

2026-01-19 Board of Selectmen Minutes

Town of Canterbury, NH  
Board of Selectmen  
Date: 2026 January 19  
Location: Meeting House

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

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

Department Heads: Sam Papps (Town Clerk-Tax Collector), Justin Crotty (Police Chief), John O'Connor (Road Agent)

Others Present: Kal McKay (Admin Assistant), Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE, Community Power Rep)

1. Call to Order
  - a. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.
2. Department Heads
  - a. Sam Papps (Town Clerk-Tax Collector)
    - i. Sam distributed the All Unpaid Receivables Listed by Warrant 1/19/2026 report.
    - ii. Taxes were due on 12/22/25. There are 110 outstanding invoices for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025 bill. That is about average and nothing appears abnormal.
    - iii. Tabulator training is tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the Sam Lake House.
    - iv. Filing period for people who want to run for office opens next week.
  - b. John O'Connor (Road Agent)
    - i. There have been a few ice storms.
    - ii. The truck that was in the accident is still down. They are waiting for a new fuel tank to be delivered.
    - iii. One of the sanders is down because the chute was damaged. The parts are about 30 days from being delivered. They brought an older sander out of retirement and it is working fine.
    - iv. Salt usage has been up this year. John will be ordering the 8<sup>th</sup> load shortly.
    - v. Nobody showed up from People Ready to help David Bowles at the Transfer Station on Saturday so John had the Highway Dept. go help.
    - vi. The Transfer Station baler has been set up to do plastic during open hours and cardboard and paper during closed hours.
    - vii. The loader is up and running. They said it should be good for another 5 years.
    - viii. For plowing they have been using the backhoe to compensate for a truck being down. Generally they have enough people to plow but due to flu, they were short-handed for a couple storms.
    - ix. The Selectboard agreed to try to start to sell or scrap the T8 and T6 which have both been out of service in the fall. They are in very poor condition so will likely be scrapped.
    - x. Beth thanked John and the road crew for working under adverse conditions.
  - c. Michael Gamache (Fire Chief)
    - i. Chief Gamache was unable to attend the meeting. He distributed Canterbury Fire Department Selectmen's Report 12/15/25 through 1/19/26 before the meeting.
    - ii. There were 350 incidents in 2025 and 162 trainings/inspections/public education events. The incidents are down 9% from 2024.
    - iii. Since last month there was a structure fire on Intervale Road. It was a camper trailer. They have called the state out to look at the cause.

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- iv. There have been multiple calls to I-93 this month.
  - v. In 2025, the department had to respond to 11 false alarms at the self storage facility on Hall Road which violates the false alarm ordinance. The owner has been sent a letter with a fine of \$1,755.
  - vi. One new member has joined the Dept.
  - vii. The annual member appreciation ceremony will be March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. There is a Selectboard meeting that night. We will keep the agenda light so they can make it to the ceremony.
  - viii. The contract with Loudon EMS has been finished.
  - ix. The new fire engine is actively being built. Diagrams are available at the Fire Department. The Chief will go down to the factory in Florida to check on the engine as a pre-delivery inspection. Delivery is still estimated in May.
  - x. Chief Gamache and Ken are working with the company that was hired to work on the EOP.
  - xi. The Dept. has been working on reprogramming radios and transitioning the reporting software.
- d. Justin Crotty (Police Chief)
- i. Chief Crotty distributed Canterbury Police Department Selectmen's Report 12/14/25 through 1/19/26.
  - ii. There have been 6 Incidents, 2 Accidents, 61 Citations, and 412 Calls for Service this month. The State Police assisted with 4 calls.
  - iii. They have been down an officer since the beginning of the year, but he should be back on Wednesday.
  - iv. Unit 5 is lettered up and Unit 3 is at executive transfer.
  - v. The first LEAD (Law Enforcement Against Drugs and Violence) graduation will be 1/22/26 at CES. Officer Westgate has been going to CES on Fridays and running this program with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Depending on donations, they hope to work with more than the 4<sup>th</sup> grade next year.
  - vi. Officer Westgate is working on the bylaws for the Canterbury Police Benevolent Association. They still need to find a civilian to be the Treasurer and need the Town's attorney to look at the bylaws.
  - vii. 2026 Budget
    - 1. On Thursday 1/15, Chief Crotty met with Ken and Scott; they discussed the current proposal for the 2026 Budget which includes cutting the vacant police officer position. Chief Crotty referred to the MRI (NH Municipal Resources Inc.) report from 2005 and the MCSO (NH Municipal and County Sheriff's Office) report from 2015 and presented new data that he collected about the current call volume, staffing, and pay in Canterbury and 10 other towns in NH. Chief Crotty recommended not cutting the vacant position.
    - 2. Ken distributed the data via email so the Selectboard could discuss it together tonight.
    - 3. Scott led by saying that after seeing this data, he thinks that cutting the vacant position is a mistake and the Selectboard should discuss with the Chief and reconsider.
    - 4. Both Scott and Chief Crotty expressed doubt that if the vacant position is removed this year, that it would be possible to convince the townspeople to bring it back next year.
    - 5. Chief Crotty reviewed the data about the current call volume, staffing, and pay in Canterbury and 10 other towns in NH. He compared the average calls for service per position for Canterbury with the other towns. Right now it is higher than most, but still within a reasonable range. If the vacant position is removed, the average becomes the highest by far. Tufonboro was the most similar town to Canterbury. Even with the pay scale proposal, Canterbury would still be in the middle of the pack in terms of pay rates.

