

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 26th, 2025
DRAFT

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Jessica Demeritt at 7:03pm.

ATTENDANCE

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

Members absent: Walter Crandall (Vice-Chair)

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (Town Administrator), Shane Lawrence (Road Foreman), Jaime Schulte (Acting Recording Secretary), Randy Charboneau, Tom Steadman, Stacy Jones, Stephen Pilcher, Lisa Burns, Ivor Hughes, Jessika Yates, Susan Davis.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

J. Demeritt mentioned that the Fire Department is hosting the Mud Bog on Saturday, Sept 6th.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

No changes were made.

PUBLIC COMMENT

R. Charboneau joined the board to report that auditors found four parcels coded as paid that still appear as delinquent on the books. This information was conveyed to the Treasurer on June 6th, but no response has been received. R. Charboneau wants the matter addressed to correct the delinquent taxpayer list.

Separately, and in his personal capacity, R. Charboneau questioned the change in status of the Treasurer position from appointed to full time, seeking information on when this occurred and if the process was handled correctly, similar to the recent Assistant Treasurer appointment. He noted the incumbent Treasurer's term seemed to have expired in March but he has continued in the role. J. Demeritt will follow up on the question. T. Steadman mentioned the Treasurer's concern about not being re-appointed and clarity on the ongoing nature of the position.

T. Steadman raised concerns about the accuracy of tax bills, referencing page 34 of the Town Report where the grand list amount appeared to be off by some \$30,000. While this may be a typo, L. Burns confirmed that the correct figures were used in the NEMRC system for the tax bills. S. Peisch, J. Schulte, and L. Burns also stated their own tax bills seem correct, and S. Peisch will follow up with the Treasurer.

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T. Steadman revisited an inquiry about a new driveway for field access near his property, which seems to have grown into a road. He asked if farmers need a curb cut and if it needs to meet driveway standards with a culvert. J. Szarejko, after contacting the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, reported that the state does not limit properties to one curb cut, so local rules on access would apply. T. Steadman doesn't object to the new curb cut but wants a culvert installed there.

APPROVE SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 12th, 2025

J. Dunham moved to approve the minutes of August 12th, 2025 for the Regular Selectboard Meeting as written. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

AUGUST 12th, 2025

J. Demeritt moved to approve the minutes of August 12th, 2025 for the Special Selectboard Meeting as written. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. Szarejko moved to approve Accounts Payable Payroll Warrant #50825 in the amount of \$14,504.64. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

J. Szarejko moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50822 in the amount of \$59,753.64. J. Dunham seconded. Primary amounts were for health insurance, Heffernan's for gravel, Tyler Bridge Rd. culvert work, etc. The vote passed 4-0-0.

J. Szarejko moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50814 in the amount of \$24,327.88. S. Peisch seconded. Amounts were for Prescott for culverts, Pratt for excavation and logging, and Bushey & Sons for the hardcourt, etc. The vote passed 4-0-0.

REVIEW OVERWEIGHT PERMITS

One new permit was approved:

ETHAN GEVRY

FACILITY USE REQUESTS

No action taken.

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HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND FEMA UPDATE

S. Lawrence joined the Board. Mowing is ongoing. Sand is being hauled in for the winter. Grading is continuing along with pothole repair. Upcoming work includes some tree cutting on Nichols Rd., to make room for the ditch work. J. Demeritt updated the Board on FEMA projects, noting that the two Piney Woods projects are awaiting final review and that funds may become available. The town would need to fund its share of these and other smaller projects like Old Stage Rd. S. Lawrence confirmed that sufficient funds, including grant funds, are available for remaining work on Davis Rd. and Jockey Lane. The Old Stage Rd. work, which involved stone-lined ditches and gravel, came in under budget.

J. Szarejko asked about the guardrail work and S. Lawrence got two quotes. T. Steadman asked if there is enough road shoulder to support a guardrail. S. Lawrence said some work would be needed at the site.

Paving grant update. S. Lawrence wants to postpone the Monkton Road paving project and its grant funds until next year due to delays and concerns about paving too late in the season. The work on the Ridge will still happen this year. The grant funds must be used by June 2026, and S. Lawrence will inquire about an extension if needed. A paving reserve fund could be created to hold the funds, but J. Szarejko noted it would require clear explanation for voters.

