

Danville Town Services Committee Decision Making Template

4/29/25

6/10/25

Intent and Purpose: The intention of the Town Services Committee is to provide recommendations to the Selectboard on whether the proposed service should be provided by the Town of Danville. This template provides guidance in recording and presenting information as part of a decision-making process to identify key information and determine possible options, rather than starting with a given course of action in mind.

Task Analysis Stage - Proposed Service Evaluation

What is the proposed service being reviewed? This section should clearly state the decision that must be made. A brief, high-level description.

Proposed Service: Fire District - Danville Fire District #1

Task Analysis Stage - Gather Information

What do you know? Key information items that are important and/or relevant to deciding about the issue; some things cannot be known. Ideally run down as many initial assumptions as possible and turn into facts. Outline Format.

- Danville Fire District - Future operation, management and maintenance

Facts and Assumptions:

- Includes 317 acres, pump house tank + steel

map ID: TH014-04100

Total Property Value = 4802,900

- Natural Resource providing water to 214 Danville residential and commercial buildings including the school.

- Location - 672 Kittredge Rd

- History - open reservoir that would need a treatment facility - instead a well was drilled in 1995 and 3 phase power + pump house installed. Electricity needed for pumping water into the tank and then gravity fed to users. (Generator kept at fire station in power outage situation)

- Upgraded 4" pipe to 8" pipe to Danville Green and Hill Street

- New pipe needed on peacham road, Broward Mountain View and Walden Hill - 4" → 8" - not urgent but will be an expensive project. Quote 2018 \$2,997,000 for piping project

- Current Board members - Tim Ide, Ken Leslie, Jerry Fontaine. Looking to step down and need plan in place for transfer of the management, operations and maintenance of Danville Fire District 1

- Fire Districts exempt from property tax

Financials

self sustaining system w/ current revenue + expenses

- Revenue - \$127,461.74

- Expenses - \$127,268.73

Current Bond matures

11/01/2038

Rates - \$220/20/year residential

Rates for businesses use a formula and school has a special rate.

Last rate increase was "at least 5 yrs ago" discussion to increase rate to \$250/20/year and for businesses in Dec 2025

Further Research and Facts

- Town wells have a well protection area (aka source protection area) - radius around which is protective and cannot be developed.
- There are 317 acres within The Fire District - there are acres which can be subdivided and sold to help raise money for projects / expenditures if needed
- Power to tax - typically less resources than a town
- Marty's will be hooked on w/ their expansion → increasing usage. There is capacity
- MTAP grants available to help fund municipal projects
- Pump runs on average 4 hours / day
- Pump House does require daily inspection to ensure no issues and check tank security. For example, and this is not the norm; usage was up and they needed to shut down a section which has known tender pipe. The fire district is not responsible for replacing this pipe. It was an add on and so for usage is back to average.
- 2024 VT Statute Title 24 - Municipal & County Government Fund - Hardship Means
- Water is high quality and regularly passes testing. It does require any treatment and currently there is no chlorine or fluoride added. Short term chlorine was needed after last tank cleaning when it tested at higher levels. All is resolved.
- Valuable Natural Resource provides high quality clean, untreated water to 214 Danville residents + businesses + Danville School
- Danville Town Clerk currently responsible for sending water bills twice a year (Done 6/30 and 12/31)
- Danville water rates much lower than many other water districts
- Barnet Village Fire District #2 - rate \$1000/year (\$250 quarterly)
used to cover bonds for leaking pipes

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Brainstorm & Evaluate Options - Develop and Compare Options

After Task Analysis to ensure alignment and to clarify the ask. Developed Options are ALL reasonable general approaches to handling the issue. Cross out any excluded options with a brief reason why they didn't pass a FAST test: Feasible / Acceptable / Suitable / Timely. For each option, explain the option in detail, then bullet benefits and risks (positive and negative) for each option. Next, compare options by creating comparison criteria and compare them to narrow. Outline Format.

Developed Options:

- ① - Status Quo - Find people to replace current board members and take on management and operational responsibility.
 - Thus far no one has offered or shown interest. In other fire districts, this has typically been taken on by a water user to keep the fire district operational and often to prevent the water district from private purchase.
 - Historical record of issues + rate increases (unsustainable) with private purchase.
- ② Town of Danville to take over management + operations of fire district. Currently the Danville Fire District is financially self-sustaining. (2024 close rate increase discussion).

Compare Options:

- No urgency for further spending at this time
 - 7 year old quote for pipe upgrade was ~\$3,000,000
 - Current Bond Matures in 2038
 - Land sale from fire district property would help cover costs + put property back on tax payments to town
 - Town Clerk already doing billing (2x/year) and financials
 - Town takes on responsibility for emergency - MTAP and HazMat ^{available} loans
- ③ ~~Private Sale / Privatize~~ - NO GO - Fails The FAST test
 - Historical precedent for disaster to water users including unsustainable costs, and loss of water access.
 - privatization limits public accountability
 - Primary objective becomes profit, accountable to stockholders not the people they serve. loss of public input.
 - ultimately loss of public control over essential services monopoly.

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Selection – Refinement and Recommendation

After Option Development, come together to validate the options and confirm recommendation(s); refine details, costs, proposals. Summarize recommendation to the TSC –include nuances, especially of sub-options, for presentation to the Selectboard. Reference back to specific option recommended and the reasoning for the recommendation. Narrative and outline formats.

Refinement of Recommendation(s)

TSC Recommendation(s) to Selectboard:

Submission Date:

Selectboard Feedback/Comments:

Revision History

If TSC or Selectboard respond with revisions, please track below to ensure that everyone is up to date.

***End Template - Rev. 4/29/2025sla*

