

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 11th, 2025

DRAFT

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by J. Demeritt at 7:00 pm. J. Demeritt then reviewed rules and procedures of public participation in Selectboard meetings.

2. ATTENDANCE

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

Members absent: Joe Szarejko (Member)

Others in attendance:

Stan Wilbur (Town Administrator), Jaime Schulte, Debra Sprague, Lisa Burns (Lister), Stephen Pilcher, Tom Steadman, Lee Cota, Susan Gulrajani (Zoning Administrator), Tom Kenyon, Trevor (on zoom, no last name listed), Eugenie Doyle, Mark Burns, Paul Low, Lauren Parren, Bill Van Steamburg, Gail Van Steamburg, Robin Hopps

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

S. Peisch offered thanks to Veterans, this meeting being held on Veteran's Day.

4. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

None

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

T. Kenyon thanked Selectboard for having courage.

6. APPROVE MINUTES

S. Peisch moved to approve the minutes of October 28th, 2025 as amended. J. Dunham seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

Special minutes to be approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting to allow all members an opportunity for review.

7. REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. Dunham moved to approve Accounts Payable Payroll Warrant #51103 in the amount of \$13,570.75. S. Peisch seconded. This is payroll for town employees. The vote passed 4-0-0.

W. Crandall moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #51030 in the amount of \$13,414.56. S. Peisch seconded. This is for cemetery mowing and church ramp project. The vote passed 4-0-0.

8. REVIEW OVERWEIGHT PERMITS

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None submitted

9. FACILITY USE REQUESTS

W. Crandall noted an increasing number of facility use requests both for the primary community room (upstairs space) and the south wing (downstairs space).

10. ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

S. Gulrajani thanked the select board for adding her to their agenda for this evening's meeting and remarked she had two requests. S. Gulrajani first requested one or two board members accompany her to a community member's home, she noted that this will be the first time she will visit a residence that may have a code violation in her official capacity. S. Gulrajani additionally requested that a select board member be assigned as a point of contact for any future support needs she may have in her official capacity. Second, S. Gulrajani requested that her hours be doubled, an increase from her current 10 hours weekly to a total of 20 hours weekly to accommodate additional workload. The select board had two questions for S. Gulrajani: W. Crandall asked if this increase in hours would be permanent and J. Demeritt asked if it would make more sense to hire a second person, an assistant, rather than increase hours? The Select Board thanked S. Gulrajani for her time. J. Dunham and W. Crandall volunteered to accompany S. Gulrajani during her upcoming visit to a local residence.

11. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

J. Demeritt shared that Shane Lawrence, Monkton's road foreman, tendered his resignation last week, Monday November 3rd 2025. Jess offered a public thanks to Shane and noted that his tenure as foreman was not an easy one. She also shared that the job description for road foreman is being updated and a job ad is being crafted presently. Trevor Currier, a five year road crew member, has been offered and accepted the interim foreman position.

S. Peisch reported the highway department updates. S. Peisch discussed the recent storm response, praising interim Road Foreman T. Currier. The crew performed grading on Rotax Rd, Rosco Rd, and Nichols Rd. Ditching was performed on Nichols Rd. A culvert and signs were replaced on Nichols Rd. The culvert on Monkton Rd was fixed. The roadside mower hydraulics were repaired. 25 loads of gravel were hauled to Nichols Rd. The Bristol road foreman offered budget assistance during this transition period. Requests were made to replace the town garage computer and hire a part-time person for brush trimming and winter road clearing.

S. Peisch also shared that both the Bristol and the Charlotte foremen advised

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against repairing the grader due to its high number of hours.

S. Pilcher offered that Starksboro began a lease on a new piece of equipment, which might be an approach worth exploring.

T. Kenyon asked if the oil S. Peischple had returned. There has been no word on the S. Peischple.

12. OVERWEIGHT ORDINANCE

J. Demeritt reported that the town attorney, Jim Carroll, confirmed that the overweight policy as proposed would violate constitutional rights of truckers and truck companies based on equity. The policy, as currently written, does not treat all trucks equally granting special privilege to only those doing business in Monkton. J. Demeritt noted other communities have limited only discrete sections of road.

J. Dunham suggested reaching out to the state regarding weight limit policies and remuneration for damages caused by heavy vehicles using town roads.

S. Peisch requested the conversation be tabled until J. Szarejko is back.

13. WINTER OPERATIONS PLAN AND POLICY

S. Peisch drafted a policy. He briefly talked through the policy as written and noted that it is modeled after Waitsfield. S. Peisch stressed that this is a starting place, not a “bow tied” policy.

W. Crandall offered some valuable feedback on the specific language.

Further discussion will happen.

14. PINEY WOODS ROAD

J. Demeritt reported that there were 6 projects slated to receive funding from FEMA for 2024 flood damage. 3 have been paid and 3 are outstanding, 2 of which are for Piney Woods Rd. If proposed repairs went ahead, the town's share would be sizable. FEMA funding is not guaranteed at this time.

Two of the outstanding FEMA funds have been obligated, this means the Federal government has released the monies to the State of Vermont, but the monies have not yet been received by Monkton. The remaining outstanding FEMA sum is one of the two pots of money for the Piney Woods Rd repair.

S. Wilbur shared that there is currently a balance in the amount of approximately \$120,000.00 in the town's account for repairs completed on Old Stage Rd. S. Peisch asked about the balance.

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Tom K asked what are the two projects.

