

2025-06-02 Board of Selectmen Minutes

Town of Canterbury, NH
Board of Selectmen
Date: 2025 June 2
Location: Meeting House

Selectmen: Scott Doherty (Chair), Beth Blair, Calvin Todd

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

Others Present: Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE), Sam Papps (Town Clerk-Tax Collector), Brian Gaessler

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.
2. Sam Papps re Deeding
 - a. See Selectboard minutes 5/19/25 section 2.d.ii. for previous discussion.
 - b. There is one property up for deeding. The deeding deadline is June 30th, so the Selectboard will need to make a decision at their June 16th meeting whether to deed it or not.
 - c. There is \$1,789 unpaid on the account from the 2022 tax bill.
 - d. Sam tried to contact TDBank today to find out if they intend to pay the debt, but they have not yet gotten back to him.
 - e. About a week and half ago, the owner came in and paid about half the bill, but didn't discuss paying any more. The last payment before that was a month and half previous.
 - f. Hopefully the remaining money will be paid off by June 16th, but if it isn't, the Selectboard will need to make a decision.
 - g. The Selectboard will each review the property information and payment history at the office before the next meeting.
3. Administration
 - a. The Selectboard signed:
 - i. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$2,250. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - ii. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$20,266.96. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iii. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$52,766.17. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iv. Beth made a motion to sign the Welfare Manifest in the amount of \$2,250. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - v. Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for Map 229 Lot 1 and Lot 1-1.
 - vi. Scott made a motion to deny the Abatement Recommendation for All Purpose Storage Canterbury at 32 Hall Road (Map 249 Lot 16). Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 1. The Selectboard each read the letter from Assessor Mandy Irving in which she recommended denying the abatement. She explained the technical reasons of why the way they calculated the value of the property was incorrect.
 2. The Selectboard thanked Mandy for her skill and effort in putting together these documents. They decided to trust Mandy's expertise in this matter.
 - vii. Yield Tax Levy Warrant in the amount of \$976.44 for Map 227 Lot 2 and Map 221 Lot 16. Map 264 Lot 18 was not cut, so no taxes will be levied.
 - viii. Veteran's Tax Credit denial due to late submission for Map 220 Lot 1.
 1. Mandy denied this application because it was submitted on 6/2 but was due 5/27.
 2. The applicant will be able to apply again next year.

3. Page 40 of the 2024 Town Report shows the total amounts of the various Veteran's Tax Credits that were deducted in 2024.
- ix. Appointment slip for Russ Maille to become a Member of the Solid Waste Committee.
 1. There is no cap on the number of SWC members.
 2. Russ is the person who spoke at Town Meeting about his idea to retrofit the diesel packer truck at the Transfer Station so it uses electricity to run the hydraulics instead of needing to keep the engine running.
 3. Beth reported that Russ has attended several SWC meetings since she became their rep. He seems knowledgeable and she thinks he would be a good addition.
- b. Previous Minutes Approval
 - i. Kal read through the suggested changes for the May 19, 2025 public minutes.
 1. Line 135: clarify that Megan spoke to a DES rep as an abutter, not a Town Official
 2. Line 148: add that Megan will share the results with DES "and the Town."
 3. Line 304: clarify which properties are being discussed
 4. Line 338: add ", after the Canterbury Fair"
 5. Line 374: rearrange the sentence to clarify what Beth McGuinn recommended
 - ii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on May 19, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iii. Beth suggested that line 16 of the May 19, 2025 non-public minutes be reworded for clarity.
 - iv. Scott made a motion to approve the non-public as amended minutes for the Selectboard meeting on May 19, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - v. Kal read through the suggested changes for the May 22, 2025 public minutes.
 1. The Selectboard decided against a proposed change for line 20.
 2. Line 75: add ", after considering the results of polling Town Employees"
 - vi. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on May 22, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
4. Representative Reports
 - a. Historic District Commission - Calvin
 - i. There was no HDC meeting last month because they didn't have enough people available to make a quorum.
 - ii. Calvin spoke with Kevin Bragg (Chair) and there is an application expected to come in from the Shaker Village to install a handicap ramp. That will be the subject of the 6/18 HDC meeting.
 - iii. The HDC will also be trying to come up with a list of acceptable building materials to cut down on back and forth with property owners about their projects. This won't be an all inclusive list, but it will let people know which building materials are always allowed and which ones are never allowed.
 - b. Recreation Committee - Calvin
 - i. Calvin spoke with Randi Johnson (Chair). The RC doesn't plan to meet anytime soon.
 - ii. They will be running the soccer program in July and the Halloween festivities in October.
 - iii. They plan to meet in November to discuss their budget.
 - c. School Board - Calvin
 - i. There hasn't been a meeting in Canterbury yet. Next Tuesday will be the first one.
 - ii. Later in the meeting there was conversation about what, if any, concerns the Selectboard would like Calvin to bring up at the meeting.
 - iii. There was discussion about the latest kindergarten enrollment for September (24 kids so far) and how close CES might be to capacity. Proposed developments such as the one at Exit 18 could affect that. There will be no 5th grade this year, but the teacher has been retained to teach other classes in anticipation of next year.

