

APPROVED Selectboard Minutes

January 15, 2026

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: Initially Matt, when stuck in traffic. He attended in person after the meeting minutes were approved.

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present Using Teams: Greg Prior

Others Present: Michelle Leclerc, Keith Gadapee, Walter McNeil, Michael Hogue, Loral Ruggles, Rob Balivet, Clayton Cargill

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

1. **Additions to the agenda:** None
2. **Approve minutes of [Special Meeting on January 6, 2026](#):** *Motion by Eric Bach, 2nd by Glenn Herrin to recognize the Special Meeting January 6, 2026 Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*
3. **Approve minutes of [Regular Meeting on January 8, 2026](#):** *Motion by Eric Bach, 2nd by Glenn Herrin to recognize the Regular Meeting January 8, 2026 Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*
4. **Municipal Minute:** Jan explained the important dates and statutory deadlines around Town Meeting Day. Town Meeting Day is on the first Tuesday in March (March 3 for 2026). Forty days prior to that date is the first time you can warn the meeting, which is January 22nd this year. Thirty days prior is the last time you can warn the meeting, which is February 1st this year. The informational meetings have to be warned (posted) ten days in advance.
5. **Visitors/Public Comment:** Janice Ouelette asked all visitors to introduce themselves.
 - Michael Hogue, representing the Train Station Project
 - Loral Ruggles, representing Village 2 Village
 - Clayton Cargill, representing the School Board
 - Rob Balivet, representing the Train Station Project
 - Walter McNeil, representing the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District
 - Greg Prior, citizen and attending as liaison to the Planning Commission
 - **NEKMWD update:** Walter reported on the NEKMWD's latest meeting, noting that the district had ended the year with a \$15,000 deficit in its budget, due primarily to equipment purchases that had to be made. However, he noted, as he mentioned in a previous meeting, the district will be voting to raise the price for handling tires from \$3 to \$5, as the district is currently losing money on tires. Walter noted that the district is not out to make money, but they must cover their costs. This increase is not likely to affect Danville, as we charge \$6 for tires under 18" and \$8 for tires larger than that. Walter also noted that there were some issues with contamination of the styrofoam collected (i.e. tape, metal); however he noted that Chris Thompson stated that the problem was not coming from Danville – Clayton was doing a great job on monitoring the styrofoam intake.
 - **DRB Appointment:** Glenn spoke on behalf of Brian Henderson, chair of the Development Review Board. The DRB is currently short an alternate, and he would like to nominate David Beidler on Pope Brook Road to be an alternate on the DRB. *Motion by Glenn Herrin, 2nd by Alison Low to appoint David Beidler as an alternate on the Development Review Board. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*
 - **Michael reported on the work on the Train Station restoration.** As of the September 18, 2025 Open House, there were still 20 deficiencies on the contract with the construction manager. We issued a termination notice for cause to the construction manager with a 30-day cure period, which expired on December 12, 2025. There are still six (6) deficiencies noted on the contract concerning gutters, storm windows, exterior trim work, and some below grade work to address drainage. Also on the list are the steel plates that are required to hold the platform brackets. This latter one is most challenging because we need to know what is inside the wall. Bringing in someone other than the

current construction manager to do it might be a challenge. Michael, Rob, and the architect (Edwards & Associates) recently met to identify alternatives for getting the project to the finish line. They are:

- Town to hire tradesmen to complete all the other remaining deficiencies, e.g. trim, gutters, and continue the work on the steel brackets with the construction manager. The disadvantage, Michael said, is that we might end where we are now in the spring and still not have it resolved. There's no risk in the canopy falling down, but Michael noted that he just wants to put this project to bed and get it done right. The other disadvantage is that Rob would have to be responsible for managing all the tradespeople. And, if we did that, Michael said, we should take the 3.5% management fee and redirect it to Rob.
- The other approach, and this is the one that Michael and Rob prefer, is to put the whole thing (including the plates) out to bid with another contractor, with Rob keeping an eye on what gets done. Rob indicated that he's willing to do this, as long as there is an end in sight. He wants to get on with his life. We can use the retainage from the existing contract of about \$80,000 and there are about \$10,000 in unbilled work. The drawback here is that while he thinks that this amount is adequate to cover the remaining work, we won't know for sure until we bid it out. Under Vermont construction law, the original contractor is supposed to be responsible for the extra cost, if the remaining work exceeds the retainage from a contract terminated with cause. However, pursuing this extra money will likely involve litigation. If the original contractor balks at withholding the retainage, Michael said that he felt the Town had good cause for litigation, citing multiple deadlines that were not honored, the steel plating work that was deliberately not done because the construction manager told his people not to do it, not to mention that extra time incurred from the Town Clerk. We do not have an arbitration clause in the contract, but the contract is very clear about our right to hold the retainage.

