

Town of Danville
APPROVED Selectboard Minutes
December 18, 2025
Danville Town Hall (6:00 pm)

Board Members Present: Janice Ouellette, Glenn Herrin, Eric Bach, Alison Low and Matt Choate

Board Members Present Using Teams: None

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present Using Teams: Justin Lavelly, Greg Prior

Others Present: Michelle Leclerc, Keith Gadapee, Walter McNeil, NEK Waste Management District; Craig Morris, Scott Beck, Ryan Fecteau, Danville Snowmobile Club

Meeting called to order by Chair Janice Ouellette at 6:00 pm.

1. **Additions to the agenda:** *None*

2. **Approve minutes of December 4, 2025:**

*Motion by Alison Low, 2nd by Eric Bach to recognize the **Regular** December 4, 2025 minutes as accurately reflecting the agenda of the meeting. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*

3. **Approve minutes of December 15, 2025:**

*Motion by Eric Bach, 2nd by Alison Low to recognize the **Special** December 15, 2025 minutes as accurately reflecting the agenda of the meeting. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*

4. **Municipal Minute: NVDA** – Alison Low discussed the role of Northeastern Vermont Development Association. While it serves as the regional planning commission and the economic development corporation for the three counties of the Northeast Kingdom, she focused on the regional planning commission role and its service to municipalities, primarily in planning and zoning. They help towns with general and specific planning (land use, energy, and zoning bylaws) and, on request, regionally “approve” municipal plans so that towns can participate in programs such as the Municipal Planning Grant program and obtain additional benefits under Center Designation. The Town of Danville has received three Village Center Designations, so this has benefitted the community in increased competitiveness for grants (such as the Train Station), and it has allowed the Town to receive a Better Connections Grant to complete the master planning along the Route 2/LVRT corridor, which was a catalyst for rehabbing the Train Station. NVDA has one of the largest service areas, covering one-fifth of the state’s land mass, and just ten percent of the population.

5. **Visitors/Public Comment:** Janice Ouelette asked all visitors to introduce themselves.

- Scott Beck, State Senator – Just here to listen;
- Greg Prior, here to listen; and
- Craig Morris, here to learn about the plans to replace Audrey and what is happening with the transportation budget.

- Walter McNeil: Reported on the most recent monthly board meeting of the NEK Waste Management District, which was December 9th (and he attended in person). They held their second hearing for public comment on the NEKWMD Budget. No one came, and the hearing closed. The general meeting followed, and the board adopted the budget, with one dissenting vote from a representative from Lyndon. This person has traditionally voted down the budget, so Walter questioned him in the meeting. The reason was that the vote was taken away from the general public in 2017 and 2019 and redirected to the Board of Supervisors. Walter also reported that budget-wise, the expenses and revenues are almost exactly even, which is a good thing since they are not in the business of making money, nor are they in the business of losing money. They had to go into executive session to do the three-month evaluation of the new NEKWMD Director Chris Thompsom. While he cannot report on what goes on in Executive Session, the board came out with no action – which is a GOOD thing. As for the styrofoam, the backlog is gone. They hope to start accepting agricultural film (the plastic that goes around hay bales) in order to keep it out of the landfill. He hopes to have more on that development in the future. Additionally, the NEKWMD has done some work on the building and

upgraded computer systems. Finally, there is a possible increase in the disposal of tires. The request for price increase stems from the "Wheels for Warmth" event hosted by Northeast Kingdom Community Action in late October. There were two large roll-offs with tires that NEKCA had rejected for re-use, and they were charging \$5.00 a tire. By contrast, the NEKWMD charges \$3.00 for tires 18" or smaller. As of December 9th, the district is running a deficit on tires of about \$1,500, so Walter has proposed an increase to \$4.00 a tire.

