

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

March 23, 2026

In Attendance: Tom Howrigan, Brian Dubie (via Zoom), Ron Bocash, Damian Branon, and David Persons

Roads: Maurice Jettie

Interim Town Clerk: Linda Hodet

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Secretary: Melissa Manson

Visitors: Matthew Hughes, Charles Mudgett, NWATV, Michael (on Zoom), W.H. Morey, Julie Wolcott, Catherine Dimitriuk

Meeting Called to order at 7:01pm

1. W.H. Morey came to discuss his concerns with the Town's land map of his property. Linda advises that Mr. Morey has spoken with her about his concerns and has been advised that he needs to have the land surveyed if he believes there is an error. Mr. Morey has declined to survey the property but still disagrees with the total acreage. David says the Selectboard will look into this more and reach out to Mr. Morey.
2. Maurice reported that all equipment is back in service. The DEF pump was the issue on the new truck. Cathy reviewed the invoices and determined that the washing and towing was not included in the warranty but the other \$20K was covered. Salt delivery was received today despite the salt shortage. Chloride price not finalized yet. Some grading has been done as the frost comes out of the ground.
3. Cathy talked to District 8 and found out that the road grants ranking system has changed to include factors like number of culverts and miles, which should benefit Fairfield's chances of receiving class 2 road grants. Discussion re paving grant. Suggest that we start with North Road starting at VT Rt. 36 and going as far as possible. Cathy will apply for the paving grant for this.
4. Two bids received from other lawyers to draft easements for McKenzie Rd. Discussion tabled.
5. Grants In Aid Letter of Intent to participate in the 2027 grant cycle is due- the state offers \$27K (\$6K cost share).

Ron made a motion to authorize Cathy to sign SFY27 Grants in Aid letter of intent to participate. Damian seconded. All in favor.

6. Josh, Friends of Northern Lake Champlain said they received the grant the Town collaborated with them on applying for to improve runoff issues at Fairfield Pond beach and the boat launch. Cathy to bring details when they have a contract, if there is a costshare. Brian was told that nothing was needed from us.

David made a motion to enter executive session with Cathy, Linda, Matt and Charles to review resumes for the Town Clerk position. Damian seconded. All in favor.

7. "Michael" was removed from the Zoom for the executive session. Michael did not respond to verbal or chat message and did not return after the executive session.

David made a motion to exit executive session. Ron seconded. Discussion only. No decisions.

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8. Linda asks who will be the tree wardens? SB as previous.

Ron made a motion to approve the minutes. David seconded. All in favor.

9. Northwest Fiberworks need 2 board members. Ron and Cathy will stay on the board.

David made a motion to reappoint Ron and Cathy to Northwest Fiberworks. Damian seconded. All in favor.

10. Workers Compensation audit is complete except for one contractor who has been hard to get a signed non-employee form back from. David will contact him.

11. Ads for Town Clerk complete. Resumes received.

12. The structures grant for the North Road culvert and paving are due in April.

13. Cathy is working on the formatting of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Formatting should be complete at the next meeting, then Cathy will look into the Cost Benefit Analysis.

14. Julie Wolcott came to discuss the Community Center lease. Reviewed the current lease and discussed changes regarding mowing and plowing. All agree the lease is ready to sign. The Community Center is planning some work on the driveway to even and create a permanent spot for the dumpsters. Would the SB entertain the thought of making School St. a one-way? Need some signage. Looking for a grant to paint the roof. The SB is happy to work with the community center on the parking lot.

15. Brian gave an Act 181 update. Brian was unable to get a satisfactory definition of “existing road”. Most of Fairfield land would fall under the act’s Tier 2 & 3 designations. There is a rally at the Statehouse 3/24 at noon. Catherine Dimitriuk, NRPC came to answer questions about Act 181. Catherine described the regional planning part of Act 181 but stressed that the future planning work that has happened with NRPC for 50 years, was not intended for this political issue. There are still many unanswered questions about how this legislation will be executed. Potential for implementation to be delayed until 2030 to allow time for those answers. Voting on delaying the Act will happen Wednesday in the Senate. Fairfield can still opt into Tier 1 later if desired.

16. Discussion re bridge priorities. The Secretary of Transportation supports us swapping the priorities of Chester Arthur bridge over Paradee bridge. Cathy will write a letter to Secretary of Transportation requesting this change. Brian asked for the timeline. They will get back to him.

Brian made a motion to have Cathy send a letter to the Secretary of Transportation changing the priority of bridge construction to Chester Arthur Road over Paradee Road. Ron seconded. All in favor.

17. Cathy asks how to update the personnel policy if the SB wants to offer time off to the newly formed Town Clerk position. She offered suggested wording. Discussion followed regarding how to change the policy so there is more opportunity to negotiate instead of using the suggested wording. Cathy will bring another draft that removes the suggestion and, instead, states “unless otherwise negotiated”.

Ron made a motion to approve the warrants. Damian seconded. All in favor.

Ron made a motion to adjourn. Damian seconded. All in favor.

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