

2025-10-20 Board of Selectmen Minutes

Town of Canterbury, NH
Board of Selectmen
Date: 2025 October 20
Location: Meeting House

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

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

Department Heads: Sam Papps (Town Clerk-Tax Collector), Justin Crotty (Police Chief), John O'Connor (Road Agent), Michael Gamache (Fire Chief), Rachel Baker (Library Director)

Others Present: Kal McKay (Admin Assistant), Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE), Christie Simbari

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.
2. Christie Simbari re Taxes Owed
 - a. Scott made a motion at 5:01 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to discuss a matter that would negatively effect the reputation of someone other than the Board. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - b. See Selectboard minutes 9/22/25 section 2.c.v. for previous discussion.
 - c. Ken spoke with Ms. Simbari regarding her taxes and invited her to speak with the Selectboard.
 - d. Every year when Ms. Simbari's property (Map 233 Lot 24) is up for deeding, her bank pays the minimum amount required to prevent the Town from taking the property. In June 2025 her bank refused to pay anymore and she paid the bill the day it was due to be deeded. The Selectboard is concerned that this will repeat again in 2026. She currently owes \$17,595.
 - e. Ms. Simbari expressed confusion about the process. She did not understand that the bank had been paying her taxes, how much she owed, or what deeding was. She said she is not prioritizing this issue.
 - f. The Selectboard explained the deeding process and urged Ms. Simbari to prioritize this issue. Next July, if the 2023 bill hasn't been paid, then the Selectboard will have the option to deed the property. If they do, the Town will become the owner. The Town would put the property up for auction. Whatever money was earned from the sale would first be used to pay the taxes owed and the remainder would be given to the owner.
 - g. Scott made a motion at 5:14 p.m. to exit the Non-Public session. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - h. The Selectboard decided not to seal the minutes of this meeting.
3. Department Heads
 - a. Justin Crotty (Police Chief)
 - i. Chief Crotty distributed Canterbury Police Department Selectmen's Report 9/21/25 through 10/20/25.
 - ii. There have been 6 Incidents, 3 Arrests, 1 Accidents, 95 Citations, and 430 Calls for Service this month. The State Police assisted with 3 calls.
 - iii. Speed on Old Boyce Road
 1. See Selectboard minutes 10/6/25 section 4 for previous discussion.
 2. Chief Crotty distributed a report showing the results of the speed data recording that was done 10/6/25 to 10/14/25 on Old Boyce Road.