6. Town Clerk (Michelle Leclerc)

- **Liquor Licenses** – None
- **Pay increase for CY 2026:** January 5th is the next pay period, so we can either approve scheduled pay increases now or prorate them later in the year. However, Michelle suggested that the board decide on this after having a discussion on the budgets, since the transportation budget has had a change
- **General budget discussion:** Michelle noted a \$13,450 increase in the Fire Department, but they have not yet spent this year's budget of \$60,000. They recently bought some protective gear, which is expensive, but that will still not fully expend this year's budget. She needs justification for the increase, and she does not have access to open the information forwarded to her by the Fire Chief. Eric queried the request and determined that there were increases in building maintenance, including testing and maintenance on equipment. Glenn pointed out that money will still be tight for them, since the appropriate amount we should be putting away for the Capital Equipment Transfer is \$80,000, as opposed to the \$50,000 that we have budgeted for. The next time they need money for a fire truck, he said, they probably won't have enough in the Capital Equipment Fund. Recommendation was to leave the numbers as is to reach out to Dani Cochran and request some clarification for the increase and explain why this year's budget has not been spent.

Additionally, Michelle received a call from the Town of Cabot, who wanted her to know that while the Joe's Pond Association requested \$10,000 for milfoil mitigation from them, they are only budgeting for \$5,000. However, Jan pointed out that Danville has more of the Pond, and there is another area of milfoil needing mitigation. Still comfortable with spending \$10,000.

Question about the North Danville School maintenance budget line – it includes the cost of the new heating system.

Question about Green Up Day – was \$500 sufficient, given we want to get participation up to where it used to be? It was decided that it was sufficient, for now, even though we are saving money on recycling. It was decided to just see how far the \$500 goes this year.

Building inspections: It was the recommendation of the Town Services Committee to have inspections. The Town Garage, the wastewater treatment plants, and the Callex building all could be bundled into a single contract, which might be more competitive to a qualified building inspector. Ultimately it was decided to budget for all the buildings, including the North Danville School and the Town Hall, with \$1,500 for the Town Garage, and \$1,000 for North Danville School and Town Hall each, and \$500 for Callex and the WWTF each. (Keith already has Town Garage covered in his budget.) It might also make sense to pursue a Sincerbeaux Grant for the North Danville School.

There was a question from Matt Choate about how maintenance estimates were derived. Michelle replied that it is largely based on experience. Glenn also pointed out that there was a maintenance tracker on the SharePoint that can be more informative over time as it is populated with more data. We could look at that if we have a budget meeting.

Source of increases in the general budget: They are not attributed to salaries and insurance, rather it's IT and equipment expense (such as need for greater security), North Danville School (heating system), Fire Department, and law enforcement (for speeding). It was pointed out that the ND School heating system would achieve savings in future years. Ryan Fecteau wanted to know how we determine if the law enforcement is increased. We receive a monthly report, and we started out with only a small amount of \$5,500 a year. Since the amount is ramping up, we should see more results.

Parking tickets – they are in! We will need to talk about appointing people to issue them on the next agenda. Craig Morris wanted to know who we can appoint. Do they need to have a background in law enforcement? No, they need to understand the parking ordinance. They will have to be familiar with that and abide by that.

NEK Hazardous Waste Management: Originally they had scheduled it for Danville Fair Day. It's now August 8th, the next Saturday. We might need a second volunteer to help with parking and flow. Inquiry regarding the bank doing two-year loans – they indicated that they would do so.

Vermont Covered Bridge Society – last year we gave them \$15. This year they requested \$100. It will have to be on the agenda next time.

7. Highway Report (Keith Gadapee)

Convex mirror – Previously he was asked to investigate this at Park X Peacham Road, above a sidewalk. He pointed out that VTrans considers these a hazard, and he also stated that there is a risk of the glass coming down on a sidewalk. Alternatively, changing the grade of the road and/or the park to improve visibility would be very costly. Historic crash data might be helpful. Matt also suggested a yellow blinker that gets activated by an approaching car. Keith said that VTrans generally discourages these too. Craig pointed out that these might be undesirable in a neighborhood setting. Keith also suggested that convex mirror might not be appropriate for the historic character of the village. Ryan suggested reversing the traffic pattern. Eric noted that VTrans was not previously supportive of this. Alison suggested speed bumps around the green. Matt said they were objectionable. It was decided to get a VTrans traffic engineer to come look at it.

