

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECT BOARD MEETING
September 4, 2025
(UNAPPROVED)
5:00 p.m.

Present: Select Board: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Douglas Wright, Michael G. Denault, Kurt Gamari and John Dunn.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, John Burchard, Carol Ethier-Kipp, Alden Finney, Lisa Gramlin, Peter Greenbush, William Levine, James McPherson, James Righi, Debra Righi, and James Stimpson.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

Lori Shepard, Select Board Secretary.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. MOTION by Doug Wright to find that premature general public knowledge of a personnel matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Doug Wright to enter executive session for a personnel matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Select Board entered executive session at 5:10 p.m. Dave Tatro and John Burchard were invited to participate.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to exit executive session. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 5:30 p.m. No action was taken.

2. MOTION by Doug Wright to find that premature general public knowledge of a personnel matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Doug Wright to enter executive session for a personnel matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Select Board entered executive session at 5:30 p.m. Dave Tatro and James McPherson were invited to participate.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to exit executive session. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 5:55 p.m. No action was taken.

Nancy Bushika opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda. Lisa Gramlin recorded the meeting for the YouTube video.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Lisa Gramlin received an email asking if the town would like to participate in the flood mapping project the state is working on. She will follow up for more information.

2. Peter Greenbush asked who to contact to have the deteriorated sidewalk in front of his property removed. Dave Tatro felt he should contact the Vermont Agency of Transportation since it is in the state's right-of-way.

MINUTES

1. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to accept the meeting minutes of August 7, 2025 as written. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
2. MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the meeting minutes of August 21, 2025 as written. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECT BOARD ORDERS

The Select Board reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #35 \$ 8,528.65 payroll
- WARRANT #36 \$19,349.62 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The board reviewed financials for the month of July.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The chip seal coat has been completed on East Road. Dave Tatro has reserved the sweeper for the week of September 25, 2025.
2. The highway crew has been working on the 2025 and 2026 Grant-in-Aid projects on Sportsmen Road. They have a small amount of work to finish and the projects will be complete.
MOTION by Mike Denault to sign the FY 2026 Grant-in-Aid Grant Agreement. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
3. Dave Tatro thanked the residents on Sportsmen Road who were good about his closing of the road during the project.
4. Dave Tatro has asked the black topping company to come next month to provide a quote on the next set of roads to be resurfaced as part of the five-year road maintenance plan.

RECYCLING

The recycling information sheet was reviewed and the Select Board decided not to increase any of the fees for the 2026 season beginning November 1, 2025.

SURVEY FOR SOLUTIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY FOR NORTHERN BERKSHIRE AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Select Board discussed the topic at length. It was ultimately decided that Mike Denault would follow up with the ambulance service and report back to the board.

PLANNING COMMISSION GRANT AND GRANT MATCH

Callie Fishburn from the Bennington County Regional Commission has started the grant application for a grant to update the Town Plan. The 10% town match should be included in the Planning Commission's budget for 2026.

PASSENGER RAIL RESTORATION PROJECT

The town was contacted by a group seeking support for a federal grant to reinstate passenger train service to North Adams. The board agreed that train transportation would be a benefit to our town and the area as a whole.

MOTION by John Dunn to send a letter of support for the passenger railway. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve the Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit application from McElwain Contracting LLC. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The appropriate fee and insurance information was received from the applicant.

EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK

The board reviewed the Employee Policy Handbook and made some revisions. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to approve the Employee Policy Handbook with the revisions. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The final policy will be signed at the next meeting.

ALL BOARDS MEETING

The All Boards meeting will be held on Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 6 p.m. Notices have been sent out and the Select Board encourages at least one member from each board to attend.

911 NUMBERING UPDATE

Bob Briggs and his team have been working on the list.

TOWN SIGN

At the last meeting the board voted to move forward with installing the last sign on the side of the school building and creating a new sign for the front lawn. The School Directors had some questions first, such as preparation of the building surface before sign installation. Jim Stimpson expressed frustration with the delay when he thought everything was ready to move forward. The contractor is a professional who will create a frame to hang the sign on the wall. A 50% deposit will be made and Jim Stimpson will work with the contractor and will submit a design of the new sign for the board's review. Dave Tatro consulted with the Agency of Transportation and the state's right-of-way has been marked with blue posts. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to move forward with the new sign and to install the prior sign on the side of the building. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DELINQUENT DOG UPDATE

There are two dog owners who still need to license their dogs for the 2025 season: Aaron Malachuk and Jamie Koosa.

NATIONAL OPIOID SETTLEMENT INFORMATION

The board previously agreed to participate in the settlement process. They authorized Lori Shepard to complete the forms online.

BINARY BLIZZARD EXERCISE

The state is planning an Emergency Management tabletop exercise on October 22, 2025 and Bob Briggs has signed up to participate. He has scheduled a meeting on September 10, 2025 at 6 p.m. at the firehouse for planning purposes. Nancy Bushika encouraged the Select Board members to attend the planning meeting and the exercise.

SCHOOL SAFETY MEETING

Several Select Board members walked around the school with the principal and superintendent to review safety issues suggested by the Vermont State Police. The superintendent will also discuss the issues with the School Directors. Removal of the large trees in front of the stone wall near the generator was discussed as well as trimming or removing the bushes in front of the classroom.

BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY

The town clerk will schedule a Board of Civil Authority meeting to complete the voter checklist purging on September 18, 2025 at 5:45 p.m.

ASSESSMENT APPEAL

Mike Denault was approached by a property owner who wanted to grieve his assessment but did not receive the notice to appeal. The appeal process was briefly reviewed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature general public knowledge of a personnel matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session for a personnel matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Select Board entered executive session at 7:40 p.m. Dave Tatro was invited to participate.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to exit executive session. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:10 p.m.

Action: MOTION by Nancy Bushika to offer the highway laborer position to James McPherson. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Doug Wright to adjourn. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 8:11 p.m.

Kurt Gamari
Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at vtalert.gov to receive notifications. You can choose how you would like to be alerted (phone call, text or email) and can choose what type of alerts you would like to receive, i.e. weather, road closures, public health, etc.
2. Anyone interested in applying for the transfer station substitute position should contact the town office or a member of the Select Board.
3. Anyone interested in serving as a lister should submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.
4. 911 House numbers must be affixed to your home or the entrance of your driveway to be compliant with state law.
5. The dog license due date was April 1, 2025. Please come in as soon as possible to license your dog. The new dog license fees for 2025 are \$18.00 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$24.00 for real/intact dogs. A \$50.00 fine has also been assessed.
6. The town office is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and on Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.; closed Mondays.