- iv. There was discussion about the bus routes and how they keep getting consolidated. Because Canterbury has so few students, when the bus company is short staffed, they consolidate bus 9 and 11.
- v. There was discussion about traffic problems at drop off/pick up. The traffic is a problem along Baptist Road as you approach CES from the Center. There is no line of sight when trying to pass the line of cars waiting to enter the school property. A different pickup schedule could alleviate the problem. Calvin will bring this up at the meeting.
- vi. There was discussion about the issues with the grading system and the efforts of the School Board to improve the system.
- d. Energy Committee – Beth
 - i. The EC is discussing doing several workshops in the fall including an electric vehicle petting zoo, battery storage, and how to use mini-splits/heat pumps.
 - ii. They have also been discussing doing another Solarize Canterbury program that would include battery storage and are working on another Window Dressers event this fall.
 - iii. They want to revisit the energy audit that was done at the Municipal Complex a few years ago and see what improvements have been/could be made.
 - iv. Ruth Heath (Chair) and Fred Portnoy (CCPC) have been attending the SolSmart informational sessions (See 4/7/25 section 4.a.).
- e. Community Power Committee - Beth
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 5/19/25 section 7.b. for previous discussion.
 - ii. The CCPC is down to 2 members: Fred Portnoy and Tim Meeh.
 - iii. Edgar Rivera and Beth McGuinn have agreed to be the Canterbury Representatives for CPCNH, but are not part of CCPC. Beth McGuinn will be the primary rep. Kal will draw up the appointment slips and/or send a letter to CPCNH to make it official.
- f. Tricentennial Committee – Beth/Scott
 - i. This is no longer an official Town committee, but Beth and Scott both attend the meetings as private residents.
 - ii. They have two Co-Chairs that are doing great work: Heidi Southard and Naomi Scanlon. Beth stepped down as Secretary and Rene Brooks stepped up.
 - iii. The finalists for the art contest have been selected and the TC will decide on a winner at their next meeting. The winner will be announced at the final assembly of the school year at CES on 6/19 at 8:30 a.m. (See 4/21/25 section 2.b.vi.)
- g. Planning Board - Scott
 - i. At the May 13th meeting, the PB approved a minor subdivision at 527 Northwest Road. 2 PB members were abutters so recused themselves.
 - ii. Also on May 13th they did a preconceptual review with Web Stout on behalf of Ken Stern. This is for a minor subdivision on Baptist Hill Road. The actual application will likely be submitted in the fall.
 - iii. At the May 27th meeting, the PB discussed a draft sludge ordinance, the addition of another chapter to the Master Plan regarding solid waste, and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
 - iv. The HOP Grant work was going to be for updating the Land Use Regulations, but with the current bills being discussed at the Statehouse, they are going to wait to see what happens before beginning. (See 1/6/25 section 2)
 - v. Later in the meeting there was further discussion about the CIP.
 - vi. CNHRPC has suggested doing community involvement activities during the CIP creation process. Ken discussed this with Brendan O'Donnell (Chair) and both agree this is not advised.
 - vii. Ken explained that he believes community involvement wouldn't be productive because of how technical and detailed the CIP is for Canterbury. We look at the mileage and lifespan of

