Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 21, 2026 6:00 pm
Belmont Mill, Tioga Meeting Room

Present were Chairman Ruth P. Mooney, Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Sharon Ciampi, Selectman Mark Lewandoski, Executive Assistant/Assessing Administrator Colleen Akerman, Town Planner Karen Santoro, DPW Director Brian Jackes. Also present were Heritage Commission members Vicki Donovan and Jack Donovan, and Budget Committee Member Susan Roache.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6:00 pm and those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review & Approve Minutes:

Minutes of Public and Non-Public Meetings 10/07/2026:

Selectman Travis O'Hara moved to approve the minutes of the non-public meeting held 10/07/2026; seconded by Selectman Mark Lewandoski. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Selectman Jon Pike moved to approve the minutes of the public meeting held 10/07/2026; seconded by Selectman Sharon Ciampi. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Minutes of Budget Workshop Meeting 10/13/2026:

Selectman O'Hara moved to approve the minutes of the budget workshop meeting held 10/13/2026; seconded by Selectman Lewandoski. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Minutes of Budget Workshop Meeting 10/19/2026:

Selectman Lewandoski moved to approve the minutes of the budget workshop meeting held 10/19/2026; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Attendees were requested to refrain from whispering during the meeting because the acoustics are not good in this room.

New Business:

2026 Community Awards Presented by the Heritage Commission:

Jack and Vicki Donovan of the Belmont Heritage Commission presented the Community Awards. There were three sets of awards for 5 worthy recipients:

"The Belmont Heritage Commission and Belmont Board of Selectmen have been presenting Community Heritage Awards for 15 years. Since its inception individuals, groups, businesses and organizations have been recognized for their contributions to Belmont's heritage, history and

well-being for the Town of Belmont. These awards have become a favorite and notable event as it highlights deeds and events that might not otherwise have been recognized. The awards are a small token of appreciation to honor those who have given their time and efforts for the betterment of Belmont."

Jack and Vicki Donovan presented the 2026 Community Heritage Awards to the following recipients:

1) Joe and Jenn Thomas: Preservation of Traditions Award
2) Katie Van Cura and Kelly Lewis: Exceptional Commitment to Community Award
3) Riley DeGange: Youth Leadership Award

"The Preservation of Traditions Award recognized Joe and Jenn Thomas for the restoration of their 1890's home. Their restoration work gives Main Street in Belmont another added feature to admire. Jenn stated that original features such as the front door and wide pine floors reflect its history and character. She also noted the post and beam barn, which was probably built before the house and may even predate the age of the house itself. The Thomas's advice to anyone restoring an older home is to preserve the original features because the specific house details tell of its charm, character and history. They were very honored to receive the award and stated that it is especially meaningful because it recognizes the importance of preserving these homes and the history they represent for future generations.

Two art teachers are receiving the Exceptional Commitment to Community Award: Katie VanCura at Belmont Elementary and Kelly Lewis at Belmont Middle School. After finding out Belmont's Old Home Day theme, "Stars and Stripes and Summer Nights", Heritage Chair Vicki Donovan took a chance in April to ask both of them to contribute to a community project. She thought they might decline since the end of the school year for teachers and students is very busy. Luckily, both Katie and Kelly said YES, without hesitation. The two teachers separately, but uniquely, involved most of their prospective school's student population in creating patriotic decorations for Belmont's Old Home Day and for the Heritage Commission's 250th America Celebration. The time crunch in May and June was tough for both teachers, but they did not disappoint. During the last week of school, they put together red, white and blue windsocks, United States laminated paper flags, strings of 3-D stars and very large Happy Birthday America posters and they were all ready for pick-up. During Old Home Day the students' work was proudly displayed throughout Belmont Village. Patriotic artwork from grades 1-8 decorated the Town's benches, the railings along the Belmont Library walkway, the retaining wall, and around the Bandstand. Later in the summer, the students' decorations were hung and strung up along the columns at the Pavillion. The decorated Pavillion was a great backdrop for the Newmont Military Band Concert that helped Belmont celebrate America's 250th Anniversary. After the concert the band's conductor commented that Belmont has a wonderful historical area to perform at, and the band members made several comments about the students' decorations that surrounded them.

Lastly, a Youth Leadership Award is presented to Riley DeGange for her role as the Student Representative for the Heritage Commission. Riley was instrumental to the commission as she was the go between for the community and the schools. She was a huge asset connecting the Heritage Commission with the Belmont High School Honor Society. This connection made it

possible for needed assistance with the commission's annual Senior Citizens Food Drive. The project had many helping hands including the Sargent Fund, Belmont Elementary Student Council, and the Belmont High School Honor Society. It was a very productive project, and we were thankful for Riley's input as well as many others who have made it such a successful event for the Senior Citizens of Belmont. Riley was unable to attend today's presentation. She will receive her award during her Thanksgiving break from college."

Request for Authority to Sell Highway Department Surplus Equipment:

DPW Director Brian Jackes requested authorization to sell some old plows. They are ready for scrap, but we could try Municibid to see if we can get a better price, and we are allowed to set a reserve. They were pulled out of the woods while cleaning up the yard. The spare truck continues to have issues and there is no reason to put any more money into it. It would be best to strip it of new parts and auction it. DPW Director Jackes can work with Selectman Pike about taking the truck to auction or place it on Municibid. It was the consensus of the Board to grant DPW Director Jackes the authority to auction the old plows.

