

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Final

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by J. Demeritt at 7 pm.

2. ATTENDANCE

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

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (Town Administrator), Shane Lawrence (Road Foreman), Jaime Schulte, Debra Sprague, John Mc Nerney, Randy Charboneau, Renee McGuinness, Ted McGuinness, Victor Cousino, Michael Elmore (County Sheriff), Jim Jewell, Tom Kenyon, Anthony Delgreco, Tom Steadman, Deb Gaynor, Cathie Buscaglia, Kerri Garvey, Ian Schulze, Peter Huber, Stacy Jones (recording secretary), Tom Steadman, Kirk Lea, Jackie.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

J. Demeritt opened the meeting with a review of the previously adopted rules and procedures for selectboard meetings, specifically where they relate to public participation.

All meetings of the selectboard are meetings in the public not of the public; members of the public shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to express opinions about matters so long as order is maintained according to these rules:

- Members of the public must be acknowledged by the chair before speaking
- If a member of the public has already spoken on a topic he/she may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment
- Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting
- Neither members of the body nor members of the public shall delay or interrupt the proceedings
- Public comment under other business is limited to the business of the body (this means comments shared shall be restricted to work the selectboard is responsible for)
- Members of the body and members of the public shall follow the orders of the chair or other presiding member
- The chair has the right to restore order by:
 - Calling the meeting to order, and remind members of the rules of procedure
 - Declaring a recess
 - Adjourning the meeting until a later date

J. Demeritt additionally shared that the recycling center coordinator, Robin Hopps, is not interested in continuing in her role as the recycling center coordinator unless she has a co-coordinator. If anyone knows a person

interested in co-coordinating the recycling center, please refer them to J. Demeritt. Robin Hopps current appointment ends in March 2026. There is a job description for the recycling center coordinator position available.

4. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

No changes were made.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

R. Charboneau submitted a letter from the auditors office to the selectboard requesting read-only access to several computer programs used by the town. R. Charboneau additionally provided a record of communications between he and S. Peisch, selectboard secretary, including a request to the town treasurer for additional information regarding delinquent taxes. Lastly, R. Charboneau referred to a previously submitted letter to the selectboard regarding the town audits and how they are “not on the system and they are delayed” this is of concern to the auditors. R. Charboneau provided a letter to bring the issue back to the new selectboard's attention. The auditors further recommend the selectboard look into an alternative firm to complete town audits, the current firm has been completing them for some 15 years. No specific firm has been recommended, reasons for the recommendation are included in the letter submitted.

R. McGuinness read a statement she drafted regarding concerns about road work by the town and about her concerns regarding how the selectboard allocates funds. R. McGuinness provided copies of her written statement to the selectboard. R. McGuinness specifically raised concern about ditching damaging her property, current ditching efforts potentially decreasing roadway safety, the road crew possibly not being adequately equipped to perform their duties successfully, and the allocation of funds to community based projects in lieu of infrastructure and equipment and training for the road crew.

Tom Kenyon shared he attended the meeting on Boro Hill last week. He raised concerns about the poor condition of the town road equipment, as well as his understanding that the town road crew has been aware of the condition of the equipment for a long time without resolve. Tom Kenyon requests that the condition of the equipment as well as the way road work is prioritized be addressed.

J. Szarejko shared that following the meeting on Boro Hill, it appears the previously agreed upon plan to use crushed asphalt on the entire length of the problem area of the hill is no longer the best option. There is discussion now of getting a quote to see how much it would cost to pave that section of the hill. There was also a suggestion that 3,000gal. of sodium water be used to improve the condition of the pack on that portion of the hill.

J. Jewell shared he is a longtime resident of Boro Hill. J. Jewell raised concerns about the amount of time and money being spent to attend Boro Hill with little

noticeable improvement. Additionally, the timing of plowing on Boro Hill in the winter is of concern for J. Jewell.

A. Delgreco raised concerns about the quality of work provided by the road crew. He voiced concern that the town is spending a lot of money with little return and briefly discussed the recent wage increase for the town road crew. There was also a brief discussion about the price of a new grader. Several people commented on the frequency of coming to selectboard meetings to raise concerns about road conditions and the road crew.

6. APPROVE MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Tuesday, September 9, 2025

S. Peisch moved to approve the minutes of September 9th, 2025 as written. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0

7. REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. Dunham moved to approve Accounts Payable Payroll Warrant #50922 in the amount of \$14620.27. W. Crandall seconded. This is payroll for town employees. The vote passed 5-0-0.