2025-10-20 Board of Selectmen Minutes

3. Chief Crotty explained the report and how it shows most people aren't speeding. Only 4% of the 3,823 vehicles that passed were going 10 mph or greater over the speed limit and only 1% were going 13 mph or greater over the speed limit.
 4. The Department will be putting the speed recorder on Hackleboro Road next time they are able to borrow it from Epsom.
 5. Chief Crotty confirmed that they spoke with the person on the electric bike that Mr. Pare discussed at the 9/22/25 meeting (section 3.b.).
 6. Regarding the purchase of a speed recorder for our department, Chief Crotty does not think we need the package with a laptop since there is an extra in the office. The Dept. is in process of getting approval for the Highway Safety Grant that could be used to cover the expense. If they are unable to get that grant and buy the device this year, they will put it in their 2026 budget.
- b. Michael Gamache (Fire Chief)
- i. Chief Gamache distributed Canterbury Fire Department Selectmen's Report 9/22/25 through 10/20/25.
 - ii. There have been 274 incidents so far this year.
 - iii. In the last month there were 3 CO scares, 2 of which were actual leaks. Chief Gamache reminded that CO is an odorless, tasteless, and silent killer. CO detectors save lives. The Dept. has access to free CO detectors if someone can't afford it and they can assist with installation. Next month Chief and Herb Batchelder will be attending a CO Summit.
 - iv. There were half a dozen accidents on I-93. There was a fatal incident this morning with a 20-year old male.
 - v. Fire Prevention Week went well. They did a demonstration for 120 kids at CES. Next week will be a demo for the kids at the Dewey School.
 - vi. Tomorrow is CES's annual inspection. Chief gave them kudos for running a safe ship.
 - vii. The state-wide burn ban is still in effect even with the day of rain.
 - viii. The Dept. is still seeking new members.
 - ix. Chief Gamache is still working on finalizing the Loudon project. Loudon's Fire Dept. will be providing backup coverage for part of town starting on January 1st.
 - x. Chief Gamache and Ken are working on redoing the Emergency Operations Plan. The law says this needs to be done every 5 years and Canterbury is going on 14 years. The EOP outlines how the Town would respond to different types of large scale emergencies like a large scale power outage or upriver dam failure. It is a required document for many grants. Chief Gamache has spoken with a company that does these plans and is aiming to get it done by the end of 2026.
 - xi. The Dept. has been doing about 1 driveway numbering project per week since May. This is significantly more than normal.
 - xii. Chief Gamache spoke with the developers working on the Planning Board application for the Hildreth's Farm/West Road development. They were looking for input from the fire perspective on the proposed subdivision plan. Chief Gamache worked with the Fire Marshall's office to get them more info.
 - xiii. The safety signage and equipment will be taken out of the Riverland Beach in the next couple of weeks as it is closing for the winter.
 - xiv. The NERIS reporting platform is changing. The Dept. is working on the switchover.
 - xv. The Dept. will be doing automobile extrication training next month. Two cars will be delivered to the station for this purpose.
- c. Rachel Baker (Library Director)
- i. Rachel thanked the Selectboard, and particularly Calvin, for coming to her with questions about how library budgeting works in NH.

2025-10-20 Board of Selectmen Minutes

- ii. Lauren Prospere was hired part-time as a Children's Room Assistant for 6 hours a week. The children's programs have been getting 30-40 kids plus caregivers each event.
- iii. Rachel spoke with a writer who was doing an article about the weatherization grant the Library got from Unifil. It will be published on the Unifil website. They have noticed a significant difference with the first few cold days of the season. Over the summer, they noticed an acoustic difference and didn't need the A/C as frequently.
- iv. Rachel will not be proposing a warrant article in 2026 to replace the boiler. It is still working despite being 23 years old. The Trustees would like to pay for half of the cost.
- v. There have been 97 new patron accounts so far this year. This is significantly more than normal. In 2024 there were 82, in 2023 there were 61. Pre-Covid, it was usually only 30. These are mostly household accounts, not individual accounts. There are now 1,242 accounts.
- vi. The seasonal events are on the calendar. This year the Polar Express event will not be the same evening as the Tree Lighting Ceremony.
- d. Sam Papps (Town Clerk-Tax Collector)
 - i. Sam distributed the All Unpaid Receivables Listed by Warrant 10/20/2025.
 - ii. A lot of outstanding taxes have been paid since last month.
 - iii. There has still been no communication from Beulah Fellowship. If this continues, the property will be up for deeding in 2027.
 - iv. The DRA hasn't released the tax rate yet, so we don't know when bills will be available.
 - v. There is no election in Canterbury this November. The next one will be in March.
- e. John O'Connor (Road Agent)
 - i. The Transfer Station will be trying to ship out paper and cardboard tomorrow. The salt shed is full of recyclables right now.
 - ii. They are expecting the first snow next week, but the forecast will likely change by then.
 - iii. The packer needed \$6K in repairs for the brakes, springs, and sensors to pass inspection.
 - iv. The loader is leaking brake fluid into the axles. To reseal it would cost \$8K. Additional problems would cost \$6,800 to fix. If he can find the money this year, he will try to get it done now, otherwise, he will budget it for 2026.
 - v. The backhoe is being used to do some of the work the loader would normally be doing.
 - vi. A resident on Ayers Road called about cars going down the Class VI portion of the road to party and litter. The road is extremely deteriorated, so everyone is surprised the cars are getting through. The Town could put a gate up, but could not put a lock on it. It is a public way, so people are allowed to traverse it, but the police could stop them if they are doing illegal things. Ken will talk with the Police Chief.
 - vii. Reclaiming and paving will be starting next week.
 - viii. Lights at Highway Garage
 - 1. See Selectboard minutes 10/6/25 section 7.a. for previous discussion.
 - 2. The estimated cost to replace the lights is \$10,990. For 3 motion lights, it would come to \$11,815. Until will pay \$5K as a rebate and could finance the balance on the electric bill. We don't know if the financing involves interest.
 - 3. There is \$16K in the Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. That would deplete the CRF, but only 8 lights are working right now. That CRF had \$5K added in 2025, but that should be bumped to \$10K in 2026 since the buildings are aging.
 - 4. The well pump was last replaced in 2016, so that is likely to be the next big expense.
 - 5. The Energy Committee would like to have another energy audit done on the Municipal Building.
 - 6. The Selectboard agreed to move forward with repairing the lights.