Jan asked if we have a certificate of occupancy – the answer is yes. The board preferred the second alternative. *Motion by Alison Low, 2nd by Matt Choate to find another general contractor to complete the remaining work. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*

Greg Prior wanted to know if the Train Station Committee was still meeting. The answer is no. The committee disbanded after the Open House. Michael, Rob, Patty Conley, Laural, and Kate Whitehead continue to work on final details and bring them to the selectboard.

Finally, Michael reported that he and Michelle are working on closing out the last of the \$100,000 in grants, which will reduce the amount owed to the Building Fund to \$67,000. Finally, he reported that they are trouble shooting on the exterior lights at the Train Station, which are supposed to come on at night.

- **Laural reported on the Village to Village nonprofit:** She stated that she “100% agreed” with Michael that getting the Train Station open is a priority. In addition to being a benefit to the community, it will help the vendors be successful. She and Patty Conley have done outreach for volunteers to staff the station. So far they've lined up about 20 volunteers. The most successful outreach vehicle to date has been Front Porch Forum. She discussed the operating budget, which she has worked on with Michelle. It's about \$12,000, which is the same as last year. Costs would hopefully be covered by vendor fees, but also from fundraising. V2V hasn't done any aggressive fundraising to cover costs yet, just because it's a bit confusing for donors with the fundraising still going on for the Train Station. In the past few weeks, Laural received a Grass Roots grant in the amount of \$3,400, which will help them prepare for the costs for the Gear Shop. She also found that there is money in the VOREC grant that will help cover this. Potential costs include Square (used for purchasing with debit cards), inventory, shelves, etc. Patty's side of the Station will have some costs as well. They'll need toilet paper and supplies, and there are few grants that actually pay for operating costs, although the Grow Grant is one. Regarding the Pause Place, NVDA received a grant on behalf of the Regional Trails Council (the six towns in our region that host the LVRT). Laural has been in a request for picnic tables and bike racks. She's also spoken with Deb Stressing about putting up a porta potty in West Danville. The Chamber is covering the 20% match. Michael noted that we have approval from VTrans to put up the vintage railroad sign. Michael thinks that the donations that we have coming in now should be directed to operations on behalf of V2V, because the money that we need to raise to close up the construction gap will not be done in the community. “We can't go back out again” to ask for general donations for the construction gap. That should help eliminate the confusion. Rob asked about having an operating reserve in place. He didn't think it needed to be much. Michael said that this was already addressed because V2V has executed a lease agreement with the Town, and one of our grant funders has asked us to have a Capital Asset Replacement Fund, which will be the fund that Laural is establishing now. So, he thinks that we are pretty well covered. It's still a Town building, and in two years we will be required to maintain a separate line item for the budget. Greg had a question about the floodlights in question – Michael said that they are on the exterior. If Greg has a question about who should he check with? Rob, since he's talking to the electrical contractors. Greg also wanted to

know if the Grow Grant covered utilities. Laural replied that it would be except that the Town covers that. How are the heat pumps performing? Rob says that they are doing great. They are working beautifully, even in the cold winter.

6. Town Clerk (Michelle Leclerc)

- **Liquor Licenses** – None to report
- **Approval for Winter Carnival Sign on the Green:** Michelle received a request from Deanna Danielson for permission to post a sign promoting the Peacham Winter Carnival, January 24th to February 7th. *Motion by Eric Bach, 2nd by Glenn Herrin to approve the request to post a sign on the Green for the Peacham Winter Carnival, January 24 to February 7th. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*
- **General Budget:** See Issues and Information below

7. Highway Report (Keith Gadapee)

- Highway Mileage Certificate: Keith presented the [Highway Mileage Certificate](#), which must be certified by the Board each year by February 10th. There are no changes to the mileages or classifications.
- Highway Budget: See Issues and Information below

8. Issues and Information –

- A. **Scheduling and Planning for Informational Meetings:** Clayton Cargill asked the Board if it was possible to move the North Danville Informational Meeting to a Saturday. Board said that this was unlikely since the North Danville meeting was a longstanding tradition. Alison noted that the NDSA is now meeting at 6:00 p.m. rather than 7:00 p.m., so scheduling it an hour earlier was a possibility. The Board discussed last year's Saturday Informational Meeting. We had many new faces at the meeting at the Town Hall. Glenn shared a draft presentation that would be used for informational meetings.

