

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 12th, 2025

Approved August 26th, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Walter Crandall at 7:02pm.

ATTENDANCE

Members in attendance: Jessica Demeritt (Chair), Walter Crandall (Vice-Chair), Joe Szarejko, Sam Peisch (Secretary), John Dunham

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (Town Administrator), Debra Sprague (Zoom), Lisa Burns (Zoom), Stacy Jones (Acting Recording Secretary), Tom Steadman, John McNerney, Sue Stasny

ANNOUNCEMENTS

J. Szarejko shared that he and S. Peisch repainted all but one of the “Welcome to Monkton” signs. Shane (Lawrence, Road Foreman) will do some brush clearing around the Silver Street sign, the last one to be repainted, to make it more visible and accessible.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

Added: waiver of late payment of homestead tax penalty

Deleted (deferred): Planning Commission Survey & Act 181

Deleted (deferred): Highway right of way permit policy

Deleted (deferred): Bike/ped scoping study

PUBLIC COMMENT

T.Steadman asked if the new delinquent tax policy is available to the public. It is not currently available, it will be made available once it is approved. T.Steadman asked to review a copy of the draft being voted on; one was provided.

REGULAR BUSINESS

APPROVE JULY 22, 2025 SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

J. Demeritt requested an amendment under the windshield damage claim adding that the operator was passing from the south. Adding the words from “from the South” will provide clarity to the incident that happened.

J. Demeritt moved to approve the minutes of July 22nd, 2025 as amended, J. Dunham seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. Szarejko moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50718 in the amount of \$17,694.39; S. Peisch seconded. Primary amounts are for

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Capital One, Crystal Rock, Heffernan Brothers Aggregate, Homeward Bound, North Middlebury Sand and Gravel, USPS, etc. **The vote passed 4-0-1, J. Demeritt abstained.**

S. Peisch moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50729 in the amount of \$8,146.26; J. Szarejko seconded. Primary amounts are for payroll transfer, electrical work, erosion control, and water test. **The vote passed 4-0-1, J. Demeritt abstained.**

J. Dunham moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50806 in the amount of \$26,657.08; J. Szarejko seconded. Primary amounts are for recurring expenses such as utilities, fuel, Zoho (email) subscription, culverts, etc. **The vote passed 4-0-1, J. Demeritt abstained.**

J. Szarejko moved to approve Payroll Check Warrant #50728 in the amount of \$14,739.78; S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-1, J. Demeritt abstained.

S. Peisch moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50811 in the amount of \$9,843.00; J. Szarejko seconded. Primary amounts are for payroll transfer, sheriff department contract, gravel, oil, etc. **The vote passed 4-0-1, J. Demeritt abstained.**

J. Szarejko moved to approve Payroll Check Warrant #50811 in the amount of \$14,161.68; J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-0-1, J. Demeritt abstained.

REVIEW OVERWEIGHT PERMITS

W. Crandall stated permits have slowed considerably. W. Crandall reviewed and approved one permit today.

KILBURN TRANSPORT

FACILITY USE REQUESTS

W. Crandall has three to review, one for November 2025 and two for 2026. The space was used all day today by the MAUSD School Board.

NEW BUSINESS

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND FEMA

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J. Szarejko reported that for the last 2 weeks the highway department has been working on Rotax Rd. They ditched through wooded areas and stone lined the sides, installed over 200ft of French drain, replaced 2 culverts, ditched near Raven Ridge and seeded/mulched, and spread and graded 500yds gravel from Rosco Rd. to Covered Bridge Rd. Additionally, they've sprayed chloride and water on various roads to mitigate some of the dust from the extreme heat we've had recently, pulled the shoulder off of Davis Rd. cleaned up the washout on Hollow Rd near the Rec field, filled in various pot holes, continued roadside mowing, completed some routine maintenance on an excavator and replaced some parts on one of the dump trucks, and began hauling some gravel to the shop. The temporary Tyler Bridge culvert fix has been completed by Parent Construction.

Upcoming projects include ditching and gravel spreading on Nichols Rd.

J. Szarejko further reported there was a FEMA meeting this morning that went well. A payment in the amount of \$85,827.00 has been received (this is the 75% committed by FEMA for the Tyler Bridge Rd., Higbee Rd., Boro Hill Rd., and Mountain Rd. projects completed in 2024.) J. Szarejko anticipates Monkton's current business with FEMA should be complete within a few more meetings. S. Wilbur referred to the budget spreadsheet and noted these monies will go into the "anticipated revenue from grants" line.