every vehicle in our fleet and the maintenance of buildings. Most members of the public would not have the expertise to contribute to the conversation, so this would only cause delays. He pointed out that if members of the public do want to watch the process or have comments they wish share, all of the PB meetings about this are open to the public.

- viii. There was discussion about how the CIP is a living document and is updated informally every year for budgeting. When the PB approves a large development, they would let the office know so they can prepare for increased needs for Fire/Police/Highway/Schools/etc.
- ix. At least one of the bills being considered in the legislature would significantly affect what can be built by right. So if that passes, the potential increase in buildings and population would be taken into consideration.
- x. The Selectboard agreed to not do community involvement meetings for the CIP development process.
- h. Solid Waste Committee - Beth
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 5/19/25 section 4 and 5/22/25 sections 2.a.ii. and 6 for previous discussion.
 - ii. Beth has been to 4 SWC meetings since she became the rep.
 - iii. The SWC has focused a lot on planning for the Household Hazardous Waste Day on 5/24. At their 5/26 meeting, they reviewed how it went. It was very successful and they got a lot of feedback that people would like the Town to hold them more regularly.
 - iv. The information the SWC published for the event was very good, so Beth will be making copies for further distribution.
 - v. At the 5/26 meeting, they discussed organization of the Treasure House. The SWC is happy to let those who have been running it informally continue to do so. Those people will work with David Bowles to determine what materials can be taken in since he is the one with an operator's license from DES. Madeleine Lowe appears to be the point person for the Treasure House so Beth will contact her about it.
 - vi. Beth explained that the 5/26 meeting was very combative, long, and unpleasant. The 2nd half of the meeting was mostly about the SWC's grievances with her and with commentary from the Selectboard at the 5/19 Selectboard meeting. They feel that their work isn't appreciated and that Beth has been hijacking the meetings and fabricating a false narrative of what they have been doing. They have not been receptive to questions and do not view new information (e.g. history of the SWC, Mission Statement) as helpful. They also feel that Megan being appointed to the SWC was the Selectboard exerting too much control over membership.
 - vii. The draft minutes for the 5/26 meeting are factually accurate, but do not convey the aggressive tone of the meeting. Beth is uncertain what edits could be suggested to make them more reflective of what happened.
 - viii. Beth has repeatedly brought up issues with their minutes at the meetings. Minutes should reflect what work the SWC is doing, but she has been unable to find evidence of how the SWC changed their focus from upgrading the Transfer Station to their current focus on relocating and building a new Transfer Station.
 - ix. At the 5/26 meeting, the SWC made it clear that they are unwilling to take direction from the Selectboard. Beth still believes they have merit and expertise, but isn't sure how to proceed after that statement.
 - x. The Selectboard discussed when and how to discuss this with the SWC. They decided to invite the SWC members to the Selectboard meeting on 6/16. To prevent the meeting from going too long, this topic will have a time cap and each person will be given a limited amount of time to speak.

- xi. The Selectboard members will send Ken which specific topics they want to address so the SWC can prepare accordingly.