PARK AND RIDE

There was discussion of how to manage the Park & Ride and occurrences of long-term parking. S. Peisch would like to see a simple policy and some flexibility, based around the assumption of good intentions by users. J. Szarejko would like to see a policy. J. Demeritt hasn't found examples yet of Park & Ride policies. J. Dunham will look into policies in other locations and bring that back to the Board.

OVERWEIGHT ORDINANCE

S. Lawrence commented that we have signs saying no through trucks in Monkton, but it isn't having the effect we are looking for. There is an example of signage in New Haven, which made some difference over time. J. Szarejko was in contact with Bristol. There can be an issue of rules and signage changing from town to town and there may not be a feasible way for a truck to turn around. S. Peisch had a similar conversation with Hinesburg. Both Hinesburg and Bristol were open to putting a sign in their towns to discourage trucks from continuing on routes leading into Monkton. This would not entirely solve the problem, but would reduce it. There was discussion of stronger enforcement options. J. Dunham asked if we could work with the various GPS services to not show Monkton as an option for certain vehicles. S. Jones described that many commercial trucks use proprietary systems, not the state's 511 system or Google Maps. J. Schulte said it makes sense to push the signage farther out of Monkton to give trucks an opportunity to choose a different route. There was discussion of roads in town

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where we would not want to see through traffic. This is essentially all roads. S. Davis commented that some trucks may not think the signage applies to them. Language such as “local deliveries only” could help.

The ordinance already restricts weight to 24,000lbs without a permit. Language should be added to say that through traffic is not allowed. J. Szarejko and S. Lawrence will work on the language to share with the Town Attorney.

HIGHWAY RIGHT OF WAY PERMIT POLICY

S. Peisch had added language about mailboxes, which was reviewed by the Town Attorney. Some adjustments were recommended by the attorney which are to the Board’s satisfaction.

S. Peisch moved to approve the Highway Right of Way policy and accept the edits made. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

HIGHWAY CLASS 4 POLICY

The policy needs to be updated so that the definitions match the updated Right of Way policy.

J. Dunham moved to approve the updated Highway Class 4 policy with the changes to definitions. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

DELINQUENT TAX POLICY

Final edits have been made and reviewed by the Board.

J. Dunham moved to approve the updated Delinquent Tax Policy. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

APPOINTMENT POLICY

J. Demeritt was looking into the policy and specifically that the Treasurer changed from being elected to appointed, but actually was hired. She reached out to VLCT and generally a person is hired to a municipal role (such as the road crew), but appointed if they are a paid or volunteer municipal official. The Board discussed how to clarify the nature of the Treasurer’s role and whether the Appointment Policy is current or needs updates. J. Demeritt would like to look at positions with unclear terms as part of that review, including the Treasurer.

MONKTON STORE GROUP SUPPORT LETTER

S. Pilcher joined the Board. There has been a group of residents looking at properties for a community supported enterprise, in which a 501(c)3 would purchase a space and offer the space to businesses at a sustainable rate. The property currently being considered is the site of the former woodworking business in the Boro (~5,000sqft). The question of fit-up could be supported by a

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grant through the VT Council on Rural Development. Grant awards would be made in October. That would be followed by an environmental review that would take 6-8 months. S. Pilcher is looking for Selectboard approval for the grant application. The grant application needs a letter of support from the Board and is clear that no taxpayer funds would be involved. The concept for the enterprise could include a store, bakery, cafe, training center, etc. The Monkton Community Coffeehouse, a 501(c)3, is currently acting for the group of residents and sees this as an anchor for an expansion of the Village District in the area of the Boro.

J. Dunham asked about the duplex that is also on the property. That is currently leased and is part of the property. It may be helpful to have housing adjacent to a potential general store. J. Schulte noted that the Development Review Board considered this project as a Sketch Plan last night and did not have any particular concerns about the proposed use moving forward toward a Conditional Use. J. Demeritt asked if there is community interest in a venture like this. S. Pilcher said the recent community survey indicated a high level of interest and a place like this would support the feel of community. R. Charboneau asked if the grant would need to be repaid if the venture was not successful. It would not need to be repaid and the space would not be owned by the Town. The 501(c)3 could seek new tenants if one leaves.

