

2026-01-05 Board of Selectmen Minutes

Town of Canterbury, NH
Board of Selectmen
Date: 2026 January 5
Location: Meeting House

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

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

Others Present: Kal McKay (Admin Assistant), Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE and CPCNH Rep), Beth McGuinn (CPCNH Rep), Brian Gaessler

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.
2. The Selectboard signed:
 - a. Mileage reimbursement check for Treasurer Al Edelstein in the amount of \$14.
 - b. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$10,188.87. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - c. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$560,801.73. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - d. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$49,888.72. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - e. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$54,385.03. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
3. Community Power Rates
 - a. Community Power Committee (CCPC) members/Canterbury Reps to CPCNH Beth McGuinn and Edgar Rivera attended.
 - b. Beth McGuinn explained that all of the rates went up, both the utility companies and CPCNH.
 - c. Starting February 2026 the power rates will be
 - i. Eversource: 11.303 cents per kWh
 - ii. Unitil: 12.061 cents per kWh
 - iii. Community Power for those with Eversource: 14.663 cents per kWh
 - iv. Community Power for those with Unitil: 14.942 cents per kWh
 - d. CPCNH decided to increase their rates by 2 cents so they can begin building up a reserve. Beth McGuinn didn't know how much money CPCNH wanted to build up in the reserve, but she will get that information for the Selectboard. She explained the goal of the reserves is to have enough money saved so that CPCNH could avoid taking loans for electricity, which would reduce the rates in the long run.
 - e. Neither Beth McGuinn nor Edgar were able to attend the CPCNH board meeting. CCPC member Fred Portnoy went instead.
 - f. The default rate for Canterbury in the February 2026 to July 2026 rate period will be Granite Basic, the least expensive Community Power plan. The Canterbury Basic plan with a .2 cent adder will be available for those who wish to opt up.
 - g. Anyone who wishes to switch to/from Community Power back to/from the regular utilities may do so.
 - h. CCPC is planning to host a listening session for the town in April so they can get feedback from residents about the program.
 - i. Beth McGuinn will post the new rates in the February Community Newsletter, the weekly town email, etc. She will include information about how someone can opt out/up.

4. Signing Continued

- a. The Selectboard signed:
 - i. Yield Tax for Map 232 Lot 18 in the amount of \$483.68.
 - ii. 2026 Investment Policy
 1. No changes have been made since last year. The Selectboard is required to reapprove this policy annually.
 - iii. HB 314 Letter
 1. Kal provided an update on the progress of HB 314 and a drafted letter to Canterbury's State Representatives asking them to vote no on the bill.
 2. Since the Selectboard last discussed this topic (11/17/25), the bill has been amended to include a way for towns to continue supporting organizations like NHMA. However, the only avenue provided would require a warrant article using inflammatory/misleading language that would make it unlikely for the warrant article to pass.
 3. The House will be voting on this bill on Wednesday 1/7.
- b. Previous Minutes Approval
 - i. The only non-grammatical change was line 373; Scott didn't attend the PRS meeting.
 - ii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on January 1, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iii. Beth suggested on line 44: change "before" to "previous negotiations"
 - iv. Scott made a motion to approve the non-public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on November 18, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

5. Other Business

- a. Letter re BUILD Grant
 - i. On 12/1, grant writer/resident Greg Paninski emailed the Selectboard a proposal to apply for a grant which could be used for projects such as building a footbridge across the Merrimack River and improving pedestrian safety. He offered to do the grant writing for the Town at a reduced rate of \$7,500.
 - ii. The Selectboard decided to hold off on discussing this topic until the summer since they are too far into the budget cycle to consider such a big project for the 2026 budget.
- b. Traffic Count
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 4/7/25 section 6.b. for previous discussion.
 - ii. Ken got the results of the traffic count back from CNHRPC. He will forward the email to everyone.
 - iii. Ken thought the most interesting part of the data was that it breaks the traffic down by time, so the count on Dump Road could be used to see when the most popular times were at the Transfer Station.
- c. Police Grant
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 11/24/25 section 2.b. and 10/20/25 section 3.a.iii. for previous discussion.
 - ii. When the Selectboard voted to approve the NH Safety Grant on 11/24/25, they didn't have the correct total amount, so they need to redo the vote.
 - iii. This grant will help the Police Dept. purchase a traffic data recording device for \$4,008.75 so they can monitor speed on roads without having to borrow equipment from Epsom. The Town will need to provide a \$1,300 match.
 - iv. Scott moved to accept the amended grant agreement from FY 2026 in the amount of \$8,500 to \$12,508.75. The Town will be responsible for \$1,336.25. Scott pointed out on page two it shows what we will be purchasing. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- d. County Meeting re Penacook Rescue Squad
 - i. See Selectboard minutes 12/15/25 section 9.b. for previous discussion.