2025-10-20 Board of Selectmen Minutes

7. Later Scott reported that he visited the location he used to work at and asked about their motion sensor lights. The lighting in the building was updated 5 years ago and the infrared option didn't exist at that time. They didn't put motion in the high bays, only the offices. The motion sensors have been working well for the most part.
4. Administration
 - a. The Selectboard signed:
 - i. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$62,515.18. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - ii. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$52,568.88. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - b. Previous Minutes Approval
 - i. Kal read aloud the suggested changes to the 10/6/25 draft minutes.
 1. Line 64: add explanation of what a "your speed is" sign is.
 2. Line 108: replace "bad at estimating speed" with "not experienced at estimating the speed of cars passing them while they are walking".
 3. Line 197: replace "not to make an exception for political signs" with "that political signage should not be allowed on Town-owned property in the Center".
 - ii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on October 6, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes for the Selectboard meeting on October 10, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
5. New Business
 - a. Class VI Road Webinar
 - i. Ken and Beth watched a Class VI Roads Webinar by NHMA. They will send the recording and copies of the slides to the Planning Board and ZBA.
 - ii. A state-level legislative change will be taking effect 7/1/26 that will impact the ability of zoning ordinances to limit construction on Class VI roads. The impact to our ordinance will be minimal, but everyone involved in land use should learn about these changes.
 - iii. We aren't yet sure if road maintenance agreements will continue to be enforceable.
 - iv. The class acknowledged that the main issue with building on Class VI roads is that emergency responders will still try to help people on those roads even if it means driving a \$1M fire engine down a road that may damage it.
 - b. Letter from resident re Certificate of Occupancy
 - i. Michael Pelky sent a letter to the Selectboard regarding the property at 17 Nottingham Road. Mr. Pelky is trying to get a certificate of occupancy for the house as a single family residence, but the Building Inspector, Joel French, is refusing to issue one.
 - ii. Joel wrote a letter explaining that he doesn't believe the lower floor conforms with the zoning ordinance and state RSAs which require an ADU to be 1000 sq ft or less. The floor in question is 1200 sq ft and would be considered an ADU because it is not connected to the upper floor by an internal door. Part of this floor is a utility room that is 256 sq ft.
 - iii. Mr. Pelky believes this utility room should not be counted towards the size calculation and Joel does. If that room is counted, then it is a non-conforming ADU and Mr. Pelky would need to get a variance from the Zoning Board.
 - iv. Ken explained that during construction Joel told Mr. Pelky that a stairway was needed to connect the floors for it to be a legal ADU. Since then, the RSAs governing ADUs changed and the stairway is no longer a requirement.
 - v. Ken consulted NHMA on if the utility room should be counted and they said the state has no regulation on that, so it is up to the local ordinance.