W. Crandall asked if any of these funds are for Piney Woods. They are not. W. Crandall then asked how much has been requested for Piney Woods, S. Wilbur indicated FEMAs share will be \$1,147,000.00 and referred back to the spreadsheet provided for further breakdown.

VTRANS GRANT-IN-AID AGREEMENT

S. Wilbur shared this is a \$24,000.00 grant for ditch/drainage work, the town must match 20%. This is a routine grant received for the last several years geared toward mitigation of phosphorus pollution in Lake Champlain. S. Wilbur indicated copies of the grant/project are available for review. For this meeting's purpose, only a vote to authorize that a board member as a signatory is necessary.

J. Dunham moved to authorize the vice chair, Walter Crandell, to sign the VTrans grant-in-aid agreement; S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

OVERWEIGHT ORDINANCE

J. Demeritt asked if J. Szarejko had input regarding Shane's (Lawrence, Road Foreman) idea implementing a strict prohibition against any vehicle exceeding 24,000lbs on Silver St. The idea mirrors a Vergennes policy.

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J. Demeritt posed the question: What do we expect trucks to do? How will they comply with the ordinance when they come upon the sign? S. Peisch indicated he shared that query and added that signage would require updating as well.

J. McNerney stated it would likely be necessary to make an allowance for local traffic, for example if a resident required a truck exceeding the weight limit to come and pour a foundation or the like. J. McNerney then referred to a Hinesburg policy that Monkton might borrow from which states, "No thru trucks exceeding XXlbs"

T. Steadman asked why Silver st was singled out. J. Demeritt offered that the suggestion came from Shane (Lawrence, Road Foreman) and would need to be revisited to clarify why the proposal only included Silver St. T. Steadman noted that we would need to look more closely to be sure there is a way around and/or to turnaround. After further discussion, general consensus is reached that signage would need to be posted at or near town limits and that this discussion should be revisited when Shane (Lawrence, Road Foreman) attends (likely at the next regularly scheduled meeting).

S. Peisch suggested that in the meantime he would talk with Hinesburg about their ordinance. J. Szarejko proposed that each Selectboard member reach out to a bordering town to inquire about signage. All agreed as follows:

S. Peisch - Hinesburg, Vergennes

J. Szarejko - Bristol

W. Crandall - Ferrisburg

J. Dunham - Starksboro

J. Demeritt - New Haven

J. Demerit commented that Monkton has considerably more traffic than it did some years ago. J. McNerney replied that there was a construction project on Rte. 116 some years back that detoured traffic through Monkton. Many drivers continued to use the route after the detour was taken down because it was a shorter, more direct route. J. McNerney also suggested that increased usage of GPS by motorists likely contributes to the increase in recent years.

CURB CUT APPLICATION - SHANDROW

J. Szarejko shared that he and Shane (Lawrence, Road Foreman) met yesterday to review a curb cut application for 781 Nichols Rd submitted by John and Linda C. Shandrow. This is a 2-lot sub-division, the curb cut would serve a single family residence. J. Szarejko reviewed the handout provided. A culvert would need to be installed by the construction company, to be paid for by the permit holder, the dimensions are estimated to be 40ft in length and 15in in diameter. Additionally, there is a tree limb overhanging Nichols Rd. at the proposed location that would need to be cut back. J. Szarejko shared that the permit has been signed off on by Shane (Lawrence, Road Foreman) and that construction would likely begin this week, should the selectboard approve the permit.

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J. Dunham asked a clarifying question about the map in the handout. Following discussion, the issue was clarified, there is an error in the map. J. Dunham asked an additional clarifying question about whose responsibility it is to enforce wetland crossings/protects. J. McNerney specified that it is a state responsibility, not a Selectboard issue.

J. Szarejko moved to approve the Shandrow Curb Cut Permit Application for 781 Nichols Rd.; S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

T. Steadman requested an opportunity for public comment. T. Steadman raised a concern about a driveway that has been installed near his property. He notes that he does not believe there to be a culvert in it. T. Steadman queried if a curb cut process was completed for the project.

W. Crandall requested the specific location (just south of Deer Run Rd.) J. Szarejko agreed to look into it.

BOBOLINK PROGRAM AGREEMENT - Sue Stasny

S. Stasny stated that the agreement was just ready for a signature. J. Demeritt requested some discussion to clarify why the contract should be signed now given that the dates on the agreement have passed (May 20, 2025 - July 24, 2025).

S. Stasny stated that the original intent was just to garner more awareness and support for the project. S. Stasny hopes to just sign the contract and "see what happens next" - there is no risk financially, or otherwise, associated with the current contract. Best case scenario, they just send a sign even though the agreement is out of date, and perhaps it will simplify the process for next year. S. Peisch asked if the Recreation Center had followed up with previously raised questions/concerns. No material concerns were brought forth.

