

DRAFT

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, December 9th, 2025

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

J. Demeritt called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

**2. ATTENDANCE**

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

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (Town Administrator), Debra Sprague, Lisa Burns, Stephen Pilcher, Tom Steadman, Randy Charboneau, Trevor Currier (interim Road Forman), Carol Lea, John McNerney, Robin Hopps, Carroll Maxwell, Stanley Burritt, Tom Kenyon, Laura Farrell, Stacy Jones (minutes recorder)

**3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None offered

**4. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA**

Proposals for Piney Woods will be discussed during the Highway portion of the meeting.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

T. Steadman asked for clarification regarding the process used to appoint a member to the Planning commission. Discussion occurred.

R. Hopps mentioned she would send an email to the Selectboard regarding a new cardboard/recycling receptacle. Additionally, the town continues to seek a new Recycling Center Coordinator or Co-coordinator.

**6. APPROVE MINUTES**

*W. Crandall moved to approve the minutes of November 25th, 2025 as amended. S. Peisch seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

**7. REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS**

*J. Szarejko moved to approve Accounts Payable check Warrant #51128 in the amount of \$4,496.22. S. Peisch seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

*W. Crandall moved to approve Accounts Payable Payroll Warrant #51128 in the amount of \$15,615.28. J. Szarejko seconded. This is payroll for town employees. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

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*J. Dunham moved to approve Accounts Payable Check Warrant #51205 in the amount of \$38,258.32. W. Crandall seconded. This is largely for highway expenses. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

**8. REVIEW OVERWEIGHT PERMITS**

None reported

**9. FACILITY USE REQUESTS**

W. Crandall reported December and January are very busy, particularly for the community space (upstairs space). He noted it is important to always treat the space with respect.

**10. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

J. Szarejko reported from November 24th to November 27th, the Highway Department was active with several road maintenance and vehicle repair tasks. Roadwork included grading Piney Woods Road, Hardscrabble, Turkey Lane, and Nichols Road, and repairing aprons on Boro Hill/Hardscrabble and Rosco Road. They also fixed a washout on Hardscrabble, delivered three buckets of gravel to Morgan Road, and cut trees on Tyler Bridge Road and Bristol Road. On Sunday, they cleared the roads. Vehicle maintenance was done, including rebuilding brakes on the F550 truck (replacing pads, calipers, and rotors), general maintenance, and working on the tailgates and lights of the 2013 Mac and 2017 Western Star trucks. They also brought a truck in for new tires, worked on the lettering on the trucks, and performed plowing operations. Lastly, the interim attended a highway budget meeting with Pete Bouvier (former Bristol foreman), Joe and Sam from the selectboard to get feedback on drafting next year's highway budget.

S. Peisch spoke about some issues the Road Crew has experienced with their radios, such as dead spots. This hindered communication poses risks to safety and efficacy. The Road Crew contacted *Burlington Communications* to test a new radio system. The test went well. The Road Crew is requesting the selectboard approve a purchase for the new system in the amount of \$9,768.15. Discussion occurred regarding a separate proposal to purchase a used radio system.

*J. Demeritt moved to approve the purchase of a new radio system in the amount of \$9,768.15 from Burlington Communications, pending a second comparable quote, if feasible. S. Peisch seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

J. Dunham followed up with the Hollow Road property owner regarding items in the right-of-way. As of this meeting, no items have been removed. J. Dunham will follow up again. The homeowner is aware of the citation previously issued.

The approved winter maintenance policy was signed.

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W. Crandall spoke with the Coyles regarding their curb-cut. The Coyles have the required application.

J. Demeritt offered a brief overview of the recent history of Piney Woods Road. J. Demeritt reported the current status, FEMA broke the Piney Woods Road project into two separate projects. One has been funded the other has not. Neither project would independently make the road usable, both are required. The total estimated cost for the full two-part project is \$1.2M. The town's share would be approximately \$150,000.

