Final Minutes

Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, October 21, 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)*
Colin Bratton (CB)
Win Clark (WC)
Tanner Winot (TW)
Dan Towler (DT)*

1. **Mike DeSocio called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and introduced all attendees.**
   Melissa Brown joined Zoom at 7:44 PM.
2. **Changes to Agenda**
   None.
3. **Review Draft Minutes**
   A. Regular Agenda Meeting – October 7, 2026
   MD made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2026 meeting as drafted. DW seconded. The motion **passed** with 4 of the SB member voting in favor (MD, DW, EB, EMB) and BM abstaining.
4. **Members of the Public**
   A. Scheduled Member of the Public-5 min
   Colin Bratton attended the meeting to provide the SB with information so that they can decide whether the Town should apply for a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant to cover the costs of replacing Culvert 57 on Grassy Brook Road, which is at risk of failure during a major flooding event. The Town has received a $200,000 structure grant, however, based on current costs of replacing similar structures that also require a bypass, the estimated cost of replacing Culvert 57 is $500,000 to $600,000. TAP grants are 80/20 grants and would cover more of the cost of replacing the culvert than the structure grant. Other considerations for the TAP grant include a FEMA like process with a longer timeline, the requirement to meet federal highway standards, and the requirement for a more extensive engineering study. Options under consideration include applying for the TAP grant and determining how to best use the structure grant awarded to the Town – for example can the structure grant be combined with the TAP grant or can it be transferred to another Town structure. If needed the SB can schedule a Special SB meeting to decide how to move forward.:
   B. Unscheduled Members of the Public- 2 Min
   None.

5. Warrants

A. Payroll

DW made a **motion** to approve payroll warrant 2716 in the amount of $5,282.62. EB seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

B. Accounts Payable

DW made a **motion** to approve accounts payable warrant 2717 in the amount of $12,983.42. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

6. Old Business

A. Award contract for Plowing & Sanding

The Town received two updated bids for plowing and sanding and two bids for providing sand from the revised RFP (Request for Proposal). The updated bid for plowing and sanding from Winot Work Property Maintenance was $53,000. The updated bid from A.S. Clark & Sons was $52,000 with 4 quarterly payments of $13,000 and the condition that if the price of diesel exceeds $6.50 per gallon there will be a $100 surcharge for that month. A.S. Clark bid $35.00 per yard for sand to be delivered to the Town garage, mixed with Town salt, and piled in the sand shed. As required by the RFP, A.S. Clark had previously provided a sample of ¾ inch sand. Winot Work bid $32.00 per yard for sand but did not provide a sample of sand.

DW made a **motion** to accept the bid from A.S. Clark & Sons for plowing and sanding for $52,000. EB seconded the motion. During the discussion, the SB discussed both bids for plowing and sanding as well as the bids to provide sand and noted that it was better to have the same company responsible for both contracts. The motion **passed** unanimously.

EB motioned to accept the winter sand bid from A.S. Clark & Sons. DW seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. RFP for Repair of Short Bridge B5 on Grassy Brook Road

This agenda item tabled; the RFP won't go out for bid until Spring 2027.

C. Building Use Workgroup Update

The Workgroup will meet on November 6th to finalize their report after which it will go to the SB. The report covers four options for the Town buildings. To move forward the SB will need to determine how to present the options to the Town for a decision. The guidance from the VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) is that if the Town wants an official legally binding process, they cannot put four options on a ballot; the ballot needs to present a single option. The SB discussed using a survey to get feedback from the Town regarding the options. The Town would hold a public meeting and then proceed with a Town-wide vote.

D. Round Schoolhouse Committee Appointments

EB made a **motion** to appoint Buffy Smith, Jean Albee, and Jess Guerraro to the Round Schoolhouse Committee. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

E. Cease and Desist Letter for Illegal Dumping and SB Designee to Enforce Vermont Statute 24 V.S.A. § 220

Bob Fisher, the Town's Attorney, is willing to prepare the letter, but EB needs to provide additional details. DW **motioned** to authorize Emily Beer to work with the Town attorney to finalize the cease and desist letter. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

EB clarified the next steps include voting to nominate and appoint the Town's municipal officer, informing the Judicial Bureau of the appointment and requesting an officer number. The Bureau will then provide the Town with a ticket book that can be used to write tickets for illegal dumping.

