

2026-02-02 Board of Selectmen Minutes

Town of Canterbury, NH
Board of Selectmen
Date: 2026 February 2
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), Dagan Howell, Randi Johnson (via Zoom), Rebeca Pereira (Concord Monitor, via Zoom)

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 4:59 p.m.
2. Public Hearing on the 2026 Town Budget and Warrant Articles
 - a. The public hearing was called to order a 4:59 p.m.
 - b. Scott read the warrant aloud and asked for comments from those present.
 - c. The second session will be held at the Canterbury Elementary School on Friday the Thirteenth of March 2026 at seven o'clock to act on the following subjects.
 - d. **Article 7:** To see if the Town will vote to establish a Police Public Safety Details Revolving Fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h for the purpose of providing public safety services by Police Department employees outside of the ordinary detail of such persons. All revenues received for police public safety details will be deposited into the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, and shall not be considered part of the Town's general fund balance. And further to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Police Public Safety Details Revolving Fund, to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and not from taxation. The town treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund, and shall pay out the same only upon order of the governing body and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
 - e. **Article 8:** To see if the Town will vote to establish a Fire and Rescue Public Safety Details Revolving Fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h for the purpose of providing public safety services by Fire & Rescue Department employees outside of the ordinary detail of such persons. All revenues received for fire & rescue public safety details will be deposited into the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, and shall not be considered part of the Town's general fund balance. And further to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) to be added to the Fire and Rescue Public Safety Details Revolving Fund to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and not from taxation. The town treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund, and shall pay out the same only upon order of the governing body and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
 - f. **Article 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Million, Six Hundred and Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventy Dollars (\$3,602,470) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.
Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$5.03 Cost for \$400K home: \$2,010.80

- g. **Article 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thirty-Nine Thousand Dollars (\$139,000) to be deposited into the following Capital Reserves:

4915.3	Highway Equipment	\$ 10,000
4915.4	Highway Truck	\$ 30,000
4915.18	Rescue Truck	\$ 8,000
4914.19	Fire Truck	\$ 50,000
4915.24	Landfill Closure	\$ 1,000
4915.27	Maintenance & Repair of Town Buildings	\$ 10,000
4915.30	Highway Loader	\$ 30,000

Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.

Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$0.34 Cost for \$400K home: \$135.25

- h. **Article 11:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighteen Thousand Dollars (\$18,000) for the purchase of slide-in water tank for the Highway Department, said amount to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
- i. **Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand (\$250,000) for the purchase of a dump truck for the Highway Department, with One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) of said funds to come from the Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund and One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) of said funds to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
- j. **Article 13:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for the purchase of a truck for the Fire Department and to replace the Rescue 1 Truck with the current Command Car, said amount to come from the Rescue Truck Capital Reserve Fund.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
- k. **Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for the purchase of extrication equipment for the Fire Department, with Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) of said funds to come from the Firefighting Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) of said funds to be raised by taxes.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.
Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$0.02 Cost for \$400K home: \$9.73
- l. **Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred and Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$170,000) for the purchase of a packer truck and to retrofit it with electric hydraulics for the Transfer Station.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.
Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$0.41 Cost for \$400K home: \$165.41
- m. **Article 16:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the purchase of a waste oil burner for the Highway Garage.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.
Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$0.05 Cost for \$400K home: \$19.46
- n. **Article 17:** To see if the Town will vote to establish a Salt Shed Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of purchasing a salt shed, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be placed in this fund. Further, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.
Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$0.06 Cost for \$400K home: \$24.32

