

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

May 27, 2025

In Attendance: Tom Howrigan, Ron Bocash, Brian Dubie and David Persons

Roads: Maurice Jettie

Town Clerk: Not Present

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Secretary: Melissa Manson

Visitors: Damien Boomhower

Brian made a motion to amend/accept the minutes of 05.12.25. Amendment to item 6. David Howrigan requests the Selectboard to improve the segment, vs. reclassify it to class 4, to avoid any impact on the future sale-potential of his land “and enhance the agricultural utilization of the property.” Ron seconded. All in favor.

1. Damien present to discuss a recreation purchase of a Portable Scoreboard. The treasurer requires a motion to approve the purchase, prior to her signing the warrant to pay. Because Rec. no longer has meetings with minutes, Cathy asks for the Selectboard to make this motion. Ron asks whether there is money in the budget for the purchase. Cathy says there is. Selectboard discusses how the purchase falls into the purchasing policy and requests recreation note that purchases between \$2K-\$10K require prior approval from the Selectboard.

Ron made a motion to approve the purchase of the scoreboard for \$4,813.15 Brian seconded. All in favor.

2. Damien gave an update on work being done on the dugouts. Brian and Tom say thanks from the Town for all of the Damien has been doing. Discussion of cost savings with some materials donated. Damien would like to choose a low-cost contractor to complete finish work

Ron made a motion to approve for recreation to engage a contractor to complete the finish work on the dugouts, not to exceed \$3K. David seconded. All in favor.

3. Cathy says the Common School Planning Group (CSPG) met last week. Cathy was on vacation and Ron was unavailable, so no update was provided. David asks who will use the building. Cathy said the CSPG identified that the Fairfield Community Center Association is interested in using the space for expanded afterschool and summer opportunities. The CSPG also determined that some space could be used for a money generating purpose.
4. Maurice reports that Green Mountain Power moved a power pole to lift the wires so the loader can access the shed. Green Mountain Power and Consolidated will come to move the wires.
5. The road crew are starting culvert replacement work on Chester Arthur Road next week in preparation for paving later this summer. No date yet for paving. Cathy asks if the Selectboard wants the culvert replacement expenses on Chester A Arthur to be coded as paving project expenses again, or construction? The Selectboard says it should be coded as construction this time because the entire paving budget, plus more from a CD, will be used for paving this year.
6. NRPC is doing an inventory of hydrologically connected road segments this year and agreed to include culverts to this inventory. This project is covered by a grant excluding a 20% match.

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7. Pre-project scoping for Grants-in-Aid needs to be done and approved before any work takes place. All work for this grant needs to be completed by September.
8. Better Roads Grant for \$60K, to be used on McKenzie Road to replace culvert and improve ditching as suggested in the Pond Watershed Action Plan, is still pending. Cathy suggests that if the grant does not come through an application could be submitted to the Stormwater Mitigation grant due in September. She also suggested that the Selectboard may want the grant concept for the Stormwater Mitigation grant to include improvements to the beach and boat launch's drainage, rill erosion and runoff issues also identified in this Action Plan.
9. Since January. Cathy has secured \$46,250 in grants so far this year, and another \$72K is still pending,
10. Discussion of coordinating getting estimates for blow insulation for the Garage. Efficiency Vermont may be able to reimburse this expense. Cathy will look at the garage's energy efficiency walk through to see if they identified insulation as an issue and find out whether blown insulation for the garage is a reimbursable expense. Brian and Mo will coordinate getting a contractor in to look at the project for an estimate.
11. Furnace has been installed in the garage as well as a new eye-wash station.
12. Cathy highlighted several potential grants but requested that the Selectboard determine what projects they want to complete first, and then she can look for a grant to do it. Discussed a variety of possible grants and projects and how they might match up. The Selectboard wants to prioritize roads. Cathy says she also expects that the CSWG will identify grants that they will propose to the Selectboard. One project highlighted was shifting of the road at the Pond beach to improve safety, as this may work for multiple grants (recreation, transportation alternatives, pedestrian safety, Land and conservation, etc). Cathy to investigate further.
13. David will connect with James Monette to see if he is interested in attending the Vermont Local Roads training in Georgia next week, to for technical training scoping projects, etc.
14. Cathy distributed an email from Sean Howrigan requesting improvements to Menard Rd.
15. Cathy reports only one bid has been received in response to the properties for sale. A few interested parties have expressed concern about the ability to develop seemingly landlocked parcels and the requirement for 200 feet of road frontage. Bid opening will take place in the next meeting. Depending on results, a new strategy and further investigation may be needed.
16. Discussion about Cathy's office hours. Decision that Cathy will post the office hours she is available by appointment, noting that she is not always in the office during these hours due to her meetings schedule. The front door is locked when the Town Clerk's office is closed.
17. Brian called NEMRC. They are paying a legal bill.

Brian made a motion to approve the warrants. David Seconded. All in Favor.

David made a motion to enter executive session to discuss a personnel issue. Gavin seconded. All in favor.

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David made a motion to exit executive session. Brian seconded. All in favor. No decisions

**David made a motion to enter executive session to discuss a legal issue. Brian seconded.
All in favor.**

Gavin made a motion to exit executive session. David seconded. All in favor.

David made a motion to ratify the motion from November 13, 2023, authorizing Cathy to submit a notice of intervention on the Howrigan Wind Farm case with the PUC. Ron seconded. Tom, Ron, David in favor. Brian abstained. Motion carries.

Brian made a motion to adjourn. David seconded. All in favor.