Other New Business: None

Old Business:

WRBP Site Visit – 11/17/2026 at 9 am – 74 South Road Pump Station:

DES (Department of Environmental Services) and BEA (Department of Business & Economic Affairs) and NBRC (Northern Border Regional Commission) will be on-site for a presentation for the WRBP at 74 South Road's Belmont Pump Station on November 17th at 9am. Both the DES and BEA Commissioners and the NBRC State Program Manager will attend this photo opportunity and presentation. DPW Director Jackes will be in attendance, and we are looking for a Selectboard member to attend, because this is a large $2,000,000 grant that the Town and the sewer users are very grateful for. Chairman Mooney and Selectman Pike can attend this event.

WRBP Transition to Regional Authority Study Commission Update:

DPW Director Jackes attended a meeting today with the group that is charged with studying the transition. In the public comment section of the study commission meeting, he read a letter of support from Belmont. It was a three-hour meeting, and they reviewed the entire report. At the end of the study commission meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to move forward as a regional authority. The legislation will be presented as SB 592. Selectman Pike expressed some concerns about the transition and the State's responsibility and funding for the Route 140 forcemain project.

200 Daniel Webster Highway Auction Update:

The 200 Daniel Webster Highway property was taken for tax deed on July 10, 2025. It went to auction and the high bidder of $700,000 backed out. The second highest bidder of $600,000 closed on the property on Tuesday. The Town has recouped $188,919.00 in back taxes and all associated fees and penalties due under RSA 80:90.

Other Old Business: None

Public Comment:

Richard Bilodeau of 9 Magnolia Lane presented concerns about the level of assessment on their property. He would like the State to review Belmont's assessments.

Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman recommended that Mr. Bilodeau file an abatement application after fall tax bills are issued. She noted that while a new manufactured home could be purchased for less than the assessed value of their property, the total assessed value includes the placement of the unit on a slab with connections for water and sewage as well as the location with a driveway and landscaping. Manufactured homes across the state are skyrocketing in value. The market is what sets the assessed value, which was last revalued in 2024 and will next be revalued in 2029 unless the current or a future Selectboard chooses to do a revaluation before 2029. Chairman Mooney mentioned that we revalued properties multiple years in a row to help reduce the impact of a large change at a five-year interval, but residents were upset. She also noted that if there are big fluctuations in the market, assessed values will stay at their current values until the next revaluation. Our current equalization ratio is about 85%, and the State wants to see it at 100%. We try to put money away each year towards the revaluation cost, but it is not always approved. This could mean a large cost in one year of approximately $300,000 to complete the revaluation. We have no choice because we are required by law to do this. It will be harder to pay for this in one year than to save a little bit each year towards the cost.

Mr. Bilodeau was frustrated that he pays his own water and sewer bills, high taxes and garbage costs. Chairman Mooney stated they are not located on a town road and don't receive curbside trash collection.

Selectman Ciampi spoke about the high lot rents in the park and the decreased market values for homes in the Great Brook community. Mr. Bilodeau talked about their recent lawsuit against the property owner where the judge determined some of the paperwork was not admissible and ruled against them with prejudice so they can't try again. Residents are upset that the property owner is not taking good care of the property. Selectman Pike requested the residents write a letter to the Attorney General and he will personally take it to the Attorney General's office. It was the consensus of the Board to help support Great Brook residents with a complaint to the Attorney General's office.

Liz Charlwood of Cotton Hill Road spoke about the need for affordable housing and the monthly lot rent at Great Brook of $1,200 compared to other communities at $600 per month. She had concerns that the assessments don't look at high lot rents that lower the market value of homes in some parks. Properties are selling for half of their assessed value and that is a problem. Properties are supposed to be assessed based on market data. Chairman Mooney stated assessments can't look at a single park community; they have to look at all similar properties and do an average. She reiterated that our equalization ratio is only at 85% and NHDRA wants us at 100%. They could require us to do a revaluation before 2029. Ms. Charlwood had concerns about how the State is cutting taxes on businesses and interest and dividends and cutting what they give the Town, which means increased property taxes.

Selectman Pike commented on the large audience, and thanked everyone for being here. It was great to see everyone and have some participation.

BOS Future Agenda Items: None

Board & Committee Reports: None

Next Meeting: November 4, 2026 at 10:00 am

The Board was reminded about attending elections on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 at Belmont High School.

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 Executive Assistant Colleen Akerman and Town Planner Karen Santoro.

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II a, c and d at 7:12 pm 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).

Town Planner Santoro discussed a staff support issue with the Board.

Town Planner Karen Santoro left the meeting.

The Board discussed an issue at a town-owned property and made a decision.

The Board discussed the compensation of two employees.

Chairman Mooney moved to 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 O'Hara. Roll Call 3: M. Lewandoski – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

Selectman O'Hara moved to exit non-public session at 7:35pm; seconded by Chairman Mooney. Roll Call 4: T. O'Hara – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, M. Lewandoski – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

Selectman O'Hara moved to reduce the 2027 Conservation Commission budget by $9,903 and increase the 2027 Land Use budget by $9,903; seconded by Chairman Mooney.

Selectman O'Hara moved to add $1,500 to the 2027 Town Clerk Deputy budget line and $1,500 to the 2027 Tax Collector Deputy line; seconded by Chairman Mooney.

Adjournment:

Selectman Pike moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 pm; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted By:

Colleen Akerman

Colleen Akerman, Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board 11/04/2026:

Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

Travis O'Hara, Vice Chairman

Jon Pike, Selectman

Sharon Ciampi, Selectman

Mark Lewandoski, Selectman