

2025-10-06 Board of Selectmen Minutes

Town of Canterbury, NH
Board of Selectmen
Date: 2025 October 6
Location: Meeting House

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

Others Present: Kal McKay (Admin Assistant), Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE and CCPC), Randi Johnson (ZBA and Budget Committee)

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.
2. Administration
 - a. The Selectboard signed:
 - i. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$543,036.75. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - ii. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$88,030.82. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iii. Appointment slip for Mary Witschonke to be Deputy Treasurer.
 - iv. Appointment slip for Randi Johnson to join the Budget Committee.
 - v. Appointment slip for Vanessa Crofton to join the Historic District Commission.
 - b. Previous Minutes Approval
 - i. Beth suggested expanding section 6.a. of the 9/22/25 draft regarding the Contaminated Materials Regulation Draft from the Planning Board. The following was added.

“He was concerned about approving an ordinance that would be excessively hard to regulate... Beth expressed her opinion that this ordinance was not just about roads but addresses storing, stockpiling, and spreading contaminated materials. She agreed that it would be difficult to go back in time to enforce this ordinance for people or businesses who were already not in compliance, but that going forward it would be useful for new business or if the Town gets a complaint. If we don’t have an ordinance to prohibit it than we can’t do anything... It was decided to go back to the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and have them continue the discussion about the purpose and goals of this ordinance.”
 - ii. The explanation of why no additional adder funds are expected on line 314 was expanded to say “Little to no money is expected next year due to the fact that the lowest available rate for residents does not include the adder. Residents would need to opt-up to a higher “Canterbury Basic” rate, and very few residents have shown inclination to do so.”
 - iii. There was discussion about the Noise Ordinance discussion on line 322. Although the Selectboard and Ken were primarily discussing logging during that conversation, the ordinance actually uses the word “construction” which is considered to include logging.
 - iv. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on September 22, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
3. Brookford Farm Sign Placement Application
 - a. Brookford Farm submitted an application to place signs in the Center for two of their events.
 - b. The Selectboard discussed the current state of compliance with the Center Sign Policy. There are several farms/organizations like Brookford that regularly place signs in the Center for harvests and events. Some are in compliance and some aren’t. The policy requires that all signs be authorized by the Selectboard and not be made of plastic.
 - c. Scott was in favor of granting the request but stipulating they must comply with the current version of the Center Sign Policy.

- d. Beth didn't mind that Brookford's sign for the Puppets and Pumpkins event is printed on plastic, but she is concerned about the length of time that these signs would be up.
- e. The current Center Sign Policy doesn't have time limits, but does require non-plastic signs. If the Selectboard intends to enforce the policy, they must enforce the entire thing consistently.
- f. Calvin asked for confirmation that the signs in the Center are required to comply with the square footage requirements in Section 2.6 of the Zoning Ordinance. They are.
- g. The Selectboard approved the sign placement request for Brookford with the stipulation that they follow the current Center Sign Policy.
- h. They will continue the discussion about editing the policy later in the meeting. When they approve the new version, they can set a date that it will become effective.

4. Speed on Old Boyce Road

- a. See Selectboard minutes 9/22/25 section 5 for previous discussion.
- b. Officer Jordan Westgate attended the meeting.
- c. At the previous meeting the Selectboard discussed ways to protect pedestrians on Old Boyce Road including reduced speed, increased enforcement, and placement of a "your speed is" sign (a flashing electronic sign which detects speed and displays it).
- d. Officer Westgate explained that the Police Dept. has been getting complaints on many roads in town. He investigated prices for both speed trailers with "your speed is" signs and Black Cat radar recorders. He distributed price information to the Selectboard.
- e. Officer Westgate explained that in his experience speed trailers are a horrible idea. They are difficult to move, get vandalized frequently, aren't very accurate because people don't usually maintain their speed when they see those signs, and a lot of people speed up to try and get a higher "score".
- f. Officer Westgate discussed the radar recorder option. This is a device that could be placed on a tree/pole for several days and would record the speed and time of every car that goes by. It does not take pictures. This device allows the PD to determine when is a good time to sit at a location to catch speeders.
- g. There were two main options for the radar recorder. Either solar powered or lithium battery. Solar is better for permanent installations rather than movable units. This is partially because it is more cumbersome to install and partially because it can be hard to find adequate sunlight.
- h. Officer Westgate explained that the Town may be able to use grant money to get 75% reimbursement for the device. The grant is from the State and the PD have been using it for speed enforcement overtime. This morning they found out that there is an issue with the grant because the funds cannot go into the General Fund, but must be deposited into a PD only account. That issue is currently being sorted out. When it is, they can see if the grant would cover this project.
- i. Officer Westgate reviewed the prices of the different packages for the non-solar radar recorder. The STARnext software needs to be purchased to interpret the data gathered by the recorder. The basic package without a laptop is \$4,895. The package with a laptop would be \$5,195. The software must be installed to a specific device, so a laptop would allow the officers to share a device that could be brought to the location of the recorder. We could also see if there is a spare laptop in the office and use that instead. There is no annual cost for the software.
- j. Currently, the Department has been borrowing this type of device from a neighboring municipality.
- k. Calvin expressed concern over the long term costs this system could have when the software becomes outdated and if this will be used long-term or just to solve the current problems people have been reporting. Officer Westgate assured that this would be used long-term. In his experience speeding is always a problem, they will just need to shift their focus to different areas of town.

