Town of Canterbury, NH
Board of Selectmen
Date: 2026 May 4
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), Donna Miller (Garden Club), Vanessa Crofton (Garden Club), Jim Miller (Garden Club), Mary Kerwin (Garden Club), Mike McGill, Mary McGill, Brian Gaessler, Mandy Irving (Assessor)

1. Call to Order
    a. The meeting was called to order at 5:59 p.m.
2. Landscaping Proposal from Canterbury Garden Club
    a. Donna Miller and Vanessa Crofton of the Canterbury Garden Club presented a proposal for landscaping at the Municipal Complex. A written proposal and supporting documents were sent to the Selectboard ahead of the meeting.
    b. They explained that the Garden Club recently talked about doing a project at the Municipal Complex for the Tricentennial. Mary Kerwin (another Garden Club member who was present) started the measurements, but then Donna and Vanessa took on moving the project forward.
    c. They have picked out native plants that can do well in harsh conditions (e.g. heat, salt runoff, drought). 4H used to plant sunflowers there, but due to weed issues they stopped.
    d. The first few years after the Municipal Complex was built, the meadow in front of the building wasn't being mowed. After the plow/Highway Dept. sign was placed, they began mowing it.
    e. Donna and Vanessa explained their credentials that qualify them to do this project.
    f. There was discussion about the particular plants being proposed.
    g. Since the meadow used to have many pollinator plants in it, if the Town stops mowing, it should all grow back. They are proposing to continue the regular mowing in some areas, but letting the majority of the meadow grow back. Half of the meadow would be mowed in the fall, then the other half in the spring. Alternating which half is mowed will allow insects to overwinter and keep the meadow healthy. Occasional mowing will prevent trees from filling in the space. The regular mowing would continue to be done by the Highway Dept. and the biannual mowing could be done by the same people who do the annual roadside mowing.
    h. Ken noted that there is stone on the ground right up next to the foundation to try and help with the ant problems. They will be keeping a wide buffer between the building and the landscaping both for pests and to avoid plants being crushed by snow falling off the roof.
    i. There was discussion about how the snow falls off the roof and how the drainage system works.
    j. Vanessa calculated that if this project were completely hired out, it would cost ~$9K. Most of the plants will be free from Garden Club members who already have these plants in their gardens. The labor will be from volunteers. The trees are the only thing that will require money, but the club could try to do fundraising for that. Not mowing the entire meadow every week or two will save the Highway Dept. money in labor and fuel.
    k. They suggested using a phased approach. Mowing could be stopped at any time. They could start with cleanup, dividing the daffodils, and putting down the ground cover for the beds in front. Some perennials could be planted this autumn and the rest next year.
    l. There is a stone area that has dozens of pine trees popping up. 4H could clean up that area and save the trees for the 300 trees Tricentennial project.

m. If they need to use mulch, they will use arborist chips and see if they can get it donated.
n. The Selectboard approved the landscaping project for the Municipal Complex.
o. Donna will get in touch with Road Agent John O'Connor and Vanessa will plan out the phased approach.