S. Wilbur reported the selectboard put out a Request For Proposal (RFP) for the Piney Woods Road project and received communication from eight interested firms. Two firms have submitted proposals: Otter Creek Engineering (previously completed the Mountain Rd project); and Dubois & King (previously completed the bike path study and a separate project several years ago). S. Wilbur distributed a handout summarizing the costs associated with each proposal to the selectboard. He noted that Dubois & King's proposal did not include a quote for the project's construction phase. He expects to receive that soon. The two quotes are similar. No decision can be made at this time without further information.

Further discussion occurred regarding Piney Woods Road.

**11. ANAC BUTLER PROJECT**

J. Demeritt introduced the Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee (ANAC), reading its mission statement: ANAC finds focus within town and is dedicated to protecting farmland, woodland and natural areas and other open areas that give Monkton its distinctive rural character and quality of life. ANAC is tasked with using monies approved by voters to leverage other funding to implement projects that maintain the look and feel of the town as indicated in the town plan.

J. Demeritt recused herself from participation in the conversation as a selectboard member to avoid actual or perceived conflict of interest due to being an adjacent land owner to the property of discussion.

Laura Ferrell, ANAC chair, described how the ANAC budgeting process works, looking ahead often 2, 3, or more years into the future. She then gave an overview of the project in question, describing that this is one piece of a multi-tiered, multi-year effort to protect the core of the wildlife corridor as indicated on the most recent town map. L. Ferrell fielded several questions from community members and selectboard members.

*S. Peisch moved to approve the Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee's request for the disbursement of \$20,348.00 from the ANAC fund. J. Dunham seconded. **The vote passed 4-0-1.** J. Demeritt abstained from voting as she recused herself from participation in the conversation as a selectboard member*

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*to avoid real or perceived conflict of interest due to being an adjacent land owner to the property of discussion.*

**12. LIBRARY MOU**

J. Demeritt and S. Peisch have worked together with the library to craft a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU). J. Demeritt inquired if there was any feedback from the selectboard on the draft. None was offered. S. Peisch and J. Demeritt will meet the Library Board of Trustees this month. The current expectation is the MOU will be finalized.

**13. SHERIFF DEPARTMENT CONTRACT**

J. Demeritt shared that the Sheriff's Department Contract is on the agenda this evening because she would like to pin down a number for the contract that can be used as a placeholder for budgeting purposes. The dollar amount discussed can and will be adjusted later if necessary.

J. Demeritt expressed that she would seek to keep the town at the same number of hours contracted in in the current year. Remaining at the same number of hours would represent an approximate 20% increase in the budget due to increased rates from the sheriff's department. Last year the sheriff's department was budgeted at \$33,500 for 60 hours per month. It was noted that the sheriff's department has not been able to reach that number of hours of service; it was further noted that regardless of the number of hours budgeted, the town only pays for hours of service rendered. J. Demeritt offered a reminder that the sheriff's department also generates revenue in the form of fines issued for speeding and other infractions. She shared that in 2024 the sheriff's department was budgeted for approximately \$31,000, but cost the town roughly \$9,000 due in large part to offsetting their expense via fines collected. Following brief discussion among selectboard members, it was agreed that it makes sense to use the \$40,200 estimated cost as a placeholder in the budget.

**14. TECH GROUP MANAGED CARE PROPOSAL**

The Tech Group Managed Care Proposal had a slight increase in cost, approximately \$10 per month or \$120 for the calendar year.

*S. Peisch moved to approve the amended proposal to continue with the Tech Group Managed Care contract at its new rate of \$906.16 per month. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.*

**15. SELECTBOARD REPORT 2025**

The selectboard is responsible for the town report. J. Demeritt will begin a draft, other members who are interested should send drafts to S. Wilbur. A discussion will occur later to determine exactly what will be included and how.

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Brief discussion occurred regarding proposed changes to the Town Report format.

**16. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR TOWN REPORT**

S. Pilcher reminded the selectboard that they are tasked with crafting articles and issuing warnings for Town Meeting.

**17. 2026 BUDGET**

J. Demeritt sat down with Bill to get some numbers for the budget and forwarded them to S. Wilbur.

J. Szarejko and S. Peisch have been working on the budget with the highway department. They expect it will be ready for presentation at the next meeting. S. Peisch will send the budget to S. Peisch once it is completed.