Paving: Craig wanted to know what the Highway Department's plans for paving were in the coming year. Keith replied that it would depend on his budget. He'd like to do Hill Street, where he left off by Brock's heading toward Danville, and Brainerd Street, right before the Rescue Building. Craig wanted to know about paving over gravel. Keith replied that he had no plans to pave over gravel unless he hears otherwise.

Wages and budget: There was a question about the payscale. There are moves coming up based on tenure and experience and skills building. If there is a COLA – is it applied to everyone, or just people who are not moving up? It was agreed that the COLA should be applied to the entire payscale first, then apply the step advancements.

Budget: Changes to highways budget, along with narrative, were circulated earlier. Line item for building and repairs has changed because of the heating system. He took out the excavator (\$165K). Janice asked about putting the excavator back in and keeping the transfer to the equipment fund the same. Keith replied that whatever we do, we are still going to have to put away money for equipment. The cost of equipment is going up. We could also finance part or whole of equipment, which was why Michelle inquired at the bank.

Keith put a plow truck in this year, because 10 years might be more appropriate than 12 years. "Things can pile up if we are not proactive." The bottom line is that plow trucks don't cost \$100K anymore, and the increase does not mean that they last any longer.

Glenn specified that we should be saving or spending about \$217K a year on highway equipment with 10-year cycle. Going from 12-year cycle to 10-year cycle adds \$15K to the budget for the five trucks, but it's not enormous.

Matt asked about depreciation – Michelle clarified that we do not include depreciation as a line item. Municipal accounting is a little different.

Alternatively, we could consider dropping level of service to save money, going from five trucks to four. That only saves us \$5,000 a year. but then we have to consider impacts if one of the trucks goes down. It takes about 4 hours to clear the roads during a storm. With one fewer truck it might take 5 hours. Then if one of the trucks is down, it could take longer. It would also increase wear and tear on remaining trucks.

Another change to the budget is the subtraction of the McDowell culvert project.

We didn't put anything on the slide on Bruce Badger. The geologist from VTrans suggested \$70K, Keith is thinking that can do some engineering for about \$6,000, getting it ready to shovel ready. Agreed that we need to keep moving on the slide because it is going to collapse at some time.

Glenn wanted to see an increase in what we are putting away to avoid financing and avoid having to pay interest, which he regards as wasted money.

Jan was leaning toward putting the excavator back in. Keith suggested that putting the plow truck in instead because the depreciation on the excavator will not change, and it takes about 18 months to acquire a truck. Or, if you don't do either, put more money away, getting it closer to the recommended \$217K with adjustments for inflation.

Keith said that some taxpayers don't like a reserve fund, but Glenn pointed out that it would not be carried forward from year to year, given the future equipment needs.

There was a question about the heating system. Michelle pointed out that the highway budget doesn't need to be segregated, and the funds could be co-mingled. However, Eric liked the idea of having a separate budget for general and highway that people vote on. If one gets voted down, we know where to focus.

It was decided we need a budget session. The budget needs to be in place by January 15th. **It was decided that we could meet on Tuesday, January 6th, at 5:00.**