5. New Business

a. Cushman Elm

- i. Beth asked Ken to look into the health of the Cushman Elm in the Center because it has several dead branches.
- ii. Ken talked with Bartlett Tree Experts who have been treating the tree for many years. The tree currently gets an annual treatment alternating between Dutch elm disease treatment and root treatment.
- iii. Bartlett sent a new rep and this person recommended extensive work to remove sod under the canopy, install a soaker hose, and cover the area with 4 inches of wood chips. This would not be possible because the tree is 3 ft from the road, and close enough to the cemetery that the Town would need to get permission from the State and an archeologist.
- iv. The rep said that they don't feel the tree is in danger from Dutch elm disease and watering is the best way to care for it. Ken believes we could get similar results by asking the Fire Department to water the tree if we have a dry spell.
- v. The Selectboard agreed to not install the soaker hose.

b. Carter Hill Road

- i. There was a significant washout on the south side of Carter Hill Road. The Highway Department has gone down to do some work on it. They will need to go back later this week to add material.

6. Old Business

a. Gazebo Update

- i. See Selectboard minutes 12/19/24 section 5.b. for previous discussion.
- ii. Ken left a voicemail for Eric Baker on 5/7 to see if/when he intends to come back and continue the work on the Gazebo. There has been no reply.
- iii. The remaining work was to fix some of the posts that were found to have rot during the handrail repair last year. This would have been an additional cost, so Mr. Baker had agreed to submit an estimate for doing that work.
- iv. Beth will get an email for Mr. Baker so he can be contacted one more time.
- v. There was discussion about what exactly was wrong with the posts and how the rot could be fixed.
- vi. Dale Caswell came to the office and suggested budgeting next year to repair the roof. Ken hasn't had a chance to go look at the roof to see what the problem is yet.
- vii. Mr. Caswell also suggested reminding the Canterbury Fair not to remove the railings this year. The new railings are permanently attached and cannot be removed anymore. Beth will remind the Fair not to attempt it.

b. Code of Conduct

- i. See Selectboard minutes 5/5/25 section 7.a. for previous discussion.
- ii. Kal summarized the changes they made since the last draft. They reorganized and reformatted the sections and removed redundancies.
- iii. The Selectboard will review the latest draft and send edits to Kal.
- iv. There was discussion about how this could be enforced and if Town Officers could be made to sign it. For elected officials, it cannot be enforced.
- v. When complete, it will be available at the Town Office and on the website. Sam could distribute it when someone signs up to run for office. It could also potentially be added to the paperwork people sign when they do the oath of office.

c. Healthcare for Employees

- i. See Selectboard minutes 5/22/25 section 3 for previous discussion.

- ii. Kal showed the Selectboard the votes from employees. By far, people chose Option 4, which was giving each person a monthly stipend to get healthcare elsewhere.
- iii. Kal updated the Selectboard on an email they received from counsel which explained that Options 3 and 4 would require a lot more consideration and planning. There are noticing requirements and the Town may need to alter overtime rates based on these types of benefits. Since the NHIT coverage ends on 7/1/25, there isn't enough time to do this right.
- iv. Kal recommended choosing Option 1 for now so that the health plan stays as close to the same as possible through the end of the year. This would give them time to work out all the details of Option 4 so it can be done next year.
- v. Kal also explained that counsel told them that the existing buyout option needs to have employment taxes taken out of it. They requested that the Selectboard approve increasing the buyout by the amount of taxes, so that the employees who have chosen that option are made whole.
- vi. There was discussion about if Option 1/2 and 4 could both be offered. That would depend on if SchoolCare had a minimum number of enrollees. Kal will look into it.
- vii. There was discussion about if the Town could bundle with SAU80 to save money. Rates are determined by the size and experience of the group. Unless we joined a group with hundreds of employees, we likely wouldn't receive any savings.
- viii. In 2026, HealthTrust might become an option again if their board decides to waive the 2-year lockout. There is also the possibility that SB 297 causes all risk pools to go under.
- ix. Scott made a motion to go with SchoolCare's Harvard Pilgrim plans for the remainder of 2025 and increasing the buyout to make employees whole after employment taxes are deducted. Calvin seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- x. Kal and Ken will continue investigating the options and making a plan for 2026.
- d. Update on Sale of town-owned property (Map 226 Lot 2)
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 5/22/25 section 2.b.ii. for previous discussion.
 - ii. The original acceptance of Brian Magoon's offer gave him 90 days (until June 17th) to complete the sale.
 - iii. The title company he is using raised some concerns because the previous owner passed away in MA and probate wasn't done. In 2023, the Town's attorney wrote the deed and had all of the heirs sign letters indicating that they agreed to give the Town the land. This information has been given to the title company, but they still have concerns.
 - iv. Because of the title issues, Mr. Magoon won't be able to make the deadline and would like an extension.
 - v. The Selectboard agreed to give Mr. Magoon a 90-day extension. That will give him to September 17th to complete the sale.
 - vi. Mr. Magoon has also requested the permission to do test pits on the land to determine where the water is and where he could build a structure.
 - vii. The Selectboard decided to not allow Mr. Magoon to dig test pits before the sale is complete.
- e. Beulah Fellowship Update
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 5/19/25 section 3 for previous discussion.
 - ii. Mr. Davis filled out the A-9 and returned it to Mandy promptly.
 - iii. Due to a clerical error, the form isn't available for review tonight. Kal will email it out for review and the Selectboard will make a decision at their next meeting.
 - iv. The Selectboard agreed to proceed in the meantime with scheduling a site visit by Mandy and Building Inspector Joel French.
- f. Library Weatherization Update
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 5/19/25 section 2.e.iii. for previous discussion.