J. Demeritt moved to allow the Chair to sign the letter in support of the Monkton Store Group. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

BIKE/PED SCOPING STUDY

I. Hughes joined the board to discuss the study. The study was to provide a recommendation regarding a path around the pond using existing roads and paths. There was an earlier Complete Streets review that looked only at the Ridge. The recommendations from the study were fairly expensive and would need to be supported by a grant and some town obligation to be feasible. The group looked at how to accelerate some aspects of the recommendation.

The Board reviewed a map of proposed recommendations. The most challenging part of the loop is between the Ridge and the Monkton Central School. For now the only recommendation for that section is to repaint the fog lines on the side of the road to slow traffic and create a little more shoulder. Another recommendation is to formalize the path near the fishing access, where access is currently allowed by the landowner. The challenge on Pond Rd. is the small rise in the middle - a gravel walkway in that location would make it safer. There is also a recommendation to drop the speed on Pond Rd. from 35 to 30, but that would need a traffic study, etc. On Rotax the road has widened over the years and has a somewhat blind curve. Adding a gravel walkway on one side in the downhill would help along with "share the road" signs on that section of Rotax between Pond and Davis roads. On Davis there are two major orchards, Yates

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and the Ridge. “Share the Road” signs should go beyond Yates on Davis due to the seasonal traffic and the somewhat blind hill. J. Yates added that traffic on Davis has increased, particularly when Full Belly Farm is open, but in any case traffic calming approaches would be appreciated. There are many cyclists and walkers too.

There was discussion of a traffic study for Pond Rd. S. Peisch asked if there is a priority to the recommendations. I. Hughes recommends the “share the road” signs be considered first and the gravel walkway added on the rise in Pond Rd.

PLANNING COMMISSION SURVEY & ACT 181

I. Hughes commented on Act 181 reforms the state’s land use and development law, expecting towns to balance development with protection of natural areas and resources. The Planning Commission has been meeting with Addison County Regional Planning Commission about how to increase housing stock. Monkton lacks public septic, which is a somewhat limiting factor. The Planning Commission is taking a look at the footprint of the Village District and zoning and will have more of an update for the Board in the coming weeks. J. Demeritt asked if the next round of the UPD (Unified Planning Document) would reflect Act 181. Yes, it will need to. Regional planning has a number of housing units they would like Monkton to increase by, but it is not a requirement. J. Demeritt asked if there is an area being considered to create town water and sewer. I. Hughes said that is not an easy thing and is not currently under consideration. The next UPD iteration is not likely to be ready until well into next year.

ACTION ITEM ROUNDUP

- S. Peisch to meet with the Treasurer on the Delinquent Tax parcels concerns as well as page 34 of the Town Report.
- J. Dunham to follow up on Park & Ride rules
- J. Szarejko to work on the Overweight Ordinance with S. Lawrence
- J. Demeritt to review appointments and terms for town positions.
- S. Wilbur to assist with the Appointments Policy.
- S. Peisch to update the appointments page to add the new Asst. Treasurer

T. Steadman asked about how follow-up on past actions happens, and provided a couple of examples. J. Demeritt appreciated the comment, and explained that a running list is kept up to date and available to SB members for any items requiring follow-up. In response to T. Steadman’s specific examples, J. Demeritt offered that the road crew is keeping an eye on some items, the Town Administrator on others. Some items will come back to the list if they do not continue to resolve.

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DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 9th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - SELECTBOARD MINUTES TAKER

J. Demeritt moved to find that premature general public knowledge about a person or persons employed by the town would place both the person or persons and the town at a substantial disadvantage. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

J. Demeritt moved to enter Executive Session to discuss a personnel decision under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) of the Vermont statutes, and invited Stan Wilbur to join the Board. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 3-0-1, with S. Peisch voluntarily recused due to having a connection to one of the candidates. Entered Executive Session at 9:08pm.

The public had left the meeting and J. Schulte stepped out of the room.

J. Demeritt moved to exit the Executive Session. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0. Exited the Executive Session at 9:15pm.

J. Demeritt moved to offer Stacy Jones the position of Selectboard Recording Secretary. J. Dunham seconded. The vote passed 3-0-1, with S. Peisch recused.

S. Jones was present and accepted the offer.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Dunham moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:19pm. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed, 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaime Schulte and Stacy Jones