W. Crandall moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #50909 in the amount of \$57708.22. S. Peisch seconded. This is primarily for Ready Mix, and Hinesburg sand and gravel. The vote passed 5-0-0.

8. REVIEW OVERWEIGHT PERMITS

None

9. FACILITY USE REQUESTS

Reviewed and approved

- March, 2026
- November 15th, 2025

10. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND FEMA UPDATE

S. Lawrence reported he received a \$10588.50 quote for the Silver St guardrail. This quote is for 229 liner ft, including replacement of the damaged endcap and install. It does not include additional materials necessary for installation. S. Peisch inquired whether \$10588.50 in the current budget. S. Lawrence replied he needs to look at the budget and that this expense is something the selectboard will need to approve.

S. Lawrence further reported ditching on Rotax Rd has been underway, this is grant funded work. There will be some shoulder work done on Monkton Ridge prior to the paving scheduled for next week. S. Lawrence has requested a quote from the pavers doing Monkton Ridge for the problematic end of Boro Hill. J. Demeritt inquired how much lead time there generally is for paving projects to let

the public know. S. Lawrence replied that generally there is more time than there has been this year. This year it has been a challenge to get on the calendar for paving and several projects were pushed back. This has been compounded by grant restrictions, grant based projects cannot be scheduled prior to July 1 in any calendar year due to the State fiscal year cycle. Other work being done by the road crew includes installation of new speed limit signs on Mountain Rd, installation of a radar sign in the borough, chipping on Nichols Rd in preparation for ditching, cutting asphalt and repair of a washout on Monkton Rd, finishing sand and gravel hauling.

S. Lawrence reports that enough sand has been acquired for the winter season. Road salt prices have gone up \$13 per ton, this is a significant increase. All grant work for this year will be completed with the completion of Rotax Rd ditching. J. Demeritt asked how grant based work is prioritized; S. Lawrence explained Addison County Regional Planning Committee creates the prioritization order and provides a map indicating the priorities. Yogi looked at the grader last week and noted that the grader was in worse condition than had been previously known. Next week United Ag will look at the grader and provide a quote for partial repair. The grader is in poor condition because it is old, the maintenance is kept up regularly. The grader was supposed to be replaced in 2020, but was removed from the capital equipment plan; it was added back to the capital equipment plan last year. It is unclear if it will be necessary to request a replacement this year. More information will be available once an estimate for repairs has been provided.

J. Szarejko asked if there should be discussion about creating a dedicated fund for equipment. Also if it makes sense to contract for grading the short term. There was general agreement that contracting in the short term would make sense and S. Lawrence agreed to follow up with Junior Lewis (Charlotte Foreman) S. Lawrence says there is not enough money in the budget to contract Junior Lewis for the +/- 5 weeks remaining of the autumn season, but there is definitely enough to contract him for a shorter period of time to address the highest priority roads. General conversation was had, it was noted that Monkton has approximately 31 miles of gravel roadway.

11. OVERWEIGHT ORDINANCE

J. Demeritt indicated next steps for the overweight ordinance are to determine what roads need to be posted and write them into the ordinance. Specific roads need to be identified for the purposes of enforcement. Discussion resolved that ALL roads should be included in the ordinance, but posting should be prioritized for Monkton Rd, Hollow Rd, Bristol Rd, Tyler Bridge Rd, and Covered Bridge Rd. J. Demeritt will follow up with Jim Carroll to finalize wording in the ordinance. There is no current update on FEMA funding.

12. COYLE CURB CUT

J. Szarejko will send a letter with an application for a curb cut to the Coyle property owner. Kirk Lea raised a concern about a problem area on Hardscrabble; S. Lawrence noted he is aware of the area and has a plan to address the concern.

13. RIGHT OF WAY PERMIT - CHURCH ROAD

J. Dunham made a motion to approve the right-of-way permit submitted for Church Rd. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

14. ITEMS IN THE RIGHT OF WAY

J. Demeritt inquired about the status of an ongoing challenge with a homeowner having items in the town right-of-way. J. Szarejko provided an update and suggested sending the homeowner a letter indicating an October 15th deadline for removal of remaining items. There was general agreement, J. Szarejko will draft and send the letter

15. SHERIFF DEPARTMENT AGREEMENT

M. Elmore reviewed the written request he provided to the selectboard prior to the meeting. M. Elmore explained that his office is requesting an increase in funding noting among other things the challenges his office has had with recruitment and retention due to limited ability to provide employees with basic benefits. S. Peisch inquired about the timeline for a response to this request. The response deadline is the end of the current contract, June 30th, 2026. J. Dunham asked how often the sheriff's office does not have enough personnel to meet the demand. M. Elmore replied this year it has been quite often, but he is hoping to have additional full-time employees by spring to avoid this in the future.