F. Hill Road/Ellen Ware Update

The Town is expecting the initial 90% FEMA payment for the Hill Road work and MB, Treasurer, is pulling together the documentation needed for FEMA to pay the remaining 10% of the grants for both the Hill Road and Ellen Ware Road projects.

G. Cemetery Commission Update

The Cemetery Commission has still not met. The Chair has resigned, there is no alternate chair, and one of the four remaining members, Dot Maggio, is not available. Once they meet, they can address the broken gravestone at the Riverside Cemetery and the issues with the ancient cemeteries.

H. Paving Update

Paving has been completed; the final invoice has been paid. MB stated that the project reimbursement sign-off sheet needs to be signed and submitted so that the Town can receive the $200,000 paving grant. EB **motioned** to authorize EMB to sign the paving grant reimbursement documentation. BM seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

7. New Business

A. Budget for 2027/2028 Fiscal Year

MD reviewed the first draft of the 2027/2028 Fiscal Year budget for the General Fund including projected revenue and estimated expenditures. The SB also discussed how to best handle the surplus from the 2025/2026 fiscal year. The draft budget for the Highway Fund will be discussed at the next SB Meeting.

B. Approval to use remaining MERP funds

The remaining MERP funds total $3,200. All work must be completed by December 31, 2026 . BM and the SB discussed options for use of the remaining funds, including purchasing storm windows for the Brookline Meetinghouse, adding insulation to the Schoolhouse, replacing fluorescent lights in the Town Office. EB **motioned** to table further discussion until the next meeting. MD seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

C. Approval to Use Town Attorney for Property Tax Appeal

EB **motioned** to use Bob Fisher to represent the Town in Andrea Seaton versus the Town of Brookline. MD seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.

D. Title Six Coordinator

Tabled as this was addressed at the October 7, 2026 SB Meeting when Marjorie Ray, Town Clerk, was appointed.

8. Reports and Updates

A. Building Commissioner – Bruce Mello

BM provided an overview of the October 20 & 21 meeting that he attended with specialists from Preservation Trust, Vermont Arts Council, Efficiency Vermont, as well as a moisture and insulation expert. Given the late hour, MD asked that BM request time on the agenda at the next meeting.

B. Emily Beer
No update.

C. Highway Supervisor – E. Mark Bills
Painting Lines on New Pavement
EMB has received feedback regarding the lack of painted lines on the newly paved sections of Grassy Brook Road. EMB reached out to three road line painters and received only one response for an estimated cost of $4,942.08 for painting the double yellow lines and white road side lines. BM made a **motion** to paint the double yellow center lines and white side lines using money from the pavement fund. DW seconded. During the discussion, the SB questioned whether the white road side lines were needed. The cost of painting only the double center lines would be $2,471.04. BM **amended the motion** from doing all 4 lines to just the center 2 lines. DW seconded. The SB also discussed whether VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation) is responsible for painting the lines and asked EMB to reach out to VTrans. EB **motioned** to amend BM's motion that the expenditure shall only be used after seeing if VTrans will do the painting first. BM seconded. The amended motion **passed** unanimously. EB called for a vote on the **original amended motion** to see if VTrans will paint the lines and if they will not the Town will pay $2,471.04 to paint the center lines. The motion passed unanimously.
Follow-up Regarding TAP Grant
EMB will follow-up with Meghan Brunk (VTrans) to schedule a call regarding the structure grant and invite EB as well.

D. Doug Wellman
No update.

E. Mike DeSocio
No update.

9. Communications
There was a communication for BM regarding winterizing.

10. Set Agenda
A. Regular Meeting November 4, 2026
1) Minutes from October 21, 2026 Regular SB Meeting
2) Cease and Desist Letter for Illegal Dumping and SB Designee to Enforce Vermont Statute 24 V.S.A. § 220
3) Cemetery Commission Update
4) Approval to Use Remaining MERP Funds
5) TAP Grant
6) Engineering RFP for Culvert 57
7) Highway Budget
8) Hill Road/Ellen Ware Road Update
9) Approve Plowing and Sanding and Sand Contracts
10) Summary of BM's October 20 & 21 meeting with Preservation Trust, Vermont Arts Council, Efficiency Vermont, and moisture and insulation expert.
11) Policy for Use of Town Buildings and Assets
12) Other

11. Other Discussion Not Requiring Action
None.

12. Adjourn the Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Vanessa Ballou, Recording Clerk