Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 7, 2026 10:00 am
Belmont Mill, Tioga Meeting Room

Present were Chairman Ruth P. Mooney, Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Sharon Ciampi, Selectman Mark Lewandoski, TA Alicia Jipson, Executive Assistant/Assessing Administrator Colleen Akerman, Finance Director Steve Forster, DPW Director Brian Jackes, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, and Fire Chief Donald Pickowicz. Also present were Budget Committee member Ron Mitchell, Conservation Commission Chairman Pauline Tessier and Dicky Eldridge and Mike Paine from Casella.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10:00 am and those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Attendees were requested to refrain from whispering during the meeting because the acoustics are not good in this room.

Review & Approve Minutes:

Minutes of Meeting 09/16/2026:

Selectman Travis O'Hara moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held 09/16/2026; seconded by Selectman Mark Lewandoski. Motion passed (4-0-1). Selectman Jon Pike abstained because he was not in attendance at the meeting.

New Business:

Sawicki Lane Solid Waste Collection - Casella:

Dicky Eldridge and Mike Paine from Casella spoke with the Board about seasonal solid waste collection on Sawicki Lane. A site visit was held a few weeks ago with Casella, residents, DPW Director Brian Jackes and Executive Assistant Colleen Akerman. There are about 30 private roads in Town that are not traveled year-round and about ten that are converted to seasonal for the winter from November 15th to April 15th. Mr. Eldridge and Mr. Paine reported Sawicki Lane road conditions last winter led to driver concerns about traveling the road and residents were noticed to bring their carts to the end of the road for collection this winter for seasonal collection. After the site visit last month, Casella said they are willing to compromise and give service one more try this winter if the residents can keep the road properly maintained. If the road cannot be traveled, there will be no collection that week and residents will need to wait until the following week or they can pay the scale fee to dispose of their waste at the private Casella facility on Route 140. If the road is not maintained to the same standard as a Town road, Sawicki Lane will be converted to seasonal collection. They trust their drivers' decisions about whether a road can be traveled. Casella also reported there was an incident last year when a Sawicki Lane resident dumped his trash in the parking lot at Casella without permission and Town Hall notified the Police Department. Resident Russell Chinnici asked if it would be easier if he kept his driveway at the end opened up so that the truck could turn around instead of backing down the road. Casella said

no, it is preferred to back down the road. Resident Jim Sawicki asked when the Town is going to address the water from the Gardners Grove Road that causes ice on Sawicki Lane. DPW Director Brian Jackes reminded Mr. Sawicki that he promised DPW would come grade the area this fall but there was no firm deadline for this work because they are still working on summer maintenance work. DPW Director Jackes stated that there is some Town responsibility, but the entrance to the road is the responsibility of the Sawicki Lane property owners.

Economic Revitalization Zone Renewal – Route 106 North:

The Town participated in this program back in 2021. It is a designation that under-used properties that will improve infrastructure or create jobs can use for State tax credits. The zone is from Laconia Road and Fruite Street to north of Lamprey Road. It must be reapproved every 5 years if the Selectmen wish to continue the designation.

Selectman Pike moved to continue the ERZ designation of Route 106-North under the current statute for an additional 5 years and to allow TA Jipson to sign all necessary documents; seconded by Selectman Lewandoski. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

TA Jipson will request a report from the State to see what type of participation there has been.

NH DOT 10-year Plan Re-Committal:

Lakes Region Planning Commission is working on the upcoming 2029-2038 ten-year plan. They are asking the Town to reaffirm their current projects. There are two in Belmont: the intersection at Route 140 and Main Street and the bridge over Durgin Brook on Union Road. At this time, the state awarded us with two 4-way stops in the downtown area at no cost as a temporary measure. The work may be completed this fall.

Budget Committee member Ron Mitchell suggested that we should reject the 4-way stop because it is going to lead to more issues, but this is a test we must complete to see how it will work before the State will move to alternative solutions. TA Jipson stated the State assured us that the timing on the two intersections would work without traffic issues. The Board discussed the matching funds needed for the bridge, which is about $308,000. There is $463,000 in the bridge account at this time. We will need to pay 100% of the project and then we will be reimbursed for 80%. This is why it is important to save money in the capital reserve funds.

