

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

July 13, 2026

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

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Visitors: Erik Bushey, Beverly Soyachak (Zoom), Skip Lisle (Zoom), NWATV

Meeting Called to order at 7:01pm

1. Agenda reviewed and accepted.
2. Erik Bushy, a resident of Fairfield, discussed a culvert, by the road near his house, that often has beaver activity handled by the road crew. He suggested the Town consider a “Beaver Deceiver” alternative. Brian acknowledged the importance of beaver management and said he and a Town road crewman attended a VTRANS training on best practices. Skip, the inventor and builder of Beaver Deceivers, and Beverly, of the VT Beaver Collective presented this option. The Selectboard requests information be given to Cathy so they can discuss this with the Road Crew.
3. Cathy shared the Town Clerk’s report: August 11’s Primary Election was warned and posted. Absentee Ballots are available.
4. Cathy shared that a resident of New St. is concerned about traffic speeding on the road, asking for speed bumps or some other way of slowing down traffic. Tom will see what type of signage there is on the road. Cathy will check the ordinance. The Selectboard will have Mo order speed limit signs if needed, so speeding can be better enforced.
5. Fuel Bids were received from Clarence Brown Stewarts Shops Corp. (Rack price 3.33 and 3.69) and Blouin Bros Oil (Rack price 3.1045 and 3.4698).

Ron made a motion to accept the Blouin bid. Damian seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

6. Mower Bids are all in: \$181,354 Pete’s Equipment, \$187,745 Champlain Valley Equipment and \$190,693 United Ag & Turf. The Selectboard tables this discussion until Mo is present.
7. Paving on North Rd is complete. David asked about when it will be striped. Cathy says the state usually has a 2–3-week turnaround after she tells them and the center is marked.
8. Cathy worked with James and Mo to submit the pre-approval paperwork for Grants-in-Aid. They scoped out improvements to Gerbode road segments and Chester A Arthur Rd, near that intersection. The plan is to improve these sections of the roads and to install 2 new culverts.
9. The Selectboard reviewed a letter from Bill Kittell, who is concerned about the town’s power pole flags’ angles, flag lighting and displays. The Selectboard discussed this and will keep the flags as-is. Pruning of bushes near the Town Clerk’s office flag corrected the lighting issue there.

Ron made a motion to approve the minutes of 6/22/2026. Brian seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

10. There have been no further updates or requests regarding Bradley Cemetery.
11. Sweet Hollow Road paving is scheduled to take place when Swanton paves their section, in August- dates TBA.

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12. Cathy reports that she has received multiple public records requests from real companies phishing for information for marketing, over the past 10 days. These take time away from Town work to respond to. Cathy's research shows that this is happening all over the state of VT and discussions are happening about whether the Public Records Act can be revised. The Selectboard directs Cathy to ask legal counsel about how to proceed with future marketing company requests- if lawyer is ok with us not responding, then the Selectboard is ok with not responding. Brian suggests the Town have a policy about this.
13. Cathy completed second quarter reports and taxes, and State Fiscal Year updates to NEMRC.
14. The Town's work on the 2025 Audit is substantially complete.
15. Cathy submitted Fairfield's Municipal Compensation and Benefits info to VLCT for their report.
16. Cathy completed registering the Town with CobraHelp, who will administer the Town's health insurance continuation. This is to be in compliance with the State of VT's requirement that individuals be able to temporarily keep their employer-sponsored health benefits after a qualifying event. The Town lost the previous "Cobra" administering company because the number of employees with Health insurance through the Town is under 20 people. Cathy researched with BCBS, VLCT, and our Life insurance carrier (NIS). Out of all the referrals they made to companies, only two carry a Mini-Cobra option/ will serve orgs under 20 people on Health insurance. Cobra Health was less expensive at \$18 per month (\$216/yr) with no setup fees, etc. CSOne Benefit Solutions' annual fee was \$495 plus charges at qualifying events, etc.
17. Cathy will be out of the office August 26-28.
18. Cathy presented the July-September income over expenses chart and suggested the Selectboard take out a Tax Anticipation Loan of \$175,000 at a rate of 2.25% with People's Trust Company. Brian asked how this request is in alignment with previous discussions about spending down the Town's surplus. Cathy explained that the banking revenue and expenses reconcile with our accounting, which keeps track of our annual budget and spending over the course of a year. With big projects coming due before we have collected taxes or can draw down on our approved grants, the bank account balance needs to be replenished. She said Amanda reviewed this request with Cathy prior to the meeting and agrees.

Ron made a motion to take a \$175,000 Tax Anticipation Loan at 2.25%. Tom Seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

19. Cathy reports that she is reaching out to Shaun at NRPC to look at the Hazard Mitigation Plan. She requests that there be an invited discussion/ presentation of the plan on the Selectboard's September 14th meeting day. The Selectboard agrees.

David made a motion to accept the warrants. Ron seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Ron made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a legal matter. Damian seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

David made a motion to exit executive session. Ron seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.
Executive session was discussion only. No action required.

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

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