- o. **Article 18:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000) for the purchase of a multifunction printer.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.
Estimated Tax Impact: Cost per \$1000: \$0.01 Cost for \$400K home: \$3.89
 - p. **Article 19:** To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to accept up to Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) from the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire Canterbury adder funds and place that money into the Renewable Energy Capital Reserve Fund.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
 - q. **Article 20:** To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the Sam Lake House Capital Reserve Fund created in 2011. Said funds and accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the municipality's general fund.
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
 - r. **Article 21:** To see if the Town will vote to modify the optional tax credit for a Service-Connected Total Disability on residential property in accordance with RSA 72:35 from its current value of One Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$1,400) to Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000).
Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen. No Tax Impact.
 - s. Edgar Rivera of Clough Pond Road asked about Articles 7 and 8 which create revolving funds for the Police and Fire & Rescue departments. Ken explained that these would reduce the "Off Duty Detail" lines (4210.10 and 4220.70) to \$1 placeholders. Not having those lines will clean up the operating budget. This will prevent having to estimate a number we can't control and having it look like the budget was overspent.
 - t. Beth commented that 10 of the 15 articles have no tax impact because the Town has been good at saving money in Capital Reserve Funds.
 - u. The hearing remained open while the Selectboard conducted other business in case anyone had additional feedback. No additional comments were made.
 - v. The hearing was closed at 6:23 p.m.
3. Transfer Station Hiring
- a. Dagan Howell, candidate for vacancy at the Transfer Station, attended.
 - b. Ken introduced Dagan and explained all background and reference checks have passed.
 - c. The Selectboard thanked Dagan for attending and asked a couple of questions about his life and how he came to apply for this job.
 - d. Scott made a motion to hire Dagan Howell as a part-time Transfer Station Attendant. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - e. Dagan will come in to the office tomorrow to do paperwork and will begin work on Saturday.
4. Administration
- a. The Selectboard signed:
 - i. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$1,575. Second seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - ii. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$571,605.97. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - 1. This includes a school district payment.
 - iii. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$54,646.26. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - iv. Calvin made a motion to sign the Welfare Manifest in the amount of \$1,575. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - 1. This is for the same expense as the first Accounts Payable Manifest that was signed.
 - v. Warrant for Land Use Change Tax for Map 266 Lot 1 in the amount of \$14,768.
 - vi. Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber Map 248 Lot 8-1.

vii. Affinity Contract

1. Affinity LED did a consult on the lights in the offices portion of the Municipal Complex. They came up with a plan to change all of the lights in the offices to LED from fluorescent. The project would cost \$44,644 in total and Unitil would contribute an \$11,780 incentive. The remainder of \$32,864 would be financed at 0% through our electric bill with Unitil for the next 10 years. This amounts to an extra \$278.86 on the electric bill each month.
2. Switching to LED is projected to save \$4,243 in electric costs annually. If you factor in the monthly payment, this whole project would result in savings of \$897 annually.
3. Beth said that she sat in on the meeting with Ken and Affinity. She thinks this is a good deal and a good company.
4. Beth moved to agree to the contract with Affinity to replace the fluorescent lighting at the Municipal Complex with LED. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
5. Scott moved to authorize Town Administrator Ken Folsom to sign the contract with Affinity. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

b. Previous Minutes Approval

- i. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes for the Selectboard meeting on January 14, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- ii. Kal read aloud the suggested changes for the 1/19/26 minutes.
 1. Line 33: Correct Friday to Saturday.
 2. Line 34: Change “instead of cardboard” to “during open hours and cardboard and paper during closed hours.”
 3. Line 156: Change “exactly what they want in the report” to “they want included in the Canterbury specific proposal for PD wages.”
- iii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on January 19, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

5. New Business

a. Highway Hiring

- i. Ken explained that Nick Ferguson has applied for one of the vacancies at the Highway Department. All of his reference and background checks passed. Nick lives in town, has lots of mechanical and welding experience, and ran trucks in the military. He doesn't have a CDL, but he is familiar with driving trucks with standard transmission and has agreed to get CDL-B certified. Ken and John met with Nick this morning and they would like to proceed with hiring him.
- ii. Scott moved to hire Nick Ferguson as a full-time Highway Maintenance Worker. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

b. Annual Report Special Recognition

- i. Beth emailed out suggested language for a special recognition that she would like to put in the Town Report. They didn't get into details at the meeting so it could be a surprise when the report is published.
- ii. Scott agreed with the idea and felt the timing of the recognition was right.
- iii. The Selectboard agreed to include the special recognition.
- iv. Beth will find the names and a photo tomorrow for Kal to include the draft.

c. Flyer from M.A. Bean Associates

- i. M.A. Bean Associates sent Ken a flyer they made which showcases work they have done for the Town on culverts/bridges. They would like to use Canterbury as a reference check for future customers.