- l. We are still waiting to get back the traffic count data from CNHRPC for this year.
 - m. The Selectboard agreed that the radar recorder without solar would be the best idea, but asked Officer Westgate to continue investigating the grant and look at costs of annual upkeep. If the grant is able to work, then they would authorize it, otherwise they would bring this idea to the Budget Committee.
 - n. Randi Johnson asked if property owners are notified when these devices are placed. Usually they are placed in the right of way, but the PD would contact the owner as an FYI. If someone calls with a complaint, they would ask the owner to give permission to place the box on their trees.
 - o. There was some discussion about how these complaints could just be from a few people who are not experienced at estimating the speed of cars passing them while they are walking. The boxes would allow concrete data to be collected.
5. Erin Hammerstedt re Shaker Village Quarterly Update
 - a. Erin Hammerstedt, Director of Canterbury Shaker Village, attended and distributed a quarterly update.
 - b. 40 Canterbury residents checked in and used the full free admission. Many more visited but didn't formally check in.
 - c. They hosted a variety of special tours and concerts this summer that were very successful. Erin reviewed the upcoming events including a car show, mobile oil change, and ghost encounters.
 - d. They will be trying to ramp up the Christmas celebrations this year, not quite to the level they used to be but much more involved than recently.
 - e. In November they will be going down to two tours a day and only on weekends.
 - f. The Horse Barn and Bee House both got new roofs.
 - g. The restoration of the Meeting House windows has begun. They are considering a contractor who wants to use the Village as a location for training/internships on historic restoration.
 - h. The Carriage House ramp is in progress.
 - i. They are lining up a contractor to do the Brethren's bathroom since funding is almost secured.
 - j. They are waiting to hear about the LCHIP funding for rehabilitation of the East House.
 - k. They were surprised to receive a federal Save America's Treasurers grant for over \$400K. They don't have the money in hand yet, but the federal agency is planning to move the money into an escrow account once the shutdown is over to prevent other agencies from trying to take the money back. This money will be used to restore the Infirmary, likely in 2027.
 - l. Andy Messenger of Turning Mill Farm will be leaving at the end of the season. They are considering whether to find another farmer to replace in kind or to bring the garden manager position back in house.
 - m. They have been working on their strategic plan and narrowed down to three priorities: preservation, enriching the present, and sustainability. Preservation focuses on the buildings, grounds, and collection. Enriching the present includes reintroducing food service, potentially creating an indoor play space to attract families, and multi-day programming such as internships and residencies. Sustainability is about finances: building the endowment and increasing earned income rather than relying mostly on annual fundraising.
 - n. They have hired Bergeron Technical to do the code review for reintroducing food service. They will come into the office to discuss. They would like to reactivate the kitchen in the Dewey School building and serve the food in the Horse Barn.
 - o. They have a new communications person starting next week, so are hoping to do more to get the word out about events.
6. Speed on Old Boyce Road continued
 - a. Beth described her visit to Old Boyce Road. She found that 30 mph felt appropriate on the straightaway but 25 mph felt like a better option from the 1st curve on. The speed limit sign as

you enter the road needs repair and possibly better placement. There are signs warning of the two sharp curves in one direction, but not the other. Both curves could use chevrons to highlight the curve.

- b. Beth did not think that the invasives were blocking the view or impeding pedestrians, but she didn't walk it. Beth will visit again to walk the road.
- c. The Selectboard discussed Beth's findings, and agreed that it would be best to lower the speed limit to 25 mph beginning about 50 yards from the 1st curve and continuing until the end of the road. This would include Riverland Road and Oxbow Pond Road. Kal will notice a public hearing and contact abutters so the Selectboard can vote on it at the next meeting.
- d. The Road Agent will be contacted to fix the 30 mph sign, and install the desired signage around the curves.
- e. Kal will figure out if Scotch Pine Road also needs to be included in this change.