ii. The grant money from Unitil has been received in the amount of \$7,210.

7. Executive Session

- a. Scott made a motion at 7:42 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) to discuss a personnel matter. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- b. Ken spoke with Ben Davis about the job offer to become Road Agent. Ben decided he is not going to pursue this position. He is still willing to plow seasonally for the Highway Dept.
- c. Scott and Ken both expressed disappointment that Ben didn't tell the Town that he was going to be working for someone else.
- d. Ken spoke with John about his plans. John reiterated that he was only willing to step back to a foreman role if Ben Davis was Road Agent. John intends to stay with the Dept. as Road Agent.
- e. So the Town will need to advertise for the current vacancy on the Highway Dept.
- f. Scott expressed concern about the ARPA project getting done with only John being qualified to operate the grader.
- g. Ken explained that John plans to start the work on June 9th and thinks it will only take 2-3 weeks. John will operate the grader, the trucks will deliver the material, and the other people in the Dept. will do traffic control and York raking. It will depend on the weather, but he is confident that the current staffing can get it done.
- h. The Dept. has been doing some prep work for the project on Borough Road. Two of the beavers causing problems on Briar Bush Road have been removed.
- i. The Selectboard realized they were straying from the declared topic, so decided to resume public discussion.
- j. Scott made a motion at 7:49 p.m. to exit the Non-Public session. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- k. The Selectboard decided not to seal the minutes because the negotiations with Ben Davis have concluded, so public knowledge of this would no longer render a proposed action ineffective.

8. Highway Dept. Updates

- a. Scott requested that John begin training someone else on the grader in case he falls ill. John will likely train Jesse since he has experience in running equipment.
- b. John doesn't expect the ARPA project to interfere with regular road maintenance. It won't take very long and the roads that usually require the most help are the ones they will be adding material to anyway.
- c. Parts of 7 roads have been identified for improvement during this project. Ken has the list.

9. Hiring Update

- a. Ken explained that Police Chief Crotty has had no luck hiring for the vacancy in his Dept. He is working on a proposal for increased wages that shows what other towns are offering for compensation.
- b. Ken thinks we are in similar shape to other towns in terms of how many vacancies we have. All municipalities in NH are struggling to hire right now.

10. DES Seminar

- a. DES is holding a seminar and the lead speaker is an expert in PFAS. Because of the issues with the Transfer Station, Ken was thinking of sending someone. It looks like the seminar is geared towards DES employees, so Beth has asked Audra Klumb (Conservation Commission member and DES employee) if she was going and could report back. She is waiting to hear back.

11. Adjournment

- a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2025 June 16, **5:00 p.m.** at the Meeting House
Minutes submitted by Kathleen McKay, Administrative Assistant