16. OLD STAGE ROAD BOAT

M. Elmore reported that the boat issue has been ongoing for several years. It is a civil violation not a criminal violation which means there is no enforceable action available through the Sheriff's Department. M. Elmore noted that the Sheriff's Department did issue a ticket last year, but it went unanswered. Discussion resulted in general agreement that the boat should be removed and disposed of at the town's expense for safety reasons. The boat's owner can be taken to small claims court for recoupment of financial resources if they can be located. J. Dunham spoke with a driver from Midstate Towing and is currently awaiting a quote for removal of the boat.

17. DOG PARK

C. Buscaglia provided a brief overview of Monkton Dog Park history. The park has been funded through 2 building and general services grants that the Dog Park Committee has written and received as well as private donations. For 5 years the park has been 100% volunteer maintained and funded. C. Buscaglia explained the value of the Monkton Dog Park to-date and described the expenses associated with maintenance and upkeep. C. Buscaglia stated the

purpose of the committee's request today is seeking selectboard support for the annual mowing \$1100 contract. The committee previously approached the Monkton Recreational Department, which has agreed to support the cost of the mowing short term. However, the Monkton Recreational Department cannot continue mowing long-term unless its annual budget is increased to include the additional \$1100 expense ongoing. The Monkton Dog Park Committee is committed to continuing to fundraise and potentially seek further grant funding for ongoing maintenance and upkeep.

J. Demeritt inquired what ongoing maintenance and upkeep costs are. C. Buscaglia replied the commitment includes fundraising for "poop bags," grass seed, and minor fencing repairs and upkeep. Additionally, the committee is exploring the development of a capital reserve fund for the future replacement of the fence. The current fence has an approximate 10 years life expectancy; 5 years have passed since its installation. D. Gaynor, the Monkton Dog Park treasurer shared that, as of last week, the price of a replacement fence from the original supplier has tripled in the last 5 years. She noted that the committee anticipates it will be able to raise enough capital to replace the fence when the time comes only if it is not spending the \$1100 it is currently spending annually to mow the park. Assuming support with the mowing expense, the expectation is that private fundraising and potential additional grant resources will meet Capital Reserve Fund/ Capital improvement needs.

18. TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE - FINAL REPORTS

J. Schulte described the 2 reports he shared with the selectboard prior to the meeting. These are the final reports to close out any federal involvement with the town forest, save for periodic inspections, which is a standard practice of the federal program funded projects. These reports are not requesting any additional financial support or approval, they are being presented for informational purposes prior to being signed by the selectboard designee. Jess asked, does this close out? Jamie responded.

W. Crandall made a motion to approve the selectboard chair to sign the Town Forest final report. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

W. Crandall made a motion to approve the selectboard chair to sign the final federal financial report for the Town Forest. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

19. HARDCOURT FUNDING

Sam shared that one grant opportunity has been forwarded to the hardcourt subcommittee.

20. ANAC - CONSERVATION PROJECT REQUEST FOR FUNDS

J. Schulte provided a brief overview of what the Agricultural Natural Areas Committee (ANAC) does. ANAC was established about 15 years ago. It's

purpose is to help landowners that are seeking to keep their land open for agricultural or natural areas purposes and to attract the funding that would be needed to conserve those landscapes.

The Agricultural Natural Areas Committee is advisory to the selectboard. When an application is vetted by the committee the committee can then make a recommendation to the selectboard to access existing funds in the town budget earmarked for this specific purpose. The town's typical contribution to the total expense of a project is about 8%, though that can vary.

The current request is \$3400 from Diane and Matt Butler. They have been working on this project for some while, this request is for the expense of an appraisal. The ANAC expects that there will be a second application for another part of this project upcoming, which will be considered separately.