J. Demeritt noted two outstanding budget items, the library and Monkton Volunteer Fire Department (MVFD).

Per S. Pilcher, MVFD generally submits their annual report to the Town Auditor or Town Clerk who then puts together the Town Report. This is where the Monkton Volunteer Fire Department budget numbers are usually generated. Per J. McNerney, MVFD usually sets its budget by a separate article from the rest of the budget.

**18. GRAND LIST ERRORS AND OMISSIONS REPORT**

Each year the Grand List is lodged in June. During the year there are changes that occur, this year the total change is \$3,120,000.00.

Lisa Burns (Town Assessor) explained the December Grand List Errors And Omissions Report reflects the difference between values at the time the report was lodged and December 1st, 2025. There is an increased taxable value of \$3,120,000.00, representing approximately .075% of the total Grand List. This change is composed of two parts. The first part is the change in real value, meaning events that occurred after the closing of the Grand List, and the second part is changes in current use status. L. Burns explained details about the changes.

*J. Demeritt moved to accept the Grand List Errors And Omissions Report dated December 5th, 2025. J. Dunham Seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.*

**19. OTHER BUSINESS**

J. Demeritt reported the Town Sign project budget came in slightly higher than anticipated. The approved budget was \$350, the actual cost incurred was \$538.56. S. Peisch explained that the anticipated items were not available and the alternative supplies were slightly more expensive.

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*W. Crandall moved to approve the additional monies spent, totaling \$538.56 for the announcement sign update. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.*

W. Crandall inquired who to reach out to regarding updates to the website.

**20. ACTION ITEM ROUNDUP**

- S. Peisch and J. Szarejko will reach out to local companies about restoring Piney Woods Rd
- J. Demeritt will contact the Fire Department to see if they have numbers available for the town report.
- J. Szarejko will follow up on a second quote for radio system
- S. Peisch will reach out to Roger Wallace regarding changes to the Town Report
- S. Peisch will follow up with B. Joos and S. Wilbur regarding the draft highway budget
- S. Peisch will complete the work on the announcement sign
- All to work on drafts for town report, send to S. Wilbur
- W. Crandall will contact the webmaster to inquire about updates.

**21. DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

December 23, 2025 at 7:00pm

**22. 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. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.*

*J. Demeritt moved to enter the Executive Session to discuss labor relations with employees under provision 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) of the Vermont statutes and to discuss confidential lawyer communications under provision 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E) of the Vermont statutes. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0. Entered Executive Session at 8:32 pm.*

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

*J. Demeritt moved to exit the Executive Session. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0. Exited the Executive Session at 10:23 pm.*

*J. Demeritt moved to increase the Zoning Administrators weekly hours from 10 hours per week for the annual salary of \$15,600 to 15 hours per week for the annual salary of \$23,400. This increase in hours will be effective for 6 months, at which time it will be reviewed. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 4-1-0. S. Peisch opposed the motion.*

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*J. Demeritt moved to authorize J. Dunham to proceed in regard to the pending Vermont Gas litigation in the manner discussed during Executive Session. W. Crandall seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

*J. Demeritt moved to hire Trevor Currier as the Monkton Road Foreman. J. Szarejko seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

Pay rates for the Road Crew were discussed during the Executive Session. Two options will be considered. J. Demeritt moved to consider two options:

- Option A: Would increase the Road Foreman's rate to \$37/hr, and crew members hourly rates to \$34 and \$30 based on seniority.
- Option B: Would leave the Road Foreman's rate at its existing level, \$34.50/hr and increase crew members hourly rates by 9%, \$32.45/hr and \$26.85/hr based on seniority.

*All those in favor of increasing the Road Foreman's rate to \$37/hr, and crew members hourly rates to \$34 and \$30 based on seniority, please indicate with your vote. **The motion passed 3-2-0.** J. Demeritt and W. Crandall opposed the motion.*

The new pay rate will be reflected in the next pay cycle. J. Szarejko will contact T. Currier to let him know the selectboards decision.

**23. ADJOURNMENT**

*J. Szarejko moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 pm. W. Crandall seconded. **The vote passed 5-0-0.***

Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy Jones