7. Old Business

- a. Highway Garage Lights
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 9/22/25 section 2.e.vii. for previous discussion.
 - ii. Ken updated Scott earlier in the day. It seems that Unitil may be able to provide a \$5K grant for the upgrade as long as sensors are used so the lights turn off when the area is not in use. It is unclear if we would be able to use sensors in the Highway Garage since regular motion sensors would timeout when staff is working in between the trucks and infrared motion sensors would get confused by the heating system in winter.
 - iii. Scott worked in a similar building in Concord where motion sensors were used successfully. He will contact them to see how they are avoiding these problems. He will also try to get more info about the requirements of the grant and what sensors are available to see if another option might work.
 - iv. The Selectboard discussed other lighting options that could help the situation in the meantime. Scott will talk to Ken about how long this project will take and if the staff need other lighting arrangements to tide them over while this is fixed.
- b. Time for Meetings
 - i. The Selectboard briefly discussed at what time the meetings should be held.
 - ii. Calvin only has conflicts March through June, so they will keep the meetings at 5 p.m. and discuss in January about moving the meeting to 6 p.m.
- c. Center Sign Policy Update
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 9/22/25 section 4 for previous discussion.
 - ii. Kal sent out a draft for a new version of the Center Sign Policy.
 - iii. The Selectboard discussed if they would like this policy to continue to apply only to the Center or if it should be broadened to include all Town-owned property in Canterbury. A broader policy would be harder to enforce and have more questions about logistics.
 - iv. They particularly examined the corner of Baptist Road and Baptist Hill Road. There are several signs there. One was recently updated and put on a separate pole. Regulating these signs would get complicated, but it could provide an opportunity to make areas with multiple signs look nicer.
 - v. Beth brought a sign that she took down from the Center for an event in Bow. It is a good event, but is plastic, didn't get permission, and is not for an in-town event/business.
 - vi. The Selectboard decided to keep this policy limited to the Center. A larger scope would likely need to be addressed through the Zoning Ordinance and that would require a warrant article at Town Meeting. The Selectboard will look into it next year.
 - vii. The Selectboard decided to include both the colloquial and technical description for what land is governed by this policy.

- viii. The Selectboard decided to add a limit for how long a sign could be up. This draft includes the ability for the Selectboard to make exceptions to the duration. They decided to start with a 14 day maximum.
- ix. The Selectboard decided that political signage should not be allowed on Town-owned property in the Center.
- x. The Selectboard agreed to include an exception for the day of events that have already been approved to be held on Town property (e.g. Canterbury Fair, Farmers Market, etc.)
- xi. The Selectboard confirmed that this new policy would allow the Farmers Market sign to be up all summer (rather than the currently allowed Mon/Tue/Wed), but it can no longer be plastic. Since the new policy will likely not be in effect until 2026, this would give them time to hand paint a new sign for the next season.
- xii. The Selectboard discussed how frequently approved sign placement applications would need to be renewed. It wouldn't make sense to force businesses like Brookford Farm to apply for signs for the same harvests year after year. An approval expiration could be part of the application.
- xiii. The Selectboard would be the ones to determine if a sign is "aesthetically pleasing" and they could require a sign be repainted/repaired if damaged. They will request a picture with the application so they can determine if the sign should be allowed.
- xiv. The Selectboard discussed the question of if the Zoning Ordinance Section 2.6 square footage size limit for signs includes double-sided signs and if this policy should have further restrictions. They also discussed how many signs should be allowed.
- xv. They decided to meet in the Center and try out various sign numbers, sizes, and placements to determine what would be appropriate. Kal will coordinate a date/time with them and notice it. Kal will update the draft and disburse it for review.
- xvi. The Selectboard will run this policy by the Cemetery Trustees and Historic District Commission before approval.
- xvii. Edgar suggested having a removable sign in the Center managed by the Town instead of one sign for each business. It could be updated with the latest events and removed every night. The Selectboard did not support this idea because of the logistical hurdle of finding someone or a group of someones to manage that sign.

8. New Business

- a. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
 - i. The Selectboard have reviewed the suggested Capital Improvement Plan. If they don't have any further edits, they will need to send it to the Planning Board for official approval.
 - ii. This afternoon Ken found out that the 1989 Loader is out of service and needs \$15K of repairs. This CIP doesn't have that vehicle scheduled for replacement until 2027. It may need to be moved up to 2026, but next year the Highway Dept. already has \$320K of replacements scheduled.
 - iii. The Selectboard discussed how the planned vehicle replacements and other capital improvements could be rearranged to make a reasonable total every year. The Transfer Station improvements and Police Cruiser replacements might be able to wait a year or two.
 - iv. The Selectboard decided not to approved the CIP as written. They would like to discuss this with Ken and the Budget Committee first.
- b. HB 314
 - i. NHMA sent an email today asking for towns to write letters against HB 314 which would change RSA 15:5 which governs lobbying. Mainly, the proposed changes would require separation of funds and classify violation of this policy as a misdemeanor. NHMA is warning that this is essentially another anti-speech law similar to SB 213 (which the Selectboard wrote a letter against on 7/21/25).

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- ii. The Selectboard and Kal discussed how this differs from SB 213 and whether this would actually impact speech. The definition of lobbying isn't actually changing, so presumably normal business could continue. However, the fact the bill sponsors are making the law more complicated and increasing the penalties implies that they intend to more heavily enforce it. They may change their interpretation of the law to include normal activities of the towns and NHMA.
- iii. The Selectboard decided to ask for more information from NHMA and Representative Cambrils (bill sponsor and Merrimack County Rep) to better understand what the potential effects of this bill would be.

9. Adjournment

- a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2025 October 20, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

Minutes submitted by Kal McKay, Administrative Assistant