving Expenses Update
- 10) Engineering Design RFP Approval for Culvert 57
- 11) Other

11. Other Discussion Not Requiring Action

The SB discussed planning a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the historic Stone Arch Bridge and coordinating with the Town's Historic Society.

12. Adjourn the Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk