

Roxbury Selectboard Meeting
Minutes of October 6, 2025
6:30 p.m. – 11:23 p.m.
Community Hall

The minutes are as follows:

Members Present: Chair Rene Bouchard, Vice Tim Martin, Donna French, Jerney Reed and Nathan Donahue

Staff Present: None

Public: Dotti Guiffre, Ben Pincus, Paul Pike, Tom Frazier, Elizabeth Carney, Rich Smith and Annette (Boo) Smith, Nick Laskovski, Claire Chomentowski, Don Randall, Heather Holter, Judy Lusk, Brian Voight and Niki Sabado

1. Meeting called to order at 6:30 the usual procedures regarding comments were made.
2. Additions and Deletions to agenda: Nate asked to have 9E Budgets deleted for time constraints and to give it more weight at another meeting. Rene added the Municipal Planning Grant to 9 F. Judy L., asking if Aus Ballots could get moved up the agenda. It was moved to 8A.

3 Regional Future Land Use- Brian Voight and Niki Sabado presenters for Central VT Regional Planning:

The state is moving to a 3-tiered system to modify Act 250 as part of Act 181 adopted in 2024. The final draft will be in put in effect in 2026. Roxbury has no zoning and will not be affected by Tier 1A and 1B, which focuses on density development with guidelines by Jan 2026. The majority of Roxbury will be classified as Tier 2, which is essentially Act 250 unchanged. Same rules apply. Some portions/lands of Roxbury will also be classified as Tier 3 which focuses on conservation and denser developments will not be allowed and will be published by Feb 2026. Taking effect in July of 2026 is the new Road Rule which will not allow single residence driveways, newly constructed, beyond 800 ft. or 1200 ft. for multiple residences. With the new Land Use Maps, Village Center Designations will be phased out of the nomenclature but areas that focus on development could be widened or broader. An interactive map will be online come late Nov, and any citizen is encouraged and allowed to give feedback.

4. Public: A. What's Next RVS Task Force update.

Heather H. The group continues to make connections: The Business Dept at Norwich University (NU) was contacted. Could NU students develop a business plan? Could NU use for off campus meetings? A small business group of retirees were contacted and asked if they

could help also with a business plan. A demo with Faciltron (an asset management company) is trying to be arranged. The group is building a grants database for grants that may apply to the school's future use. Property Management companies are to be contacted to hopefully get quotes on building management costs and arrangements. Can real sq ft #'s be added to Task Force working notes so a cost analysis can be done. First Children's Finance meeting two weeks ago which may help in finding a childcare provider as a renter. A matchmaker essentially. Next meeting of Task Force is Oct 15th 6pm at the library. Site visits are trying to be organized with other similar schools that have closed in the past. Anyone is welcome on the tour pending space in potential van or you could drive yourself.

Paul P. thought that the town hall could be kept and school demolished, if necessary, the town doesn't really need the space. Tom F. said Stickneys Barn, in E. Granville uses Google Ads to rent space and has had success with it reaching out to a larger market. Boo S. expressed that some people might want to go on the tour. The majority of the public session was divided between topics of the Aus Ballot question and MERP Grant outcomes. Many feel that losing town meeting would be devastating to town governance and politics. The status quo in some viewpoints should be maintained as part of tradition and others feel that change could be good and the selectboard should ask voters the ballot question with a vote.

The other major topic was in what final condition the Community Hall will be left in after the grant is completed. Questions on ADA ramp placement, baths, kitchen, finished surfaces etc. Some feel the board has not been transparent with the plans and work scope. The board and others explained that this grant is for energy and resilience renovations and may not "complete" the building as some may intend. Some elements of the grant can execute or pay for portions of the building to be done, such as ADA compliance, but there is a threshold the MERP grant pay for.

5. Minutes approval. Donna moved to approve the minutes of Sept. 2nd, 2025 as submitted, Nate 2nd, minutes approved 5-0-0

6. Financial Report. Nate asked to see the legal fees for the school split out of general government so it can be tracked. Jerney asked what the Otter Creek invoice was for? Given that Tammy was out this evening, it could not be ascertained and Donna moved to approve orders without Otter Creek payment, someone 2nd. Orders were approved 5-0-0. Usually, Tammy gives us the addons, but they were missed on the first motion, add ons were then moved by Nate and seconded . Addons motion passed 5-0-0.

7. Road Commissioners Report: along with written report from Kevin Hewitt (road foreman)

- A. Equip. New cutting edges should be ordered before winter. Some plows need them and one for a wing is necessary. At least one truck needs tires, the others are in good

shape. Truck inspections expire soon and are scheduled to be done before the end of the month. A new sand screen was fabricated.

- B. Roads: Roadside mowing has been accomplished, touch up grading, tree clean up, and stumps removed along Steele Hill along with a berm that impeded drainage. The fill was used to widen the road a bit in that area. While on that side of the town, culverts and drainage swales were cleaned out. After a trailer was removed from Tracy Hill the ditch was cleaned out. The town helped the contractor haul overburden away and hauled gravel back to finish up the top dressing of the West Hill culvert grant project. Capital Earthmoving did a great job.
- C. Culverts: The large culvert for West Hill Grant is done and photos taken for submittal. More “regular” culverts were delivered, and some will be used on Horner Rd. and to have on hand for emergencies. A Warren Mtn Rd. culvert by the intersection of Northfield Rd. is scheduled for this coming week. Wednesday and Thursday it will be closed, and the detour around will be to take to Carrie Howe.
- D. Winter Plowing Assistance: The road foreman will be asked for his opinion on winter help and in crafting a description with the Road Commissioner as to what an advertisement might say or request. The board has elected to advertise after conferring with the road foreman.
- E. Birdseye Forestry Request: Birdseye has requested a portion of Old Mail Rt Rd from the Messier Hill side be “upgraded” to facilitate logging operations. Due to the request being a bit vague Jeremy volunteered to ask a few more details of the scope of work to be possibly done by Birdseye before the board can give permission.

8 Unfinished Business:

A. Australian Ballot Voting was taken up as a topic of discussion to weigh the pros and cons of proceeding forward with asking of voters if they would like all budgetary matters to be voted on by Australian ballot instead of the way it is done now. Presently a citizen must be present for a floor vote at town meeting to vote on the budget. For any change in the way citizens vote is cast on the budget a special meeting or at town meeting must occur first where the issue must be voted on the floor. If it fails, no change will occur. If passed all budget items would be by paper/ absentee ballot (Australian Ballot) for budget items like the school budget vote. The board and the public engaged profusely about the matter with varying degrees of opinion. If the board was to proceed forward at this point many options for timing of the special election or town meeting were discussed along with when it might take effect. All VT statutes for warnings and timelines would be in effect regardless. No vote by the board was taken at this time to establish a special meeting for Australian Ballot Voting.

B. 1. RVS: Jeremy moved to sign the Purchase and Sales agreement along with the Addendum, written by the town attorney, Tim 2nd the motion. P&S motion passed 5-0-0. The Addendum makes the testing result date and final closing date more flexible than the original document crafted some 2 months ago.

2. First Children's Finance. A meeting was held between First Children's Finance, Rene, Heidi A. and Nate. The RVS building was toured and generally they were happy with the space and what it could provide for a tenant with a childcare business. It appeared First Children's had some organization/people in mind locally for uses of the space. A Memorandum of Agreement was crafted to enable a board member to give First Children's data to work on number crunching to facilitate a potential tenant with renting the space. They are a non-profit entity with 5 offices around the country that do this work for free. Nate made a motion with Jerney 2nd to have Rene sign this agreement. Motion passed 5-0-0.

C. Speed Sign Quotes: The board reviewed the speed sign quote from work safe. Nate made a motion to go ahead and purchase, Donna 2nd the motion passed 5-0-0. They consist of one smaller sign and two larger signs. One to be placed north of the village and one to the south; and the smaller sign to be principally placed halfway up Warren Mountain going eastbound. Three additional anchors were purchased so the sign can be periodically moved when needed to different locations. Total sign costs are \$15,492.94.

D. Internal Control Document: The board followed up with the status of filing of the state mandated Internal Control Document, a one-page questionnaire as to how town employees handle funds, mail, records, checks, reconciliation etc. The document has not been completed as of yet by the town treasurer. Rene will reach out to see when it will be accomplished.

E. Update on MVP Healthcare: Donna, Tim and Tammy have previously met with an MVP employee to explain the differences between plans and answer any questions. The board would like Donna and Tim to advise the board on how to best offer and explain the plans to the employees, so everyone gets the plan they want. Enrollment for the plans begins Nov. 1st, 2025, for the following year.

F. Community Hall Next Steps: The board had notified the public and town organizations to have everything in the community hall cleaned out by the Oct. 1st. With that deadline passed, the remaining items need to be "cleaned out" or critical items stored in the storage container that has been delivered to the site. The remaining items at this point might as well be considered town property and will get saved and put into container, recycled if applicable, donated or discarded to prepare for renovations slated to take place over the winter. Nate will be the point of contact for this process and will organize with volunteers if necessary to clear space for energy renovations.