J. Dunham moved to authorize the vice chair, Walter Crandell, to sign the Bobolink program agreement; J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

DELIQUENT TAX POLICY

J. Demeritt noted that S. Wilbur drafted an updated Policy. The draft provided in the packet does not have the most current markups. J. Demeritt inquired if T. Steadman had any feedback following his review of the draft he requested at the start of this meeting.

T. Steadman asked for clarification on changes as written. T. Steadman discussed the state statute as he understands it and raised concerns about whether the Treasurer is printing out the warrants of delinquent taxes indicating new balances for all parcels in delinquency each month and delivering them to

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the parcel owners and the Delinquent Tax Collector (currently, one person fills both the role of the Treasurer and the role of the Delinquent Tax Collector). J. Dunham noted that it is important to clearly identify and distinguish BOTH the physical drop-off address and the mailing address distinctly. J. Dunham volunteered to mark-up the draft with discussed changes (addresses, "town treasurer"). S. Wilbur will deliver the marked-up copy to Bill (Joos, Town Treasurer)

Vote on this action is postponed until the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT SIGN

W. Crandall has been in talks with a representative from Daktronics (the company responsible for the dynamic message signs/e-signboards at Mt. Abe and Vergennes high schools). The quote is costly (about \$50,000.00). W. Crandall has invited the company to visit and provide a demo/Q&A in October - date to come (it will be during a regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting). S. Peisch queried if the demo is free; it is.

ASSISTANT TREASURER

The selectboard made an offer to a candidate. The candidate accepted. J. Demeritt will reach out to Bill (Joos, Town Treasurer) to determine a start date.

WAIVER OF LATE PAYMENT FOR HOMESTEAD DECLARATION

S. Wilbur read the waiver as written and encouraged the Selectboard to vote on whether to adopt the waiver. J. McNerney commented, this motion was made and passed every year he sat on the Selectboard. S. Peisch queried if this fee must be waived annually, rather than adopting a standing waiver. It does need to be voted on annually.

J. Dunham moved to waive the late penalty for homestead declaration; J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

CONNECTING WITH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

J. Demeritt shared that she and S. Peisch went to visit the Fire Department. They had a nice visit. One of the topics discussed was how the Selectboard might support the Fire Department. Several ideas were proposed:

- When the Post Office lease comes up, the Selectboard can reach out to the Fire Department to talk about it.
- Think about recruitment/retention strategies (possibly an addition to the budget for the Fire Department to use to stipend volunteers.)

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- The Fire Department is looking for a volunteer to maintain their social media presence.

During their visit J. Demeritt and S. Peisch heard some inspiring stories about how the community steps up to support them and learned some of the history of the Fire Department, such as that the founding members built the original building as volunteers.

J. Dunham asked if the Fire Department had a \$ number to work with for the possible stipend. J. Demeritt responded that the Fire Department preferred if the Selectboard came up with the number.

ACTION ITEM ROUNDUP

- 1) Deer Run Road Curb Cut, J. Szarejko.
- 2) All board members, reaching out to towns about signage.
- 3) Contact Owner of tractor trailer in Park&Ride Parking lot, W. Crandall.

OLD BUSINESS

VGS CASE UPDATE

J. Dunham offered that information requests have been submitted as well as depositions. Things included by Cindy Hill are largely unchanged, save for the few things the Selectboard previously requested.

Their (VGS) responses are due August 22nd and rebuttal is due September 26th.

OTHER BUSINESS

DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meetings will be August 26th 2025. A special meeting will be held at 5:30pm at 100 Roscoe Rd. The meeting will recess there; on return to the town offices, an information session followed by a hearing will take place. The regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting will follow.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EMPLOYEE ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

J. Demeritt moved to enter Executive Session finding that premature general knowledge to the public would clearly place the public body or person or persons involved at a substantial disadvantage. J. Dunham seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

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J. Demeritt moved to enter Executive Session to discuss labor relations agreements and employee reviews, in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) of the Vermont statutes. W. Crandell seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0. Entered Executive Session at 8:36pm.

The public left the meeting and S. Jones stepped out of the room.

J. Dunham moved to exit the Executive Session. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0. Exited the Executive Session at 9:10pm.

Two members of the Selectboard will meet with the employees of the town to discuss their evaluations.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Dunham moved to adjourn the meeting. J. Demeritt seconded. The vote passed, 5-0-0. Meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Jones