

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
SELECTBOARD/SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2026

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Meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Owen Astbury, Chair
Present: Norman (Nope) Martin, Selectboard Member and Steve Tarleton, Selectboard Member
Randy Kennedy, Road Foreman, Melissa Spear, Treasurer and Nancy Robinson, Clerk

Visitors: In person – Laura Stone & Gemma Poulson, VTRANS – Engineering Division
Ed & Linda Valenski, Valerie Bridge, Jeff Bridge
Zoom: The Wideman’s and George Spear

Additions to agenda: Wastewater Letter from SOS
Windsor County Sheriff’s Dept. email

Scheduled Visitors: Laura Stone, VTRANS PE – Discussion of Bridge #26 on Mountainside Road. This meeting is an Alternative’s presentation to hear the report of the completed feasibility study to determine if the bridge should be rehabilitated, replaced or removed. Notice of this meeting was published in the local newspaper, posted locally and sent to all stakeholders and abutting landowners. This bridge is one of the last Warren Pony Truss bridges, built in 1922 and was part of the original Route 4 road. New Route 4 was built in the 1960’s at which time this bridge and road became town owned and maintained as a class 3 road. Laura reviewed several options and expense associated with each option.

1. Do nothing – bridge would continue and deteriorate and become an environmental hazard.
2. Truss Rehab – Clean, repair and replace members. Would not pass hydraulic design. 30-year life span at a cost of approx. \$2.7 million dollars.
3. Full bridge replacement with a new Pony Truss. Would require a new substructure. 75 years life span with a cost of approx. \$4.7 million dollars.
4. Full bridge replacement with a conventional steel beamed bridge. 75-year life span with a cost of approx. \$4.1 million dollars
5. Disinvest-Permanent Bridge closure – remove bridge, construct turn around, provides the lowest costs solutions at this site at approx. \$930,000.
6. Pedestrian Bridge replacement – allows pedestrians and cyclists to cross. Total road closure. Approx cost \$1.3 million.

Town portion would be 2.5% of each of the above costs.

Mr. Valenski, closest abutter to the bridge, inquired about the turnaround process. Jeff Bridge is ok with any decision as long as he can access his field at the east end of the bridge.

After discussing the options and hearing from the abutters, Owen moved to Disinvest-Permanent Bridge closure of the Mountainside Road Bridge. Nope seconded the motion and the motion carried. Information regarding this bridge can be found at the following link.

<https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/vtrans/external/Projects/Structures/22J407>

Nope moved and Steve seconded to approve the minutes of January 27, 2026, as written. Motion carried.

February 10, 2026 Selectboard Minutes Cont.

Highway Report: Randy reported that the truck is back from Earle's. Has contacted Barrett to check status of salt. Slim chance of getting any and now up to \$120.00 ton. Thinks that we have enough to get through. Randy signed the paperwork on the new grader. Expected to be delivered in 4-6 weeks. Randy and Shaun worked on Sunday to take care of roads from Saturdays storm.

Treasurer's File: Expense warrant #26-15 (e-ck's #3015-3016 and ck's 22265-22284) was reviewed and signed. A current year budget status and fund balance report was given to the board to review. Owen moved and Steve seconded the motion to engage RHR Smith for the FY 26 audit. 75% retainer will need to be sent in with engagement letter. Motion carried. Melissa has signed off on the loan interest from the FEMA loans; reimbursement should be coming back to the town soon. State has approved the Scope of Work for Hale Hollow Bridge. Waiting for FEMA approval, then bidding packages can be sent to the contractors. Melissa is interviewing a local person interested in becoming the asst. treasurer.

Clerk's File: Owen moved and Steve seconded to approve the liquor and tobacco applications submitted by Isah's Grab n Go for the store in West Bridgewater. Motion carried.

Old business: New computer IT person was here last week to check on the status of the Treasurer and Assessor computers. Both are "running" windows 10 which is no longer supported by Microsoft which creates liability issues. Suggested that the town order 3 new computers (Dell) so that the town office staff are all using the same computer system. The computer that was recently purchased and set up for the Clerk could go to the town garage as that computer is old and no longer usable. Melissa had a quote for \$10,605 for the new computer and set up. Asked the board to approve up to \$12,000 to cover any extras that may be needed. We have funds available in either the FEMA administrative reimbursement or various other reserve accounts. Owen moved to approve up to \$12,000 to purchase and upgrade the computer system. Nope seconded the motion and the motion carried.

New business: The selectboard reviewed and signed the PVR Form-4155 Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending with the Town Assessor/Listers. Form gets filed in the Grand List. The Fire Department/Auxiliary has asked for permission to use the field for an Easter Egg hunt on April 4, 2026, from 8:30 -noon. Permission granted on a motion by Owen and seconded by Steve. Board has received a letter from Simon Operating Service discontinuing service with the town as of May 1st. due to staffing issues. Gave a list of state resources to draw from. Hope to have more information at the next meeting. Email from the Windsor County Sheriff's Department letting the town know that they intend to proceed with business as usual. Deputy Claude Weyant is acting chief deputy and is overseeing department operations at this time.

Visitors: No comment

Being no other business to come before the board, Owen moved to adjourn at 5:10 pm. Steve seconded the motion and motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Robinson, Clerk