T. Steadman asked if completing the single Piney Woods Rd project with the obligated funds would make the road usable. The supposed answer is no, based on information currently available.

Following some discussion among the Selectboard and community members, the Selectboard decided they will move forward with issuing an RFP (request for proposal) for engineering services, as well as seeking estimate(s) for restoration of the road's previous state. There was discussion about holding a special meeting to solicit community feedback regarding Piney Woods Rd, no decision was made on the matter. It was mentioned that Rodger Parker previously offered an estimate and that it might be worth reaching out to him again for an updated evaluation/estimate.

J. Dunham also suggested researching a repaired vs improved cost comparison, to the extent possible, of expected maintenance on the road.

15. BOAT REMOVAL

J. Dunham reported that the state will levy fines if the boat is not removed "before winter". J. Dunham sought out 3 quotes, two came in at \$3,000, the third was \$3,700. He offered a recommendation based on his research to move forward with the company that would remove the boat and decommission it off site, versus decommissioning on site and then removing it. This approach seems less likely to result in inadvertent debris left behind on site.

Paul inquired why the town was paying for this boat removal rather than the landowner's insurance. S. Pilcher offered precedent for the town paying for rubbish removal in another similar situation.

*J. Demeritt moved that the Selectboard approve \$3,000.00 for MiddState to remove the boat. S. Peisch Seconded. **The motion failed 2-2-0.***

Following some discussion, it was determined it was not in the best interest of the town, at this time, to pursue the property insurance option at this time.

*J. Demeritt moved that the Selectboard approve \$3,000.00 for MiddState to remove the boat. J. Dunham Seconded. **The motion passed 3-1-0.***

16. ANNOUNCEMENT SIGN UPDATE

W. Crandall briefly reviewed the presentation by Daktronics. W. Crandall shared his opinion that the town is not in a financial position to pursue the purchase. The estimate starts at \$22,000.00. There was general agreement among board members that this is not the right time to invest in such an item.

S. Peisch reiterated his preference to revamp the current marquee sign and explained his plan to do so. Several people volunteered to help S. Peisch complete the project.

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*J. Demeritt moved to approve \$350 for the repair of the current sign by S. Peisch. W. Crandall seconded. **The vote Passed 3-0-1.** S. Peisch abstained, as he proposed the project and will carry out the work to complete it.*

17. PARK & RIDE POLICY

J. Dunham reviewed updates to the policy. J. Demeritt requested time to review the policy

Stacy offered a suggestion about posting both a sign and policy.

*J. Demeritt moved to approve the Park&Ride policy as written. W. Crandall seconded. **The vote passed 4-0-0.***

The wording for the sign will require additional work

18. APPOINTMENT POLICY

Tabled.

19. 2025 BUDGET REPORT

J. Demeritt asked some clarifying questions about the budget as it is written, S. Wilbur responded. It was noted that the highway Department will be a big lift this year.

S. Peisch reminded the Selectboard that Bristol Forman offered to help with creating the highway budget. S. Peisch and J. Szarejko will also offer T. Carrier support in creating that budget.

There was some discussion about the current highway budget.

20. 2026 BUDGETING UPDATE

The Recreation Committee responded quickly to the request for budget submission. Their budget will be increasing by \$2,000 to include Dog Park mowing and other added expenses. Other committees are still working on getting their budgets submitted.

J. Demeritt is scheduling appointments with Sharon and Bill in the near future.

21. OTHER BUSINESS

None offered

22. ACTION ITEM ROUNDUP

- J. Dunham will reach out to the State of Vermont about overweight trucks, specifically if there is any financial or policy support for towns that have no state roads but serve as a shortcut or bypass for many thru trucks.

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- All Selectboard members will review the winter maintenance policy, provide feedback, and send edits to S. Wilbur
- S. Wilbur will reach out for estimates on Piney Woods Rd
- S. Peisch will reach out to J. Szarejko and Roger Parker about Piney Woods
- S. Wilbur to draft RFP for Piney Woods
- J. Dunham will follow up on the metal sign for the Park & Ride
- J. Dunham to reach out to MidState towing regarding the boat removal
- S. Peisch will follow up with T. Currier regarding onboarding and the budget
- S. Peisch will follow up with the treasurer regarding some of the social services allocations
- S. Peisch will update the minutes from October 28th

23. DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

November 25th, 2025 at 7:00pm

24. EXECUTIVE SESSION

J. Demeritt moved to enter Executive Session because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or person involved at substantial disadvantage. J. Dunham seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

J. Demeritt moved to enter Executive Session to discuss labor relations, provision of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) of the Vermont statutes and to discuss confidential lawyer communications, provision of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont statutes. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0. Entered Executive Session at 8:49 pm.

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

J. Demeritt moved to exit the Executive Session. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0. Exited the Executive Session at 9:39 pm.

J. Demeritt moved to have J. Szarejko and S. Peisch work with T. Currier in onboarding him into the interim road foreman position. The vote passed 4-0-0.

The Selectboard will review the road foreman job ad and create a road crew member job description and ad both to be posted imminently. There was some discussion about the specific wage range to include in the ad for the road foreman. It was decided that the pay rate would be advertised as an hourly rate, not an annualized rate. The suggested rate is \$30-\$40 hourly.

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S. Peisch and J. Szarejko will work to finalize the job descriptions. Per discussion, the job ad will require applicants to submit a letter of interest outlining their qualifications and relevant experience in addition to 3 references. There was discussion about updating the personnel filing system for the town.

25. ADJOURNMENT

J. Demeritt moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 pm. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Jones