Informational meetings are set for Saturday February 7th at the Town Hall Information Meeting at 12:30, and Monday March 2nd at the North Danville School, at 6:00 p.m.

The board also scheduled a special meeting for Tuesday, January 27th to discuss the presentation for the Informational Meeting, 5:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

There was also a question of who goes up first – School Board or Town? After some discussion, it was decided that the Town would go up first.

It was also noted that Alice Kitchel, TMD Showrunner, was looking for an assistant who can step in when she is no longer doing it. Clayton agreed to it.

- B. **Town Administrator Discussion – Job Description and Effective Date:** The Board checked the latest revised version of the job description. Jan confirmed with VLCT that it was not mandatory to post the job opening unless it's somewhere in the Town's policies. It's not in the Town's policies. The Board discussed making the job effective after Town Meeting Day, to make sure the budget passes. Keith noted that the Town needs to fill the Highway Supervisor position. The Board decided to discuss this at their regular February meeting (Feb. 5th). Glenn Herrin made a motion to accept the Town Administrator full-time equivalent position to replace the Selectboard Assistant position after Town Meeting Day. Matt Choate seconded the motion. *Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.*

Michelle asked about Audrey's laptop to see if IT could transfer all of Diane's files to it, since she has the oldest laptop. Agreed. Keith will keep his computer and switch the account from Highways to the Town Administrator role after TMD.

- C. **Disruptive Behavior Policy:** Matt asked to have this discussion tabled for the next meeting
- D. **Reserve Funds Policy:** Glenn presented a draft policy regarding accounts and how the Selectboard uses them to balance budgets and avoid tax fluctuations. The Capital Project Reserve Account is a Reserve fund that was specifically created by the voters at Town Meeting in 2024. The Board decided to change this policy to "Special Purpose Funds" so as not to create the impression that all of these listed all reserve funds. We will need to go back and look through the Policy on that Reserve fund that was adopted in 2024 to eliminate conflicts and consider if it can include the set-aside created for Infrastructure. Town Building fund is to cover improvements to all buildings, including the WWTF building, and we can have the Sewer fund move funds back into the account as needed, since the latter is funded by user fees. The policy can be changed as needed. FD Dept. Equipment fund covers only equipment (generally over \$25,000) but not the building. Same for the Highway Equipment Fund. The latter may fluctuate more because it's on a 10-year cycle as opposed to a 15-year cycle. This will be on the agenda for next meeting, and there is a slide that addresses it in the TMD Informational Meeting Session presentation.
- E. **AARP Challenge Grant:** The Town applied for it last year, but the timing might be better now that the Town Services Committee has addressed pedestrian safety, and the Town has held a walk audit, and committed funds at Town Meeting Day. There are three kinds of grants: Flagship (up to \$15K), microgrant (\$2000 for technical assistance), and demonstration grant (things that can be replicated on other towns. What the Town went for last year aligned with the Flagship Grant, and it was intended to identify and implement traffic-calming methods on

Hill Street and on the Peacham Road. The request was \$11,000, with some soft match. Since the Town Services Committee focused on the gateways it might make sense to apply again. The webinar is on January 27. Alison would like to attend the webinar and come back at next meeting with a proposal.

- F. **Town Meeting Articles:** We don't need to warn an article for moving surplus. The Article regarding the Town engaging with the Fire District, according to VLCT, does not need to be warned. There was some discussion about how to list this. The Board agreed that the Article could be listed as an "Advisory Only" article. It was also recommended that someone from the Prudential Board attend the Informational Meetings. There was a question about "any other business." Clarified that it was non-binding, but a good idea to keep it in.
- G. **Finalize Municipal and Highway Budgets:** These had already been reviewed by the board when reviewing the articles pertaining to the budget. Members of the board double-checked the numbers from the budget to ensure that they matched the figures on the articles.
Glenn Herrin made a motion to set the General budget for operating expenses of \$1,031,542.83, of which \$842,989.33 should be raised by taxes and \$188,553.50 by non-tax revenues. Eric Bach seconded the motion. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.
Glenn Herrin made a motion to set the Highway budget for operating expenses of \$1,706,799.22, of which \$1,289,222.21 should be raised by taxes and \$417,577.01 by non-tax revenues. Eric Bach seconded the motion. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carries.

Financials: These were already signed

9. Adjourn – Motion by Alison Low, to adjourn at 8:17 pm.

Minutes taken by Alison Low submitted January 19, at 4:27 p.m.