Chairman Mooney moved to reaffirm our support for the NH DOT 10-year plan as part of LRPC's 2027 Transportation Improvement Program with Belmont's 2 proposed projects for improving the intersection and safety and congestion at NH Route 140 and Main Street and the replacement of the Union Road Bridge over Durgin Brook on Union Road; seconded by Selectman Lewandoski. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Commercial & Industrial Property Tax Exemption RSA 72:81 Renewal Consideration 2027:

This exemption was re-adopted in 2023 with some updates from the RSA. The program must be re-adopted every five years or it will lapse. The Board must decide if they want it to lapse or if it becomes a warrant article for the voters to decide. There is currently $9,000,000 in assessed value exempted with 5 different commercial properties. The exemption is for a

percentage of the improvements but not the land. It is a gradual decrease each year from 50% to 10% over a 5-year term. There is one new one that was submitted recently. If the program is discontinued, anyone currently enrolled would receive their approved exemptions until the end of their term.

Selectman Pike moved to put the question of readopting RSA 72:81 Commercial & Industrial Property Tax Exemption on the 2027 Town ballot; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

State Revolving Fund Loan – Lead Water Line Service Inventory:

DPW Director Jackes requested permission to apply for funding for a loan with 66% forgiveness in order to complete the lead water line service inventory as required. We would pay 34%, which could be stretched out through bonding for 5 to 30 years, which would be a low impact to the ratepayers. There are currently about 650 lines, and we have identified about 200 through records. We will need to hire a consultant who will work with neighborhoods on our behalf and complete potholing to identify neighborhood lines instead of every individual home. The cost is about $2,400 per day but we will only pay 34%. We own the line from the curb stop to the main and property owners are responsible from the curb stop to their house. We have the right to access the curb stops. The contractor would complete the work and then come through with landscaping afterwards. It will have to go to the voters if we are awarded the loan. If the voters choose not to accept the loan, we will need to figure out another way, and the ratepayers would be responsible. This loan program with forgiveness will be the most efficient and cost-effective way to meet this mandate.

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with application and provide a letter of support from the Board.

Village Spur Rail Trail Parking Lot Paving Project:

DPW Director Jackes, Ron Mitchell and Woody Fogg spoke about repaving the parking lot for the trail located off Route 140. There is about $30,000 in the account and most of the bridge work is done so it would be a good idea to make the parking lot easier to plow in the winter. The cost is estimated at $27,000 to $28,000 and DPW can do some of the gravel prep work. There was discussion about future maintenance and repairs if most of the account funds get used for the paving. Ron Mitchell suggested using some of the BRATT account money, however some of those funds were federally obtained and it is unlikely we can use them for this project. There is moss on the roof of the second bridge that needs to be cleaned up to prevent deterioration. Additional funding could be added to the Village Spur Rail Trail Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) if necessary. Selectman O'Hara asked about runoff into the brook, but DPW Director Jackes will crown the entrance and complete the gravel work to avoid issues.

Selectman Lewandoski moved to expend up to $30,000 from the Village Rail Spur Trail CRF for the paving of the parking lot at the head of the trail; seconded by Sharon Ciampi. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Mr. Mitchell noted the need for an active committee to work on the BRATT trail. TA Jipson reported there is $130,000 in that CRF.

The Board also discussed the need for Old Home Day Committee members. The Parks & Rec Director cannot do all of the work herself. Old Home Day is supposed to be a volunteer run event and if we can't get volunteers on the committee it may need to be canceled. There is a lack of volunteerism across the community.

Town Property Sign Policy Request – Conservation Commission Member Pauline Tessier:

Pauline Tessier of the Conservation Commission explained there have been problems with signs (solicitations) on Town-owned conservation property. The Commission requests that the Board create a policy for signs on Town property to regulate the permission needed. That will make it universal and give some teeth to it. Selectman Lewandoski mentioned that Northfield has an ordinance that there can be no signs on Town property and they can be taken down by DPW or Code Enforcement. If signs are removed the owner is contacted to pick them up at DPW and if they are not picked up by the deadline, they are destroyed. All Town property is free of signs. Town Planner Karen Santoro suggested adding a sign section to the current Town Properties ordinance. TA Jipson will review Northfield's policy. It was noted that nailing signs into trees on Town property is vandalism.

Other New Business:

Property Revaluation for 2029:

The 2029 property revaluation has been discussed for many years and the multi-year data collection process will need to be finalized by September 2029. This revaluation will include a full measure and list. The cost is $310,000 and we only have $152,810 right now. Warrant articles have been voted down to save money toward this big expense. Selectman O'Hara commented that voting the money down will not prevent everyone's property from being revalued because there is a State law that it must be completed every five years. We currently have a contract for a cyclical revaluation and an extension of the regular contract for pickups for KRT appraisal. The state has reviewed both contracts and found no issues. The contracts include a timeline for completion and payments. It was noted that it is hard to get companies to do revaluations and no one is going into the assessing field. The State of New Hampshire recently had to complete a revaluation for a community who could not find a company to complete theirs. Selectman O'Hara asked if we should put this out to bid, but no one has bid in the past. Donna Cilley thought the contract should go out to bid. TA Jipson suggested continuing the regular contract for pickups at this time, and she can create an RFP for the cyclical revaluation. There was discussion that KRT is familiar with our Town and properties and they have the historical information. It could be problematic to have one company complete pickups and one complete the cyclical revaluation because there would not be consistency, but we should put it out to bid to cover all of the bases.