3. McGill Yield Tax on Map 257 Lot 6
   a. Mike McGill and his mother Mary McGill attended to dispute the yield tax bill dated 4/8/2026 for $8,041.86.
   b. Mr. McGill explained the history of the property and the logging project that resulted in this bill. He worked with both the Merrimack County Forester and NRCS. The logger he chose was John White. The intent to cut was filed in May 2025 and the cut took place this past winter.
   c. Mr. McGill explained that he and Mrs. McGill have been to the office several times to discuss the bill with Assessor Mandy Irving. He distributed a copy of the PA-9 which included the amounts that the contractor paid him. There were several lines where the stumpage value used for the tax assessment was more than the value his contractor paid him. He doesn't believe this is fair.
   d. Mr. McGill explained that he can talk on his mother's behalf because he has a POA for her.
   e. Mr. McGill also believes that the entire $7K spent on the logging road should be deducted from the assessment because he paid for it in a separate check instead of including it in the contract. He spoke with Mandy about this at one of his visits to the office and she said she would need to check with Rick Evans at the DRA. After consulting with Mr. Evans, Mandy said that she would remove the entire road from the assessment if Mr. McGill could provide a letter from the logger confirming that the road would be removed. Mr. McGill didn't think this was required by an RSA but agreed to obtain the letter.
   f. Mr. McGill spoke about how he doesn't trust Rick Evans.
   g. Mr. McGill explained that he submitted two Right to Know requests, one of which was asking for the RSAs that require the road be removed/a letter saying the road will be removed. Kal McKay (Admin Assistant) replied to the requests earlier in the day. Mr. McGill said that Kal's response didn't answer his question and there is no RSA with that requirement.
   h. Mr. McGill spoke about how he feels the office staff have been bullying his mother and lying.
   i. Mr. McGill submitted a letter summarizing how he believes the tax bill should be changed.
   j. Calvin asked if the contract Mr. McGill signed with the logger had set prices or accounted for market fluctuation. Mr. McGill said that the State sets the stumpage values every 6 months.
   k. Mr. McGill explained that the State lumps red oak and white oak together on the PA-9, but they have different values. Mandy already agreed to separate those into two lines.
   l. Beth asked for Mr. McGill to speak to why they substantially overcut what they had initially declared on the intent to cut form. Mr. McGill said it was an oversight by the logger that he didn't file a supplemental.
   m. Mandy clarified that there is no monetary penalty for overcutting, but you lose the right to appeal the tax bill if the supplemental wasn't submitted (per RSA 79:8).
   n. Mr. McGill doesn't agree that he doesn't have a right to appeal. The tax bill is dated 4/8/26 and he received it on 4/11/26.
   o. Mandy explained that the deadline for the PA-8 is May 15th.
   p. Scott asked why Mr. McGill thinks it is okay for him to cherry pick the lowest stumpage values from two different lists (the contracted stumpage and the DRA stumpage). Mr. McGill said anyone would do that. Calvin disagreed. Scott noted he has never seen someone try to do that before.
   q. There was discussion about if the logger should have known to file the supplemental. Mr. McGill argued that they didn't know the tallies until the end, so they didn't know they were going to overcut. Beth pointed out that the overcut was 27% for board feet and 152% for pulp.

r. Mr. McGill argued that Rick Evan's advice to Mandy that 60% of the road value could be taken out isn't backed up by an RSA and is made up. Mandy explained that the 60% guidance was published in a synopsis published by the DRA long before they hired Mr. Evans. Mr. McGill argued that the synopsis isn't legally binding.
s. Beth pointed out that the difference between taking out 60% of the road value and 100% of the road value is only a difference of $280.
t. Scott asked Mr. McGill if he would agree to pay based on the contracted stumpage values if the entire road was deducted. (Value of $84,466.90 with a tax bill of $7,746.70)
u. Mr. McGill stated he wanted to continue to "nickel and dime" the issue because it is the principle of the thing and he is upset about the perceived bullying.
v. Scott disagreed with Mr. McGill that the town staff have been bullying or unprofessional.
w. Mr. McGill agreed to the assessed value of $84,466.90 with a tax bill of $7,746.70.
x. Mandy will write up an administrative warrant for the Selectboard to sign. Sam will put the difference between the bills as an abatement.
y. The Selectboard thanked Mandy for the time she spent on this issue.
z. Calvin asked if the road issue was common. Mandy explained that most people just pay their timber tax bill. If someone brings in their contract she will use those stumpage values. She uses the DRA's established stumpage values by default and if there is a more complicated question, she consults Rick Evans since he is the expert. It is entirely possible for someone to sign a contract with low stumpage values and loose their shirt in the deal.