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- ii. Ken spoke about how he highly recommends them. They do good work quickly and for a lot less money than other companies. He cited the work they did on Morrill Road as an example of how quickly they can complete a project.
- d. Newsletter Donation
 - i. Beth asked if we had anything in the proposed budget to donate to the Canterbury Newsletter. The Selectboard agreed to a one-time donation last year in remembrance of Mark Travis. It wasn't discussed this year, but the Town takes up a significant amount of space in the newsletter, so she thought it might be a good idea to do it again.
 - ii. The Selectboard hadn't discussed it this year or specifically budgeted for it, but there could be room. Kal will see what line it was expended from last year.
 - iii. Randi Johnson asked if the Canterbury Newsletter could set up a table at Town Meeting like the Farmers Market does and ask for donations.
 - iv. The Farmers Market is at Town Meeting because they provide food for the event. The donations they accept at the meeting all go to Mary Ellen's basket. Beth wasn't sure if it would be appropriate to mix business by also soliciting newsletter donations.
- 6. Public Hearing on the 2026 Town Budget and Warrant Articles Continued
 - a. Calvin discussed his concerns with the wages for the Police Department (included in Article 9 – Operating Budget). He further reviewed the data that was presented by Chief Crotty about the call volume and pay rates in other towns, and determined that the proposed wage increases would put Canterbury out of step with the others. Compared to the average of those towns, one officer would be paid higher by a few dollars, the Sergeant position would be significantly higher, and the Chief would be significantly less. Calvin suggested meeting somewhere in the middle for now until the in-depth report/discussion about the PD can happen later in the year. He is still worried about memorializing these pay rates as actual raises rather than bonuses.
 - b. Ken explained how he also went back over the data presented by Chief Crotty. He excluded the smaller towns when calculating the average and used only the similarly sized towns. When the smaller towns are excluded, the proposed Canterbury wages are much closer to the average.
 - c. Ken clarified that the wage lines in the proposed budget are calculated bottom up by determining payrates and hours and estimating what the annual spend would be. The Selectboard have the authority to decide how that budgeted amount is spent. With the currently proposed number, the Selectboard would have the budget to do the step plan, the COLA plus bonus plan, or anything in between.
 - d. Beth was concerned that waiting to implement the full raises could lead to poaching and felt that if these raises put Canterbury in line with other towns, the amounts are reasonable.
 - e. Calvin felt that committing to that big of a raise all at once was inadvisable and still felt that a higher than COLA raise plus the remainder as a bonus was a reasonable plan.
 - f. Scott agreed with Beth. He added that the fact that the vacancy has been open for so long and there haven't been any applicants shows that this increase in wages is needed. The officer wages line (4210.1) going up 17% looks like a huge jump, but it allows Canterbury to have a functional and fairly paid PD. Not well paid, but fairly paid, and in line with similarly sized towns.
 - g. Scott suggested meeting with the Chief and ironing out what information they want at the first Selectboard meeting after Town Meeting.
 - h. Calvin expressed concern that the PD budget is relying on all 4 full-timers being National Guard members and choosing the healthcare buyout.
 - i. Scott and Beth agreed that Calvin's concerns were valid and the future of the PD needed to be carefully thought out asap. However, they were in favor of keeping the proposed budget as is and working this out after Town Meeting. Scott thanked Calvin for going on the record.
 - j. The Selectboard discussed who should present which warrant article at Town Meeting.