- vi. Ken spoke with Joel and Joel stated that he still believes the utility room should count towards the sq ft calculation because it serves the entire building. If there was a problem with a device in there, tenant laws would require that the property owner give notice to the occupant of the ADU and the occupant would have the right to deny access to the utility room.
- vii. The Selectboard examined floorplans and pictures of the space. They observed that the space could also be used as storage for the ADU occupant.
- viii. The Selectboard agreed that the utility room should be considered part of the ADU.
- ix. Ken will send a letter to Mr. Pelky with their decision and urge him to try to find a solution with Joel. A circular staircase/bulkhead into the utility room would allow access without going through the ADU.
- c. Energy Audit
 - i. The Energy Committee has found a company that can do an energy audit for streetlights and the Municipal Complex for free. They need a letter from the Town giving the auditor permission to speak with Unitil about the power rates.
 - ii. The Selectboard agreed to the audit. Ken will send a letter.
- 6. Old Business
 - a. Center Sign Policy Update
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 10/6/25 section 7.c. and 10/10/25 for previous discussion.
 - ii. The Selectboard would like to speak with the HDC about their idea for a Town-managed signpost with a certain number of standardized signboards that advertisers could paint.
 - iii. Beth brought up additional questions that the Board should consider. She will email those and the photos with the mockups of what they discussed at the last meeting.
 - iv. The policy looks fine for now, but will need updating if they go with the Town-managed sign-post idea.
 - v. State law only allows the Road Agent to remove political signs. Due to that, the policy should state that the Road Agent enforces the policy and all signs that are removed are kept at the Highway Garage.
 - b. Hay Press Donation
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 8/4/25 section 3.a. and 9/22/25 section 2.e.vi. for previous discussion.
 - ii. The hay press was meant to be donated to an agriculture museum, but when it arrived, the museum decided they didn't want it. It is currently being stored at the Highway Garage.
 - iii. Herb Batchelder belongs to the East Coast Antique Tractor Club and would like the hay press to display at club events. He would store it and be the caretaker of the piece.
 - iv. The Selectboard agreed to donate it to Herb for that purpose.
 - c. Fire Engine Bond
 - i. The new fire engine that was approved in warrant article 2023-2 is due to be delivered in May. The balance due is \$490K which needs to be funded through a bond.
 - ii. The rates for the January bond sale are 3.44% for a 10-year and 3.94% for a 15-year. That would be a difference of at least \$45K in interest.
 - iii. Currently the Town only has one bond payment remaining and it will be finished next year.
 - iv. The draft Capital Improvement Plan calls for the capital reserve fund for the next fire engine to start getting funded next year. We bought this engine for \$820K. They are now worth \$1.2M and have a 3-5 year wait time for delivery. The dealer also now includes a clause that any unforeseen price increases would be passed to the customer. There is a congressional investigation into this issue since it is a nation-wide problem.
 - v. The next engine that would need replacing is from 2015. If the Town wanted to replace it in 2030, we would have had to order it this year.