8. Issues and Information –

- A. **Selectboard Assistant Transition Plan** – Janice recapped the decisions from the special meeting on December 15th: Michelle will monitor emails and phone calls made to the selectboard assistant. Michelle and Glenn will share duties on website management and posting of agendas. Alison will handle agendas and minutes. Keith will handle buildings and grounds issues, and capture and direct issues that require board action as necessary. Janice will do the email coordination required for setting up special meetings. Glenn will reach out to non-employees/appointees. Eric and Janice will develop a job description for review at January 8th meeting. There will be an interview committee with two candidates who can be forwarded to the Selectboard.
- B. **Snowmobile Parking**: Ryan Fecteau reported that he had run into issues with the property manager from the bank, and he doesn't feel that we will get approval for crossing the parking lot. His goal is to allow snowmobilers to access the Village businesses. He raised the possibility of parking on the Green. He felt that it might be limited, but it could bring in more people to stay around. People drive in to snowmobile and then they leave, unlike Island Pond, where they visit and spend money at local businesses. He showed a willingness to minimize damage to the Green, explaining that a snowmobile has less impact than a bicycle, and it's on snow. The parking can be squared off, and he's just asking for parking of the snowmobiles, not the trucks. Eric asked about the markings. Ryan suggested a 10-foot roped in path that directs the snowmobilers when they leave the parking lot, as well as signage that advises them to stay on the trail. The board chose to give parking on the Green a try. Finally, there was a discussion about allowing access parking behind the Town Garage. The school has a concern that snowmobiles could go on athletic fields. Ryan stated that the majority of the parking is going to be in West Danville; however, it would be a benefit if parking (for trucks) were available behind the Town Garage, especially with the loss of parking at Marty's. Ryan pointed out that it would be very hard for snowmobilers to be able to reach the fields. Keith asked that the fields committee get to put some signage, stakes, and barriers to protect the athletic fields. He suggested that Ryan reach out to Bill Gray of VTrans, who would have some signage.
- C. **Town Service Committee Update**: Glenn noted that the committee has concluded its work. Glenn reviewed the recommendations:
- a. Continue to appoint a Town Services Committee every year, serving from March to December;
 - b. Budget and contract for building inspections
 - c. Update and maintain (quarterly) a list of facilities, grounds, managers, and additional information as needed
 - d. Reconsider establishment of a Public Works position or similar organization within the Town
 - e. Warn and present information on the Fire Department Administrator (combining Town Health and Emergency Mgmt coord) position
 - f. Refine position description and hire Fire Department Admin person.
 - g. Purchase speed limit and 2 radar speed feedback signs, as well as additional signs and pavements markings at village gateways
 - h. Continue traffic enforcement at 35 hours a month
 - i. Purchase and install 4-8 village entry signs
 - j. Re-evaluate traffic enforcement for 2027 as needed

- k. Provide updates for pedestrian safety opportunities
- l. Hire an additional recycling attendant
- m. Continue weekly bulky waste collection at the recycling center
- n. Appoint a wastewater superintendent (already done)
- o. Present information on wastewater treatment plant upgrades, including sludge removal
- p. Update the contract for wastewater treatment to include facility and grounds
- q. Execute wastewater plant upgrades
- r. Manage wastewater operations, capital improvements, and fees so that customers pay for the system with limited occasional support from the Town as approved
- s. Warn and present purchase of Fire District #1 if FD is willing
- t. Engage with ANR-DEC to ensure Town has technical, managerial, and financial capacity to operate the FD
- u. Execute acquisition of FD #1
- v. Manage the drinking water operations, capital improvements, fees, and bond transfers so that users pay for the system with limited occasional support from the Town as approved
- w. Maintain the website with Town Clerk/Selectboard -- two content managers (already done)
- x. Adopt updated zoning fee schedule

Janice commented that the Town Services Committee has been a great advisory tool for the Town. Glenn recommended that we include Town Clerk and Highway Foreman instead of Selectboard.

- D. Adjustments to Zoning Fee Schedule:** In November, we adopted new Zoning fees. After some discussions with the Zoning Administrator, the following changes were suggested.
- a. No Certificate of Occupancy for accessory structures that are 150 SF or less (detached), or areas (attached) that are not applicable, such as decks, carports, patios, and driveways.
 - b. \$50 late fee instead of \$100
 - c. New subcategories added to the developments of 1,000 SF or less: signs are \$25, 250 SF or less is \$50; 251-500 SF is \$100
- Glenn Herrin made a motion to make these changes to the zoning fees effective as of January 1, 2026. Alison Low seconded the motion. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*
- Craig Morris asked if this would affect any zoning permits pending. He paid last year's fees. Then this does not affect him.
- E. Town Meeting Warrant Articles:** Glenn sought input from the Selectboard about any recommendations from the Town Services Committee to be included as articles for this year's Town Meeting Day.
- a. "Shall the voters of the Town of Danville raise and appropriate up to \$10,000 to hire a Fire Department Administrator?" It was agreed that this warrant article felt appropriate for Town Meeting Day in 2026.
 - b. Wastewater upgrade. This warrant article would reference a bond or a revolving loan for the funding. It was agreed that this article was not ready for TMD 26.
 - c. "Shall the voters of the Town of Danville vote to purchase the Danville Fire District #1 for \$1.00?" Agreed that it was appropriate for Town Meeting Day in 2026. Eric Bach indicated that he would coordinate this article for Town Meeting Day.
- F. Town Meeting Day Coordinator:** Alice Kitchel has agreed to be the TMD coordinator/showrunning again. She has requested someone to assist who can learn the position for future town meetings.
- Glenn Herrin made a motion to appoint Alice Kitchel as Town Meeting Day Coordinator for 2026. Alison Low seconded the motion. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*
- G. Shared Pathway Update:** There was a meeting on December 4th, and the committee looked at three options on the Hill Street side. Hearing the concerns made about pedestrian safety during the public meeting, the committee opted to have parallel parking on the east side, with a sidewalk between the parking and the building. This would eliminate people walking out into the middle of the road. There will be further investigation about how to connect the side to the front of Three Ponds. Alternative #1 (the preferred) puts the sidewalk in the location of the existing path. In addition to promoting pedestrian safety, this was deemed easier to maintain. This alternative was more expense than alternatives #2 and #3, but the cost of utility relocation was not factored in, and relocation is not required in #1.