6. The call volume in Canterbury is less than last year because we have been down an officer. Calls for service include every time they get a call from dispatch. It could be anything from an accident to a returned phone call. Many calls happen regardless of how many people are on duty, some only happen when officers have time to patrol (e.g. traffic stops).
7. Justin explained that if the PD was staffed with 4 full-timers and 1 part-timer, they would be able to successfully cover most of the hours they are trying to provide coverage for (by recommendation of the MCSO report). Part-timers are difficult to schedule around because they are usually beholden to their other full-time job. In past years the PD has been lucky to have 2 part-time retirees, but people like that are rare.
8. MRI did the report in 2005 because the State Police were having to cover too many calls when Canterbury PD was supposed to have coverage. 5 full-timers would allow for 100% coverage, but Canterbury is still small enough that the State is willing to cover some of the time.
9. Relying on the State for coverage is problematic because they are severely understaffed and they may be far away so response times can be long. It is also an issue because they usually only respond to immediate emergencies; they may not come out for a suspicious person or a window being shot with a bb gun. In those instances, they will send a fax to the PD and Canterbury officers will handle it the next day.
10. Scott spoke about how demoralizing it can be to those who remain when a position is eliminated.
11. Chief Crotty spoke about how the officers are working very long shifts right now because of the vacant position. He is also concerned that if the step program is not implemented this year, even if retention bonuses are given, the officers will see it as risky to stick around for a year when other police departments are trying to poach them with guaranteed raises.
12. Scott advocated for restoring the cut position and looking at the wages.
13. There was further discussion about the problem of poaching and the competition between departments to recruit and retain.
14. Ken explained that the draft 2026 budget distributed tonight includes the originally proposed Police Dept. budget including the vacant position and the wage step proposal. With this, the budget is higher than what was presented to the Budget Committee (which had a 1.7% increase), but still stays under the 4% increase goal. This budget has an increase of 3.4% over 2025.
15. There was discussion about the option of accepting the wage increases this year but not committing to the step program long-term.
16. Scott was in favor of increasing the wages this year, but would like a Canterbury-specific proposal from the Chief before accepting the step program as the plan for future years. He liked that this change still allowed the budget to stay under the 4% goal.
17. Calvin felt there wasn't a meaningful difference between accepting or not accepting the step program. If the raises are enshrined this year rather than included as a retention bonus, it will affect the wages in subsequent years the same as if the program was formally implemented.
18. There was discussion about what step/hourly wage range the vacant position would start at. The exact pay would depend on years of experience. Chief Crotty explained that "step" is just shorthand for how experienced an officer is.
19. There was discussion about how the wages in Canterbury compare to other towns and how benefits such as weekends off can help retain young officers with families.