J. Dunham inquired if the ANAC take into consideration the Development and Review Board (DRB) and town planning projects when deciding which Agricultural Natural Areas projects to move forward. The question was clarified, are considerations made to ensure the town is not funding something that is ultimately not in the town's best interest. J. Schulte replied that it is not a scenario that has come up in recent projects, and is not an issue with this project. He further noted he believes it is something that should be given due consideration if such a project does arise. J. Szarejko inquired about the timeline for this request. No specific timeline was identified beyond "soon."

*J. Dunham made a motion to approve the request for \$3400 from the Agricultural Natural Areas fund for project 2025a. S. Peisch seconded. **The vote Passed 4-0-1.** J. Demeritt recused due to potential/perceived conflict of interest.*

S. Wilbur requested an invoice be provided for the requested funds.

21. OLD AIRPORT ROAD MAINTENANCE

J. Szarejko and W. Crandall recused due to potential/perceived conflict of interest. J. Demeritt outlined the history of this request. Old Airport Rd is a shared road. It is privately owned, but shared by the town due to the Town Forest Access. In January 2025 the selectboard agreed to pay for a portion of the road maintenance, 50% of the \$5654 total cost, an amount of \$2827. These funds have not yet been paid out because no entity has yet been identified to receive the funds. J. Demeritt reviewed the requirements identified by the town treasurer, a W-9 form with a billing address and a dated invoice specifying the dollar amount requested.

J. Demeritt requested an additional requirement that the invoice be approved in some way by the residents of Old Airport Rd. Discussion occurred. The selectboard previously approved dispersal of the funds. In order to move forward with the dispersal of funds the selectboard requests that the invoice or some

accompanying document be signed by, at a minimum, all property owners with a curb cut on the road, and preferably all property owners on the road.

22. VGS CASE

J. Dunham reports everything has been delayed again. J. Dunham is scheduling a phone call with Cindy Hill (New Haven attorney) to better understand the process. J. Demeritt shared an encouraging encounter she had with Vermont Gas Systems.

23. LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

J. Demeritt advised the selectboard that they need to adopt a local hazard mitigation plan. The plan was presented by Stephen Pilcher back in the summer. The plan has been completed and the town is currently paying invoices. A grant will cover a portion of the expense. J. Demeritt reviewed the purpose of the local hazard mitigation plan including that it is required by any town seeking FEMA funds, it allows the town to identify areas that it's community members feel could be a hazard and require mitigation efforts, as well as offering some recommendations of mitigation measures the town can work on implementing itself.

J. Dunham made a motion to adopt the Monkton local hazard mitigation plan. S. Peisch seconded. The vote Passed 5-0-0.

24. STARKSBORO SELECTBOARD LETTER - MAUSD

J. Demeritt reviewed the bullet points of a letter received from the Starksboro selectboard regarding concerns about how the district school board is proceeding with making decisions. The selectboard had some discussion and determined that too few of the members felt they had adequate information to make informed decisions about how to move forward. There was general agreement to request further information on the matter by reaching out to local school board members and inviting them to provide insight.

25. OTHER BUSINESS

None offered.

26. ACTION ITEM ROUNDUP

- J. Demeritt will follow up with Jim Carroll, town attorney, regarding finalizing the language of the overweight ordinance to include all Monkton roads.
- J. Szarejko will follow up with Coyle's by sending a letter with the curb cut application included.
- S. Wilbur will write and send a letter to the property owner on Hollow Rd with items in the town right-of-way informing them of the October 15th deadline to remove all remaining items.
- S. Peisch will follow up on the hardcourt funding

- W. Crandall will reach out to local members of the district school board to schedule a time they can speak with the selectboard.

27. DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 14th at 7pm.

28. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*J. Demeritt moved to enter executive session because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or person or persons at a substantial disadvantage. J. Dunham seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

*J. Demeritt moved to enter executive session to discuss labor relations agreements with employees under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) of the Vermont statutes. J. Dunham seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

*J. Demeritt moved to enter executive session to discuss confidential attorney client communications under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F) of the Vermont statutes. W, Crandall seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.** The selectboard invited S. Wilbur to join them for the executive session.*

The public left the meeting and S. Jones, recording secretary, stepped out of the room. The selectboard entered the executive session at [9:20] pm.

*J. Demeritt moved to exit the executive session. J. Dunham seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.** The selectboard exited the executive session at 10:36pm.*

29. ADJOURNMENT

*J. Dunham moved to adjourn the meeting. W. Crandall seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:37pm.*

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Jones