

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
SELECTBOARD / SEWER COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9, 2025

DRAFT

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Owen Astbury, Chair

Present: Steve Tarleton, Selectboard Member, Nope Martin, Selectboard Member, Randy Kennedy, Road Foreman, Melissa Spear, Treasurer and Nancy Robinson, Clerk.

Visitors: Chris Stevens and Robert Pauly

Visitors via Zoom: Jerry Oppenheimer & The Wideman's

Additions/changes to agenda: None.

Owen moved to accept the minutes of November 18, 2025, as written. Steve seconded the motion and motion carried.

Scheduled visitor: Chris Stevens came before the board to review the Snowmobile Policy and Fire Station "punch list" list of items that need to be fixed/addressed.

After reviewing the list of roads open to snowmobiles, Owen moved to approve this current list, Steve 2nd the motion and motion carried.

The list of items that need fixing or updates was then reviewed. Chris reported that a couple of items needed to be added to the list; interior and exterior LED bulbs have gone out and need to be replaced. The interior lights have been ordered at no cost but will need to hire an electrician to install. The exterior lights need to be removed, packaged, and sent back to the company. Would like to have the board approved the work so that an electrician (have been using Jason Chayer) can be hired to replace the interior lights and remove and package the exterior. Will keep an ongoing list of what lights are being replaced for future reference. Owen moved to approve the lighting request. Steve 2nd the motion. Chris will get a quote for the town to have on record. Also discussed building maintenance items that need to be addressed; sprinkler system and fire alarm are overdue for inspections. CO alarm also needs attention. Chris will see if Josh Maxham will follow up on these items.

There was also a brief discussion of the 2 electrical services shared between the fire station and community center, Chris wondered if the costs should also be shared between the two entities. Owen asked about the chicken cooker that sits on the east end of the field. Will be moved off from the field.

Highway Report: Randy reported that the crew have been plowing, sanding, and salting. All equipment is working and ready for tomorrow's projected snowstorm. A belt broke on the sander and had to be replaced. Randy discussed with the board the possibility of ordering an assortment of bolts to have on hand. He can get a 1700-piece set for \$990.00. Nope moved to approve this expense. Steve seconded the motion and motion carried.

December 9, 2025 minutes cont.

Treasurer's File: Expense warrant #26-11 was reviewed and signed. (e-ck #'s 2996-3003 and ck's 22173-22206). Paying local appropriations. Payroll warrant #26-05 was reviewed and approved.

Melissa discussed with the board the necessity of adopting a revised Bidding and Purchasing Policy to be in compliance with new regulations requiring additional language in the policy related to purchasing and contracting using Federal funds as outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 etc. The updated information relates to the Davis Bacon Act, Whistleblower Act, Debarment and Suspension. These additions will add an extra step to contractors wishing to bid on federally funded projects. Nope moved to approve the new policy. Steve seconded the motion and motion carried.

Hale Hollow Bridge update: Melissa and Randy attended a meeting last week with Chris Bump (VTRANS), Scott Jensen (ANR) and Niki Burke & Sebastian Strong (McFarland & Johnson) to discuss the material and stone that needs to be used on the bridge project. This information will change the scope of work for the bridge. All of the new information will be provided to the contractors that attend the pre-bid meeting. Army Corp of Engineers need to be contacted to get required permits. S. Jensen and representatives from McFarland & Johnson will be on the job site for the first 2 or 3 days to oversee the work. Pre-bid meeting will still be held on Tuesday, December 16th as noticed & published. Contractors will be provided with information about the new bidding policy as well as job specs. Bid submission time frame will probably be extended due to these changes. Melissa has applied and received an extension on this project in case it cannot be completed by September 1, 2026. Melissa also reported that Jim Tonkavich (VEM) is retiring on December 10th and that a new FEMA rep (David McMillan) has been assigned. Trying to arrange a meeting with new representative, Chris Bump (leaving VTRANS at end of year) and town officials, not successful yet.

Melissa also had a quote/estimate from McFarland & Johnson in the amount of \$2,000 to assist the town on the bridge project for 1 year. Nope moved to approve the contract, Steve seconded the motion and motion carried.

Melissa is also finalizing paperwork for administrative costs to be refunded by FEMA/State. Waiting for FY 25-25 audit report from RHR Smith, will follow up with them again.

Visitor: At this time, the board heard from Robert Pauly who was here to ask about the plowing schedule on the Chateauguay Road as he has a new driver that needs to get out by 7:15 am. Crew will do their best to get road plowed. Also asked that the road crew not plow the area that he piles his wood. This is not a turnaround spot and doesn't want people to use his land for a pull off. The area will not be plowed.

Clerk's File: Nancy didn't have an item on the agenda but wanted to update the board to her computer issues. The computer has been having problems for a few weeks, was looked at by town's computer technician and found to be in need of being replaced. A new computer has been ordered and is expected to arrive early next week.

Old business: None

December 9, 2025 minutes cont.

New business: Nancy gave the board members copies of the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan which has to be formally received by the board before it is sent onto Vermont Emergency Management for review.

Nancy reported on the information that she had found and received regarding Local Option Tax (LOT). There are 3 types of LOT that could be voted on to give the town additional revenue; 1% sales tax, 1% rooms tax and 1% meals and alcoholic beverage tax.

The VT Dept. of Taxes does not have or provide a list of registered businesses that may file rooms and meals taxes.

Currently the Town has 4 restaurants and stores that provide meals that pay the meals and alcohol tax. We do not have any way of knowing of a complete list of rooms or Airbnb's that should pay into the state. Joan Wideman has done some research and provided the board with some information regarding estimated revenue in the amount of between 20-35,000. This equated to about 2 cents on the tax rate. The state suggested that if board were to add an article to the town meeting warning they should speak with as many potential businesses that may be impacted as possible. The board was not ready to make a decision at this time. Will address at next meeting.

Nancy also mentioned that Dave Buckey, Town Assessor, is expected to be in the office tomorrow if any of the board members wanted to stop by to introduce themselves and to ask any questions that they may have.

Being no other business, Steve moved to adjourn at 6:00 pm. Owen seconded the motion and motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Robinson,
Clerk