4. Administration
    a. The Selectboard signed:
        i. Current Use Assessment Map 212 Lot 6
            1. Beulah Fellowship would like to enroll the back 11 acres into current use. They still have not paid their tax bills for 2024 or 2025. This application would only reduces their taxes going forward; it would not reduce the amount they already owe.
            2. Mandy explained that nothing says they can't do this even while owing taxes, so she recommends approving the request.
            3. Beth pointed out that this proves we have the correct contact information and they are capable of contacting us to resolve the overdue bills and file paperwork on time.
            4. Beulah Fellowship did not file for a religious tax exemption this year. That in combination with this application indicates they are recognizing that the property is taxable.
            5. Calvin pointed out that if they do not use the property for long enough, the permitted use may lapse. In that case, to resume campground activities, Beulah Fellowship would likely need to go before the Zoning Board.
        ii. Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber Map 231 Lots 1 & 2
            1. The McGraw's having been working on this harvest for a while. The timber year closed on April 1st, so they had to submit a new intent to cut to continue the project.
        iii. Yield Tax Levy Map 231 Lots 1 & 2
            1. This is the levy for the timber that the McGraw's have harvested so far.
        iv. Tax Settlement Recommendation with All Purpose Storage (Map 249 Lot 16)
            1. Mandy explained that this settlement is for the 2024 taxes that All Purpose Storage paid.
            2. In 2024, Mandy assessed their property at $948,700. The taxpayer filed for abatement and appealed to the NH Board of Tax and Land Appeals, submitting an opinion of value of $569K.
            3. Working with the taxpayer, Mandy determined that the difference in opinion was due to the property only being partially leased on April 1st, 2024. It wasn't unfinished construction, but due to the lack of income, the taxpayer argued they were in the red and

thus the value of the property was lower. After negotiations, both parties agreed on an adjusted value of $775K for the 2024 tax year.

4. This dispute was only for the 2024 taxes. Since then, the property is now valued at ~$1.4M and no bills have been contested. The taxpayer had already paid the full 2024 bill when it was originally due.
5. The Selectboard signed the settlement. This will result in a refund to the taxpayer of $4,164.45.

v. Elderly Tax Exemption Map 101 Lot 71
   1. This person had a disability exemption, but now that they qualify for the elderly exemption, they are switching to that instead.

vi. Center Sign Placement Request
   1. Beth Blair and Julie Dewdney (Market Manager) submitted a request to place a sign in the Center for the weekly farmers market. The sign meets the material requirements of the Center Sign Policy. It would be up weekly Monday through Wednesday. They will also have additional signage up during the market (Wednesdays 4-6:30 p.m.)
   2. Scott and Calvin approved the request for 2026 and 2027. Beth recused herself.

vii. Agricultural Commission Appointment Slips: Joshua Marshall, Jessie Scanlon (Alt)
   1. Beth asked for information from the AC about why they are recommending these candidates. Calvin explained the AC doesn't have a chair right now to organize that.
   2. Joshua Marshall is a reappointment. Calvin recommended both Joshua and Jessie.

viii. Beth made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of $844,957.45. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
   1. This manifest includes a $535K payment to the school district and $247K for the new Highway Dept. truck that was approved in warrant article 2026-12.

ix. Beth made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of $58,209.49. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

x. Scott made a motion to sign the Welfare Manifest in the amount of $280. Calvin seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

b. Previous Minutes Approval
   i. Kal distributed a list of suggested changes for the 4/20/26 and 4/27/26 minutes and read aloud the suggested changes for the 4/20/26 minutes.
   ii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on April 20, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
   iii. Kal read aloud the suggested changes for the 4/27/26 minutes.
   iv. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting on April 27, 2026. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

5. New Business

a. NHMA Legal Inquiries Authorization
   i. Ken got an email from NHMA which asks towns to update their contact preferences.
   ii. Currently for Canterbury, any town official can contact NHMA and ask for legal advice. If we wanted to, we could restrict who is allowed to ask questions or require that certain people be cc'd on all answers.
   iii. The service is free and there haven't been any problems, so Ken doesn't have a recommendation one way or the other.
   iv. The Selectboard decided to leave it as is.

b. Legislative Letters
   i. Earlier in the day Ruth Heath (Energy Committee Chair) sent a copy of the testimony the Energy Committee presented to the legislature regarding SB538.

ii. NHMA sent out an email asking towns to contact their senators regarding several bills being considered this week that affect local control over the zoning ordinance.
iii. Scott read the email earlier and agreed that the Selectboard should write a letter in opposition of the bills.
iv. Calvin asked how HB 1588 would affect Canterbury. It would not affect any projects that already exist (like the Hildreth Farm development), but it would affect the Town's ability to have residential in commercial zones.
v. Kal will draft a letter and contact the Selectboard to sign it tomorrow.

c. Annual Class 6 Road Inspection Report
i. Road Agent John O'Connor conducted the annual inspections for the Class VI roads in town. He said none of them are emergent, but Hancock Road is getting close to needing a lot of work.
ii. There are 2 houses on Hancock Road. The hill is getting "washboardy" and they are having trouble with beavers blocking culverts.
iii. If it gets too bad, the Town would send out a letter reminding the owners of the road maintenance agreement that they signed. There is no fining process, the Town would just work with them to get the road fixed.
iv. Scott explained that a resident was attacked by a beaver last week and had to go to the hospital. Both the beaver and the human are fine.