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20. Beth explained that she initially wasn't in favor of this idea, but changed her mind after seeing the data. She appreciated the Chief's due diligence and commitment to his team. She liked that there was proof that there are enough calls for service to justify a fourth officer and that this plan would still keep the budget under the 4% goal.
  21. Calvin was still concerned if this was a good fit for the town and wondered if adjusting hours could reduce the need for the 4<sup>th</sup> full-timer. He and Chief Crotty discussed the schedule.
  22. Calvin said if the rest of the Selectboard was ok with it and the plan allowed the budget to stay under the 4% goal, then he was ok with it for now while a more thorough plan was developed.
  23. The Selectboard will schedule a working session after Town Meeting to work with Chief Crotty and Ken to determine what they want included in the Canterbury specific proposal for PD wages.
3. Administration
- a. The Selectboard signed:
    - i. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$130,521.89. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
      1. The largest expenses in this manifest are the annual payments to Primex for property, liability, and workers compensation insurance.
    - ii. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$53,349.25. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
    - iii. Two oath of office documents were missing from the Town Clerk's records. The Selectboard signed new appointment documents for Art Hudson to the Budget Committee and Kristofer Dupuis to the Police Department.
  - b. Committee Appointments
    - i. Audra Klumb to UMLAC
      1. Kelly Short of the CCC sent a letter of recommendation for Audra to the Selectboard. Audra is on the CCC, is a certified wetlands scientist, and helped the Fire Department with the dry hydrant project.
      2. The Selectboard agreed that Audra would be an excellent fit.
    - ii. Jeremy Whaley to Energy Committee
      1. Beth explained that Jeremy is new to town. He is one of the people bringing foam up to Guildford for recycling. Beth has only met him at one meeting, but he is very enthused by energy data/projects and seems to be a great fit.
    - iii. Katie Archer as Assistant Moderator
      1. Moderator Jessica Treadway picked Katie Archer to be Assistant Moderator for the next year while Jessica fills out previous Moderator Jim Miller's term.
      2. Beth said that Katie is currently Secretary for the Canterbury Community Farmers Market and goes a great job.
  - c. KMS Actuaries Contract
    - i. As part of the annual audit, the Town has had to hire an actuary. We already signed a contract with them last year, but because we have switched healthcare providers, KMS would like us to sign a new 4-year contract.
    - ii. Scott moved to authorize Town Administrator Ken Folsom to sign the contract with KMS Actuaries. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
  - d. NH Bond Bank
    - i. The bond sale was last week and we have received the bond for the fire engine.

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- ii. The Bond Bank sent out about \$40M in bonds and Key Bank Capital Markets won the bid. As part of their bid, they reduced the principal of our bond from \$490K to \$437K. Even with the discount, they still stand to make \$63K in interest over our 10-year payback period.
- iii. Since we won't be paying for the fire engine until it is delivered in May, Ken is considering putting that money into a CD for a month or two. We can't earn more interest than what is being charged on the bond, but we could break even for a few months.
- iv. Scott moved to authorize Town Administrator Ken Folsom to sign the bond paperwork on behalf of the Town. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- e. Previous Minutes Approval
  - i. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes for the Selectboard meeting on January 5, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
  - ii. Scott made a motion to approve the non-public minutes for the Selectboard meeting on January 5, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
  - iii. Kal read 1/12/26 suggested changes.
    - 1. Line 17: Specify "garage" is Sam Lake House Garage
    - 2. Line 28: Clarify which calculation was used.
    - 3. Line 58: Clarify which reports were being discussed.
  - iv. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on January 12, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
  - v. Kal read 11/24/25 suggested changes.
    - 1. Line 127: Add the current population of Canterbury (~2500)
    - 2. Line 143: Rephrase for clarity. From "The Energy Committee is down because the CCPC budgets were cut due to the CCPC being inactive." to "The CCPC budgets were cut due to the reduced activity of the Committee."
  - vi. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on November 24, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 4. Selectboard Representative Reports
  - a. Planning Board – Scott
    - i. The PB had two subdivision hearings scheduled for the last meeting, but neither surveyor showed up so both were continued to the next meeting on 1/27.
    - ii. The remainder of the 1/13 meeting was spent discussing zoning proposals for Town Meeting. Most of the discussion was on the proposal to eliminate the Cluster Subdivision Ordinance. The proposal was changed to instead modify the ordinance so the baseline density is only 50% of what would be allowed for a regular subdivision.
    - iii. Beth thought that there might have been more feedback from the CCC on the wetlands setback ordinance, but it wasn't brought up at the hearing. She will check to see if there is more that needs discussion for the 1/27 meeting.
    - iv. Kal explained that they found out that RSA 675:7, I-a requires sending letters to each property owner in a district if a zoning amendment would affect the boundary, minimum lot size, or permitted uses for a district with fewer than 100 properties. Canterbury has 5 districts with fewer than 100 properties and any change to the Table of Uses is technically a change to the "permitted uses" of the district. So essentially all of the articles discussed at the 1/13 PB meeting will need to be reheard on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Kal has added the cost of postage to the 2026 budget since this will likely need to happen every year.
  - b. Tricentennial Committee – Scott
    - i. The Chairs cancelled the last meeting. The next meeting will be February 19<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. Energy Committee – Beth
    - i. The EC will be hosting a discussion about battery storage on 1/20 at the Town Hall.
    - ii. Jeremy Whaley has joined the Committee.