It was the consensus of the Board to sign the regular contract with KRT and create an RFP for the cyclical revaluation.

Water Main Break:

DPW Director Jackes expressed his appreciation for Paul Busby and Brian Campbell for their help with the water main break on Concord Street. He was also very proud of how the department handled the situation. He is equally grateful for the police and fire departments for working with them. He told the Board they have a great team working for the Town and it is nice that everyone has the same goal.

This morning a service line on Concord Street was found to be leaking. We are not allowed to excavate private water lines and the curb stop is the end of our responsibility. We are providing the property owner with any parts and support and guidance that we can within the regulations. We are trying to help set up some temporary lines. Tom Murphy complimented the department and Busby Construction for doing a great job. John Gile of 77 Concord Street reported his property was affected by the water leak and he is questioning how the Town's responsibility ends at the curb stop. It is going to cost thousands of dollars to fix the problem. Mr. Gile was informed that it is standard that the Town owns to the curb stop and that is the same everywhere. We can't control what is in the ground. DPW Director Jackes will work with Mr. Gile to help as much as they can.

Town-wide Trick or Treat Saturday 10/31/2026 5-8 pm:

Town-wide trick or treating will be held on Saturday October 31st from 5 to 8 pm. Trunk or Treat will be held on October 23rd from 5 to 7 pm.

Old Business:

SAFER Grant Update:

TA Jipson reported that this grant extension was approved until February 2027. Fire Chief Donald Pickowicz informed the Board that this is very important because there are two employees on that grant saving two salary lines. It is a big help with the budget and overtime. He credited Administrative Assistant Becky Beaulac with her follow-up efforts. Chief Pickowicz mentioned that a lot of the grants are ending.

Road Construction Update:

DPW Director Jackes is looking for some direction on next year's projects. This year they worked on Grimstone, Wild Acres, Middle Route, Horne Road and Westview Drive. Leslie Roberts is almost complete and it exceeded expectations. Next year they will do a topcoat when they pave Knotty Way. He would like permission to tackle a few other things including patching Church Street. Next year he would like to do a shim and overlay on Dearborn Street, which has been avoided for years because there are water lines that may need work, but we need to avoid losing the road completely. Wolcott will hold the pricing from the beginning of the year. It will last a few years until there is a plan to replace the water lines. It is more affordable to pave it than chase it all winter with cold patch. HBG funds will be used.

It was the consensus of the Board to approve of the road maintenance updates.

Underwood provided a road plan until 2028, and it has been followed closely. Next year the department would like to reconstruct Jamestown Road with the same method they tackled Middle Route. It saved a lot of money and there is no reason to pay 25% for engineering and monitoring when the department is staffed appropriately. They may coordinate with Northfield when doing some work next year on Shaker Road.

Other Old Business: None

Public Comment: None

BOS Future Agenda Items:

Selectman O'Hara proposed a public hearing to place a "Do Not Enter" sign at the intersection of Dearborn Street and Route 140. After discussion, the Board determined to wait until the all-way stops are put into place and review this again at a later date.

Board & Committee Reports: None

Next Meeting: October 21, 2026 @ 6:00 pm

Non-Public Session:

Those present and voting were Chairman Ruth P. Mooney, Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Sharon Ciampi and Selectman Mark Lewandoski. Also present were TA Alicia Jipson, Executive Assistant Colleen Akerman and John DeJager.

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II e, L and c at 11:43 am seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 1: J. Pike – aye, M. Lewandoski – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

The Board discussed a request for an abatement of interest on outstanding property taxes. The Board made a decision.

Mr. DeJager left the meeting.

Selectman O'Hara left the meeting.

The Board discussed ongoing litigation for an employment issue.

Chairman Mooney moved seal the minutes because if these matters were discussed in public, it would likely adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a member of this Board; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Roll Call 3: M. Lewandoski – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (4-0).

Chairman Mooney moved to exit non-public session at 12:52 pm; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Roll Call 4: J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, M. Lewandoski – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (4-0).

Adjournment:

Selectman Ciampi moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:52 pm; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Respectfully Submitted By:

Colleen Akerman

Colleen Akerman, Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board 10 / 21 /2026:

Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

Travis O'Hara, Vice Chairman

Sharon Ciampi, Selectman

Jon Pike, Selectman

Mark Lewandoski, Selectman