- ii. Beth and Ken attended a meeting with the County, Boscawen, and PRS to discuss funding and call volume at the County's facilities.
 - iii. 50% of calls to PRS in Boscawen are from the County's facilities. A case was made to have the County contribute as if they were a 4th town using PRS.
 - iv. The County Administrator said they would discuss the idea internally and come back with an answer.
6. 2026 Budget and Warrant Articles
- a. Warrant Articles
 - i. Slide in Water Tank and Replacement Dump Truck
 - 1. The water truck we have now is no longer useable and one is necessary to properly maintain dirt roads. A slide in tank rather than a new truck would cost \$18K that could be funded from the Highway Equipment CRF.
 - 2. T1 is a 2011 International truck. It is the oldest vehicle other than the Sterling which we decided not to replace yet. We have had a lot of issues with it in the last few years and it was due to be replaced in 2025. It would cost \$250K to get a new one.
 - 3. If we took \$18K from the Highway Equipment CRF, there would be \$98K remaining. If the CRF deposit WA is approved, the Highway Truck CRF would have enough money to cover the remainder, so T1 could be replaced with no tax impact.
 - 4. The next truck that needs to be replaced is the Sterling. It would be downgraded to an F550 which would cost ~\$160K (including new spreader).
 - ii. Waste Oil Burner
 - 1. Ken checked with the company and confirmed that waste oil burners are still allowed to be installed in NH.
 - 2. The burner, installation, and transfer pump would cost \$20K. There is no CRF with money saved for this project.
 - 3. Right now there is a repair place in Loudon that is picking up the waste oil we collect at the Transfer Station/generate at the Highway Garage. They stopped picking it up once before and could stop again. If the Town couldn't find someone else to take it, it would cost \$10K each time to have Clean Harbors come and get it.
 - 4. The waste oil burner would be installed in the Highway Garage where the waste oil is currently stored now and would blow hot air to heat the garage in winter. We don't have separate meters for different areas of the building, so we wouldn't know how much it would save on heating costs until it was installed.
 - 5. There was discussion about how to safely/legally transport the oil from the Transfer Station to the garage.
 - 6. The burner has a triple filter that would need to be maintained like any other furnace. The burner could be run using all of the used oil collected by the Transfer Station and Highway Garage. We don't know how much we collect, but it should be enough to store in the summer and run the burner all winter. It comes with a 100 gallon tank and a way to attach another tank if needed.
 - 7. The Selectboard agreed to put this on the warrant.
 - iii. Rescue 1 Replacement
 - 1. It would cost \$100K to move the 2021 Ford F250 Command Car to be Rescue 1 and to purchase a new F250 to replace the Command Car. This would be entirely covered by the Rescue Truck CRF.
 - 2. Ken will talk to Road Agent John O'Connor to see if Highway could use the old Rescue 1 vehicle.
 - iv. Copier