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- iii. They finished the solar checklist and are working on other educational sessions for 2026.
  - iv. They missed the deadline to get the C-PACER article on the 2026 warrant. Since new legislation is being considered at the State which would affect this program, they decided it is best to wait anyway.
  - v. They would like to pursue getting the higher level energy audit for the Municipal Complex. Beth told them to get the cost before scheduling anything and to consult with Ken before committing to anything.
  - vi. Since the LED lighting has already been installed, the only thing left to evaluate in an energy audit is the heating. If the waste oil furnace warrant article is approved at Town Meeting, then that will affect the results of any audit.
  - d. Community Power Committee – Beth
    - i. CCPC is going to schedule a listening session sometime in April to see how residents understand and use Community Power. They will also be encouraging people to opt up.
    - ii. They found out from CPCNH that the goal for their reserves is 60 days worth of funds. Scott asked Edgar to ask CPCNH to regularly report on their progress; 60 days worth of funds is a large number and it would be helpful to see how quickly that goal is being achieved.
    - iii. CCPC is looking for new members. Only one out of the five people on the Committee is using Community Power (Edgar), the rest are on solar.
    - iv. They rewrote their mission statement. Beth will forward that to Kal who will put it on the next Selectboard agenda for review and approval.
  - e. Conservation Commission – Beth
    - i. The CCC is working on outreach, fighting invasives, and a number of other projects.
    - ii. They weighed in on the Planning Board's wetland setback ordinance and recommended Audra Klumb to be the next Canterbury UMLAC representative.
  - f. Historic District Commission – Calvin
    - i. The HDC does not have enough members to meet and there were no applications, so the January meeting has been cancelled.
  - g. Agricultural Commission – Calvin
    - i. The Ag Commission isn't planning to meet again until March.
  - h. Recreation Committee – Calvin
    - i. They will be taking the lights down from the tree in the Center soon. The lights kept going out because the wind was unplugging them.
    - ii. They found a new member to replace Danielle Krautman who left the Committee. Calvin will have Randi contact Kal so an appointment slip can be brought to the Selectboard.
  - i. School Board – Calvin
    - i. The School Board had their budget hearing. Not many people attended; only 7 from Canterbury. Most of those in attendance were staff since job cuts are being proposed.
    - ii. The deliberative session is February 5<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at Belmont High School.
    - iii. The school budget is almost \$30M. The booklet will be available on sau80.org and paper copies will be distributed.
    - iv. Calvin urged people to attend.
5. New Business
- a. Cell Phone Coverage
    - i. James Saunders, a Canterbury resident who works with C Squared Systems in Auburn, contacted Ken about improving cell coverage at the Transfer Station. He felt the lack of coverage was a public safety issue.
    - ii. Ken, James, and a tech from C Squared met at the Transfer Station and took measurements there and at the Municipal Complex. Both places have small residential boosters. They felt a

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small antenna could be placed at the Transfer Station. They are going to look at ways to improve coverage at the Municipal Complex and will get Ken in contact with another division of their company that puts up large cell towers. If a large tower was installed at the Municipal Complex, it could potentially provide coverage for the whole center.

- iii. The Town is exempt from zoning regulations, so it would be legally permissible to build a tower there. There was discussion about if the public would support a project like that. Many people have had serious safety and business concerns about the lack of coverage in town and the Selectboard have discussed potential fixes for years.

### 6. Old Business

#### a. CD Investments Update

- i. Mary and Ken met with TD Bank about the CD investments to see what to do next.
- ii. They decided to do another round of laddered CDs: one for 1 month, one for 2 months, and one for 3 months. Based on the cashflow going back a few years, they determined they could invest \$1.5M, putting \$500K in each CD.
- iii. Ken talked with Treasurer Al Edelstein and he also thought it was a good idea. If the Selectboard agree, they will set it up to start February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- iv. The Selectboard agreed.
- v. Ken is going to work with the Conservation Commission to see if the Land Use Change Tax funds could be invested. There is over \$400K in the bank, but it is only making \$500 a month in interest.

### 7. Adjournment

- a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2026 February 2, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

Minutes submitted by Kal McKay, Administrative Assistant