7. Erin Hammerstedt re Shaker Village quarterly update
 - a. Erin Hammerstedt, Canterbury Shaker Village Director, attended and gave her quarterly update on the happenings at the Village.
 - b. Erin provided clarification on when/how Canterbury residents can access the museum/grounds. The grounds are always open and people are welcome any time. When the museum is open, they would like Canterbury residents to check-in and get a sticker. They don't need to pay, but this allows them to count attendance and ensures no-one is stopped if they go into the buildings. They will send out communications about this in the newsletter/email.
 - c. Resident Farmer Andy Messinger is moving to Maine. They are talking with several people who may be able to fill that role.
 - d. They are doing a lot of planning and budgeting. They are intending to shorten guided tours to 1.5 hours long and having more guides/interpreters to have more buildings open with a docent model. They will be having summer concerts, special tours, and new social events this year. They will be focusing on growing their endowment and are working on getting food service back.
 - e. They will be working on four buildings this year. The Meeting House is funded and the contractor, Preservation Timber Framing, will be teaching 2-4 interns.
 - f. Steve Fifield will be working on the Ministry Privy. The building will be moved into the Horsebarn so it can be worked on next winter. Steve will work with Belmont High School to use it as a teaching tool.
 - g. The East House renovation is fully funded. Ollie Fifield is working on a proposal.
 - h. The Bee House got a new roof last fall. They will be finishing the rehab and do a bee-themed opening in late August.
 - i. They have a grant for the Infirmary and will be doing fundraising and approvals this year.
 - j. Cassidy Priester and Garrett Bethmann have joined the team and expended their capacity for events and programs.
 - k. Erin asked about getting police reports for car accidents. Two incidents did damage to the stone walls last year. Scott and Ken advised having their insurance company contact the Police Dept.
8. Old Business
 - a. Center Tree Replacement
 - i. Ken forwarded an email from the Liberty Tree Society who is looking to plant trees for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
 - ii. We need to take down the tree next to the Sam Lake House Garage because it is dying and there is enough money remaining in the budget for the garage renovation to remove and stump it. So that could be a good location for this new tree.
 - iii. The Selectboard agreed to pursue this option.
 - iv. Ken will make sure to work with Sam Papps on removing the existing tree because he wants to do something for the Tricentennial with the wood.
 - b. CCPC Mission Statement
 - i. Tim Meeh of the CCPC wrote a new mission statement and it was distributed to the Selectboard for review.
 - ii. Beth explained that since there are so few members, the focus of the group has changed to just maintaining the community power program. This new mission statement reflects that.
 - iii. The Selectboard approved the new mission statement and thanked Tim.
 - c. Selectboard Meeting Schedule
 - i. Calvin will be coaching lacrosse from 3-5 p.m. for 10 weeks beginning in April.
 - ii. The Selectboard agreed to move the Selectboard meetings to 6 p.m. for April-June to accommodate Calvin's schedule.
 - d. NH Legislature Activities

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- i. This week the NH House will be voting on HB 751 regarding universal open enrollment. This is technically a school district issue, but since most of the taxes paid in Canterbury are to the school, the Selectboard could discuss and send in an opinion on the topic. The Selectboard decided to submit testimony as individuals.
 - ii. Ken reviewed some of the other bills that NHMA highlighted in their legislative bulletin. There are quite a few that will affect municipalities and the Selectboard may want to comment on them. One would affect the Town's ability to fund NHMA; several would affect risk pools as a response to what happened to NHIT last year; one would define citizen for the purpose of Right To Know requests. Ken will forward the email to the Selectboard.
9. Executive Session
- a. Scott made a motion at 6:24 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to discuss a matter that would adversely affect the reputation of someone other than a member of this board. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
 - b. Scott made a motion at 6:42 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.
10. Accident at Transfer Station
- a. The Selectboard briefly discussed and looked at the photo of the accident that occurred at the Transfer Station this past weekend. A temporary worker tried to park on the ramp used to load sand and drove off the side. There was no damage to the person, vehicle, or property, but a wrecker had to come tow the car out of the way.
11. Adjournment
- a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2026 February 17, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

Minutes submitted by Kal McKay, Administrative Assistant