6. Old Business

a. Sam Lake House Tree Replacement
i. See Selectboard minutes 4/20/26 section 7.b. for previous discussion.
ii. Beth suggested going with the serviceberry tree that Kevin suggested planting next to the cemetery. The lifespan is 30-60 years and grows up to 25 ft tall.
iii. The Selectboard agreed to the serviceberry. Ken will talk to Kevin Bragg about it.

b. Septic System Agreement Update
i. See Selectboard minutes 4/20/26 section 7.f. for previous discussion.
ii. Scott and Ken met with the Church and the Market. They were waiting on some answers from the Market and received them this morning.
iii. Ken will set up a meeting with Scott and the Planning Board Chair to discuss compliance with zoning for what is intended to be done at the store. Scott wants to be sure the stated uses in the agreement comply with the zoning before signing anything.
iv. Scott would also like to add to the agreement specifications about what can be dumped down the drain. Certain cleaners, solvents, etc. will kill the leach field, so it would be wise to add a clause about that.
v. Scott explained that the daycare in the Parish House has a capacity of 29 students, but the daily enrollment is 8-10 kids. Continuing to monitor the water meter is the most accurate way to keep track of what each building is using. Everyone is talking and the agreement is proceeding in a good direction.
vi. Beth asked if there was any concern about well water usage. The Town's well feeds the Sam Lake House, Meeting House, Library, Town Hall, and Church. The Parish House has its own well. The building with the store/post office/apartment has its own well. A new tenant just moved into the apartment. Considering that the Sam Lake House basement keeps flooding, the water table is probably fine.
vii. Scott wants to make sure that going forward, what happens in the store is what the Market are telling the Town is going to be happening in the store. They have encouraged the Market to go to the Planning Board about their plan for the new store. This wastewater agreement shouldn't cause a delay in the store opening.

c. Packer Truck

i. See Selectboard minutes 4/27/26 section 3. for previous discussion.
ii. NH Hydraulics has submitted a quote of $12K to install the pump. That doesn't include the electrical work to the building, but that shouldn't be more than a couple thousand.
iii. The budget for this warrant article was $170K. The truck was $117K (including trading in the old packer truck). Between the truck and the pump, we will be way under budget.

d. Energy Audit at Municipal Complex
   i. See Selectboard minutes 4/20/26 section 7.c. and 2/17/26 section 6.b. for previous discussions.
   ii. Turn Cycle Solutions called Ken and told him that there are no incentives from Unitil for doing HVAC. Ken asked for the audit report anyway. It could still be worth the work depending on what the audit says.
   iii. This Thursday Ken will be meeting with Affinity at the Municipal Complex to schedule the work for the LED lighting.
e. Natural Gas Line Work
   i. Liberty Utilities notified Ken that they are putting a moratorium on new connections to the gas line that goes up Shaker Road.
   ii. They are going to be working on increasing the capacity of the line this summer. Last year they did Route 106 and up Shaker Road to the Canterbury town line, so this will be a continuation of that up to Tilton.
   iii. Road Agent John O'Connor put off paving on Shaker Road until next year due to this.

7. Executive Sessions
   a. Scott made a motion at 8:01 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) to discuss the Police Chief salary. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
   b. Scott made a motion at 8:54 p.m. to exit the Non-Public session. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
   c. Scott made a motion at 8:54 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) and (l) to discuss Jesse Crowell v Town of Canterbury. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
   d. Scott made a motion at 8:57 p.m. to exit the Non-Public session. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
   e. Scott made a motion to seal the minutes for both non public sessions. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
8. Adjournment
   a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: Regular Meeting: 2026 May 18, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House
Work Session: 2026 May 8, 8:30 a.m. at the Sam Lake House

Minutes submitted by Kal McKay, Administrative Assistant