2025-10-20 Board of Selectmen Minutes

- vi. The Selectboard agreed to go with the 10-year bond.
- d. Update on CD Investments
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 9/8/25 section 7.b. for previous discussion.
 - ii. Office staff completed the CD investments. One will mature December 14th, the other January 14th. They will rollover in January. Ken will keep the Selectboard updated on interest.
- e. Capital Improvement Plan
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 10/6/25 section 8.a. for previous discussion.
 - ii. There are a few changes from the last meeting.
 - iii. The heating system for the Library is on the CIP for 2027. If the Trustees decide to fund some of it, that would reduce the tax burden.
 - iv. The water truck is not serviceable and will be replaced with a slide in tank. The \$18K could be funded from the capital reserve fund (CRF).
 - v. The loader will need to be replaced in 2027 or 2028. \$160K could be funded from the CRF and \$90K from taxes.
 - vi. The waste oil heater would cost \$21K. Ken still feels it is a good idea because of the problems there have been with disposal of the oil collected at the Transfer Station. This would also help with the heating costs at the Highway Garage. It would be difficult to calculate the payback on this, but Ken can ask the energy audit company if that is calculable. The Selectboard were concerned if contaminants in the oil would cause harm to the equipment or environment. Ken will check with the vendors.
 - vii. Ken isn't sure why the salt shed was included. That is part of the larger conversation about the Aries report that will be had with the Budget Committee on 11/3.
 - viii. T1 needs to be replaced in 2026 and will cost \$250K. The CIP currently shows it as half CRF and half tax. The Highway Truck CRF has \$128K in it now and if the regular \$30K was to be added in the 2026 Capital Improvements warrant article, then \$150K could be funded from the Highway Truck CRF. The other \$100K could potentially be funded from the Highway Equipment CRF to prevent any tax rate impact.
 - ix. Rescue 1 is scheduled for replacement in 2026 for \$100K. The current Rescue 1 is no longer serviceable. Chief Gamache would like to replace it with the current command car and then replace the current command car with a new pickup. The cost of a new truck would be ~\$50K and equipping the new rescue vehicle would be ~\$80K. That strategy would allow the CRF to cover the cost.
 - x. Chief Crotty thinks there may be enough extra money in the budget this year to replace one of the cruisers. He will wait until November to decide and encumber the money for delivery in 2026. He would like to replace one cruiser in 2026 and the other two in 2029.
 - xi. There is only one bond payment remaining (\$52,550). In 2026 the fire engine bonds will need to begin. We should begin saving for the next engine in 2026.
 - xii. CNHRPC didn't send us the formulas they used to get the numbers in the lower section. Ken will get those from them so the numbers can be updated.
 - xiii. Ken will clean up this draft of the CIP and send to the Selectboard and Dept. heads for review and then give it to the Planning Board. It will also be given to the Budget Committee for the 11/3 meeting.
 - xiv. The Selectboard will be attending the Schoolboard meeting on 10/28 before the PB meeting.
- 7. Selectboard Representative Reports
 - a. Tricentennial Committee – Scott/Beth
 - i. The TC is moving forward with a number of projects including a challenge coin, t-shirts, stickers, and license plates.

2025-10-20 Board of Selectmen Minutes

- ii. They are trying to figure out how to make the online store work better to raise funds. They got a \$500 grant from the Canterbury Fund. Eventually they will need to ask the Town for money, but they don't know specifics yet.
- iii. If they did a warrant article in 2026, they would need an invoice to encumber the funds into 2027. They could also establish a CRF and fund it in 2026, spend it in 2027, and dissolve it in 2028.
- b. Planning Board – Scott
 - i. The PB finished reviewing the Solid Waste Management chapter of the Master Plan. They will schedule a public hearing to finalize it.
 - ii. Meridian requested a continuance so the Hildreth Farm/West Road hearing will continue on 10/28. The new plan hasn't been delivered yet. Ken went to a meeting with Meridian and CNHRPC to discuss the code compliance report. Meridian requested a couple of minor changes.
 - iii. Scott is concerned about the PB's participation of alternates. At the last meeting, they barely had a quorum.
 - iv. The 11/11 meeting may be rescheduled due to the holiday.
- c. Conservation Commission – Beth
 - i. No permits came up this month, the CCC has been working on process, budget, and property management. They have several workdays scheduled and will be putting signs up on the Schoodac Trail.
 - ii. They will be consulting with local hunters on safety zone signage that went up to get their opinions on whether signage like this is effective.
 - iii. They walked the Briar Bush Road Town Forest with the county forester. Nothing needs doing right now.
 - iv. The CCC and PB have a joint subcommittee to consider a wetlands setback ordinance.
- d. Energy Committee – Beth
 - i. The 10/13 meeting was cancelled because lack of quorum. 2 members stepped down and they need new members.
 - ii. They are still interested in creating a solar checklist for those interested in installing solar in town, but it isn't clear how useful it would be.
- e. Community Power Committee – Beth
 - i. The CCPC needs to write warrant article language to accept the adder funds into the Renewable Energy CRF.
 - ii. They are trying to figure out how people new to town get on community power and they want to do education about opting in and opting up.
 - iii. They are in desperate need of new members. Right now there is no chair and Beth is acting as secretary.
- 8. Adjournment
 - a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2025 November 3, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

Minutes submitted by Kal McKay, Administrative Assistant