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1. This would replace the copier in the Town Offices. Ken and Kal agreed to make the warrant article \$4K. Kal will ask the repair company if the old one could be traded in.
- v. Transfer Station Packer Truck
 1. It would be \$150K to buy a used packer and \$20K to retrofit the hydraulics.
 2. The current packer was bought new in 1999 for \$70K. It hasn't gone many miles, but has had to idle whenever the Transfer Station is open so that the packer can be used. In 2025 we had to put \$10K of repairs into it and it needs more work. The hopper has rusted out again, the check engine light is on, and turbo is making funny noises.
 3. There are a lot of used packer trucks available since a lot of municipalities are switching to dump trucks with the robotic arm rather than the rear packer. If this was approved, we would likely be able to acquire a new-to-us one within months.
 4. The Wheelabrator contract is good for another 5 years. A CRF was never created for a packer because we didn't know how long Wheelabrator would continue operating.
 5. The Selectboard could bond the money, but then the purchase would have to wait until 2027. They could also use some of the Highway Equipment CRF, but it would be safer to keep a buffer in that account in case of emergency.
 6. The Selectboard agreed to place this on the warrant for \$170K.
- vi. CRF Deposits
 1. The balance for the Loader CRF is \$188K and we will be looking to buy a new one next year. It will cost ~\$250K, so it will be close. We just put \$15K of repairs into it, so hopefully it lasts 2 more years.
 2. If the Selectboard decide to build a new salt shed, we may be able to forgo a loader or buy a smaller/cheaper one instead.
 3. Since Rescue 1 is being replaced with an F250, the next replacement shouldn't cost as much as what we were saving for. The lifespan of the new Rescue 1 is likely 10 years and after the purchase this year, the CRF will have \$78K remaining. So the CRF contribution can be reduced from \$12K to \$8K.
 4. The Building Maintenance CRF has been getting funded at \$5K a year, but we have been using it a lot this year as the building ages. So this is bumped up to \$10K.
 5. The new lights at the Highway Garage didn't end up costing us anything from the CRF because Unutil funded about half of it and financed the other half at 0% interest which we will pay gradually on our electric bill.
 6. The Selectboard discussed if they should start saving for a new salt shed.
 1. Based on the numbers Ken got from other towns, replacing the current one with a similar size would be in the ballpark of \$150K, but material/construction costs could change in the years it takes to save the money.
 2. The salt shed is in poor condition, but (knock on wood) isn't in critical condition yet.
 3. There was discussion about what is planned in the CIP for the next few years.
 4. Calvin suggested saving for the shed in 2026 and 2027, then putting it on the warrant in 2028.
 5. Usually the goal for big expenses (like the fire truck) is to have half the money saved in a CRF. To achieve the goal of 2028, we would need to put \$25K in each year.
 6. There was discussion about how the salt shed figures in to the overall plan for the Transfer Station. The salt shed is on the Transfer Station property, but it is a Highway Dept. building. The Transfer Station has been using it for recyclable storage in the summer, so arranging for more recyclable storage is needed.
 7. The Selectboard decided that saving for the salt shed should begin this year. In 2026 the Selectboard will focus more on the long-term plan for the Transfer Station and decide if any other projects should be saved up for in 2027.

8. Wheelabrator will close eventually, but that could be 10/20 years down the road. Getting the packer truck in 2026 buys time to come up with a long-term plan. If the warrant article for the packer is voted down, then the Selectboard will have less time. The Landfill Closure CRF has \$166K and the Transfer Station Upgrade CRF has \$1,200.
7. The security cameras at the Municipal Building are 10 years old. They work, but they are approaching the end of their lifespan and the system requires switching cameras manually in order have audio recording. Ken got an estimate from a company to replace the cameras for \$35K, but he considers that the “Cadillac” option. Ken is getting estimates from 2 other companies and is thinking this could be put on the warrant in 2027. The last time they bought cameras, there were grants available to fund half of the cost.
- b. 2026 Operating Budget
 - i. Mary created a list of grants received in 2025 and other offsets to the budget including the ARPA funds and SB104 money.
 - ii. During the ice storm on Monday a FedEx truck slid off the road and the truck we had out sanding slid into it which damaged the fuel tank and heated mirrors. No one was hurt. Primex will be sending an appraiser to take a look. Compared to other municipalities we have been pretty lucky when it comes to the number and severity of accidents we have.
 - iii. Healthcare is the biggest thing that has changed since the last draft of the budget.
 - iv. This draft has the 2026 budget at \$3,722,717 which is an increase over 2025 of \$237,467 (6.8%). This includes the originally proposed budgets from the PD and Library.
 - v. Kal corrected the offset column on the draft that was distributed to include the ARPA and SB104 money. Without listing those grants, the table makes it look like the 2025 budget was overspent.
 - vi. At the 12/15 meeting with the Library Trustees the Selectboard agreed to a budget of \$265K plus the healthcare costs. If healthcare is removed from the Library budget, they are already below \$265K. Ken will speak with Rick Crockford about it.
 - vii. Calvin suggested waiting to implement the wage step plan for the PD until next year. He has done research into how other towns do their wages and we are on par or exceeding certain places. He would like to put more thought into the plan and do a 4% raise this year.
 - viii. Scott asked Calvin to send Kal numbers to run to see what effect that would have on the bottom line increase of 6.8%. He wants to recruit and retain, but is concerned about the cost.
 - ix. Beth asked what the Town would do if our PD is all called to the National Guard and the State PD have to cover Canterbury. We aren't yet at the 3K population level where the State would charge us. If it was a temporary situation, they would likely be willing to cover us.
 - x. To reach the goal of a 4% overall increase (without including the effect of the fire engine bond), the Selectboard need to find \$48K to cut.
7. Executive Session
 - a. Scott made a motion at 6:58 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to discuss a welfare case. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - b. Scott made a motion at 7:13 p.m. to exit the Non-Public session. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - c. Scott made a motion to seal the minutes. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
8. Adjournment
 - a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Minutes submitted by Kal McKay, Administrative Assistant