Another change was to stop the side at the rail trail crossing, since the safer way to get to the ballfield is from the rail trail. It doesn't make sense to have people walking up the access road to the athletic fields when there is

no safe place for them to walk there. And, there is plenty of traffic on the access road.

- H. **Parking Lot Update:** There was a meeting with Andrea Haynes on December 9th, but there was a misunderstanding in the scheduling of the meeting. She'll need to have an additional meeting with Keith and Michelle. The plans that she circulated in the December 9th meeting reflected the input from the charrette, with two banks of parking spaces running east-west, separated by shade plantings. She attempted to do angled parking along the edge nearest the Town Hall, but she couldn't get it to work. All in all, she ended up with 29 spaces. There were questions about the trees. Andrea had proposed them to break up the view of the parking lot and building as one approaches heading east on Route 2. Additionally, there was a vegetation buffer between the town hall and the parking lot, which would direct water away from the building. One lamp will need to be relocated.
- I. **North Danville School Update:** Alison attended the latest meeting (on Tuesday, Dec. 16th). There were two things that were discussed. There is a possible grant from the Vermont Department of Public Libraries (funds originate from HUD) that the library may be eligible for. If so, it could pay for the entire heating system. Alison will check with Efficiency Vermont to see if there are any issues. The North Danville School Association will report back to the selectboard at the January 8th meeting. They are cognizant that they would have to do a couple of things to be eligible, including bumping up hours from 10 hours a week to 14 hours a week, and putting their library catalog online.

Another issue from the NDSA is the rental policy. Currently their policy sets the same price for a few hours as well as an entire day. They recently had to spend a great deal of time cleaning up after a rental, and they would like to revisit their rental policy. Alison sent the NDSA the rental policy for the Old Labor Hall as an example.

- J. **Planning Commission Road Classification (Thrown Up Roads):** This will come up in February. The Planning Commission have this on their task list. They will likely give this to the next Town Services Committee to review.
- K. **Disruptive Behavior Policy:** Matt Choate circulated his latest draft. This was tabled for the next meeting because it was getting late.
- L. **Selectboard Report for Town Report:** Janice stated that we will need to produce a letter for the Town Report. Items to be included mentioned in the meeting were the progress made on the shared pathway, the parking lot, the work of the Town Services Committee (although they will also submit a letter), the advanced wood heat systems (Town Garage and North Danville School) and the Efficiency Vermont Grant; the work achieved regarding traffic safety, the realignment of the Hill Street Parking, and the use of the church parking lot.
- M. **Hiring for recycling position:** Eric made a motion to go into executive session, citing 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3) regarding a hiring decision. Alison seconded. The board went into executive session at 9:04. *Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.* Alison made a motion to leave executive session at 9:10, and Eric seconded. *Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.* No action was taken.

9. **Financials:** Orders reviewed and signed by Janice Ouellette.

10. **Adjourn – Motion by Alison Low, to adjourn at 9:12 pm.**

Minutes taken by Alison Low submitted December 21, 2025 at 11:20 pm.