G. Town Office MERP received Bids: Three bids for installing one 24K and one 18K heat pump for the town office where opened. Peak Mechanical \$13,000 for Dakin brand with electrical hookups, Gillespie \$15,402.37 for Comfort Brand or \$17,028.00 for Mitsubishi both without electrical, and Mountain Air \$20,833 no electrical for Fujitsu brand. All come with similar 10–12-year warranties. One Bid for basement insulation by Foam Pro Inc. \$3250 plus \$750 for flame retardant application and Attic cellulose for \$ 7950.00 Total \$11, 900. One quote for Vermiculite and cellulose removal in the attic for \$14,660 by Mid-State Asbestos. Donna made a motion to award the bids to Peak Mechanical, Foam Pro and Mid State Asbestos. The motion was seconded and passed 5-0-0.

Nick L. the energy coordinator would like to know when the Town Clerks energy renovations are complete so he could compare before and after energy usage/savings. He added that the excess power produced by the solar panels installed on the fire station last winter has produced credits that compute to \$3,300 which can be applied to other town buildings, before the end of GMP's billing year.

H. Dog River Project II: Rene had a meeting with all the major players regarding the Dog River Project. Our engineer D&K, VT DEC, VT Fish and Wildlife, Army Corps of Engineers, CVTRP, to discuss mainly the need for additional permits or does "cleaning" out of the Dog River channel as defined in the original Dog River plan not need additional permits because it is regular maintenance. It was found that where the river is cutting back on itself, "horseshoeing", is outside the original permit zone and would need a permit from DEC. For such a permit additional work would need to be done such as constructing a channel profile to estimate the amount of material to be removed and they are concerned the river would cut headward if not done properly. D&K could assist us with this. DEC also said swamp mats would be needed to perform any of the work, and whether or not the existing swale can be used for ongoing maintenance. DEC was also concerned about the number of trees and shrubs that would need to be cut to do the work. VT Fish and Wildlife suggested speaking with the warden about beaver control and also stated that any beaver control devices placed within the river channel would probably not work. The Army Corps stated he believed all this work was part of ongoing maintenance, albeit delayed but still maintenance under his separate permit.

9. A. Town Office Electric charging station: An electric vehicle charging station was discussed by the board with a potential site at the town clerk's office. A program with GMP for installing chargers at municipal places of work. Up to 95% of the charger installation \$26K could be covered through the grant for a level 2 charger, which is essentially like the amount of power capacity a typical dryer at your house needs and at this point are not the type of chargers users seek out unless necessary. The board discussed the site as to whether it is the best location on town property and who might use it. Of course, the town could charge a fee, typical fees are 0.30-.50

per kWh, for using it but would the usage be enough to offset any other associated costs such as subscriptions and maintenance of the charging unit. Due to these issues and a limited amount of info on subscription services to administer the fees and potential maintenance the board did not elect to move forward at this time.

B. Lister Appointment Request: Tom Frazier submitted a request to be a Town Lister this week. Jeremy moved to approve Tom as appraiser, Nate 2nd, motion passed 5-0-0.

C. Town Auditor: Jillian A. stepped down from one of the auditors' positions, and Wade Holt submitted a letter to fill a vacant position. Tim moved to approve Wade Holt as auditor, Jeremy 2nd, motion passed 5-0-0. The board would like to thank those who have served in the past, continue to do so and are coming on board whether lister, auditor or another position.

D. Tax Sale Request: 6 properties have been identified for tax sale. Jeremy made a motion to grant the request by the listers to move forward with the sale. Donna 2nd, the motion passed 5-0-0. Rene also mentioned that the delinquency amount is up.

E. Rene was quick to ask the board that they start to think about the budget and please enter their proposed amounts into the spreadsheet before next meeting. Donna suggested that we should have a meeting solely devoted to budgets, it worked well last year.

F. Municipal Planning Grant: At the last meeting the board voted to pursue a municipal planning grant for building an accounting handbook. Up to this point a vendor has not given an estimate which is critical for even applying for the grant. Rene simply made the board aware, as he will also try again this week at a VLCT meeting he is to attend. If unsuccessful maybe the board could switch gears and use the grant to build a capital plan.

Other Business: The road commissioner made the board aware of the filing deadline for the Better Roads Grant is 10/31/25. The board asked if Kevin, road foreman, could help prepare and then bring to the next meeting.

11. Executive Session: Donna made a motion to go into an executive session for personnel and salary budget. Jeremy 2nd, passed 5-0-0 at 11:01. Donna moved to come out of exec. session, Nate 2nd Motion passed 5-0-0 at 11:23. No action taken.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 p.m.

Nate Donahue

Acting Clerk

Approved on October 20, 2025