

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

June 22, 2026

In Attendance: Tom Howrigan, Brian Dubie, Ron Bocash, Damian Branon

Roads: Maurice Jettie

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Secretary: Melissa Manson

Town Clerk: Absent

Visitors: NWATV, Larry Lamore, Diane Ovitt Lamore, Richard Pelkey, Barbara Pelkey, Mike Boulterice, Sherry Boulterice, Harold Garrett, W.H. Morey, Bill Fairchild, Virginia Montague, Albert Morey, Michelle Frennier, Robin Yates

Meeting Called to order at 7:01pm

1. Large group of people attended the meeting to discuss Bradley Cemetery. Cathy gave an overview that the Bradley Cemetery Association is not overseen by the town but is a separate entity, which appears to be defunct. Based on her research, the remaining individual representing the association has two choices, either restart the association, with new officers or legally dissolve the association and transfer responsibility for the cemetery to the town. The Bradley Cemetery Association has \$15K in the cemetery fund, separate, and entrusted to the town over a decade ago to be held. Because the Association is inoperative, there is currently no approval method in place to withdraw and use the funds. The Selectboard's most recent request of the association for books/ accounting was in 2023, but none have been provided.
2. Albert Morey stated his concern that there is money in the fund, yet no mowing is happening. The Town stated that we have no authority over the association actions or funding. Cathy says that at least three people on the association, documented and with active participation, in good standing with the Secretary of State's office, are required to approve expenses, or the association needs to be dissolved for the money to be accessed by the Town for the cemetery's upkeep. Harold Garrett, of Swanton, said the cemetery looks amazing, since the awareness of its disrepair became public a few weeks ago—best he's seen it in many years. Tom said people who have been concerned by its state have stepped up. Mr. Garrett wondered how the situation could be fixed long-term. The two paths forward were restated: either issue documents necessary to legally dissolve the association or revive the association into good standing with the Secretary of State. Bill Fairchild says, "I am what is left of the Association. There are forms that need filing to reinstate or dissolve the association". Harold Garrett asks if the Town would take over if the Association was dissolved? Brian says "Probably, we've done it for other cemeteries." Michelle Frennier described her family's help in removing broken trees and is concerned about other trees that need cutting. Michelle thinks community outreach could handle the current needs. Cathy says that the energy in the room could form into a revived association. Brian reminds the group that the Town is not in charge of the cemetery, outreach, or planning and restated that the Town can't do anything with its upkeep until the association is dissolved.
3. Maurice says Pete's Equipment wants to submit a bid on the mowing tractor but haven't yet. We will wait to decide until we have 3 bids.
4. Town crew has been hauling sand. 3331 yards so far. 3K from Howrigan and the rest from Wrights. Maurice asks how the SB would like him to proceed. SB says use your judgement based on your time – take from both as it works for your crew. Moe says, with the chloride shortage, they have time to haul sand now.
5. Cathy said she received positive comments for the road crew when the most recent delivery of chloride was used on the roads.

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6. Ron asks that the beaver obstructions be removed from the dam at the pond, because it is getting clogged up again. Mo says Jake will go down with a backhoe.
7. Cathy says SD Ireland will be paving Sweet Hollow Rd for Swanton. They offered us a price of \$83.70/ton to pave the .42 mile of Sweet Hollow. Discussion followed on whether to pave the whole section or just a part. Brian requests that next year Mo provide reasoning for how road paving projects are prioritized.

Tom made a motion to pave all .42 miles of Sweet Hollow Rd. Damian seconded. All in favor.

8. Cathy said the Betsy Ross American 250th Celebration flag has been dropped off from the Vermont Covered Bridge Society. The flag needs to be placed on the East Fairfield Covered Bridge for July 4th, so one of these flags will be flying on all the 87 historic bridges in VT. The road crew will handle it.
9. The Fuel Bid documents is ready to go. Format is “Rack +” as is customary.
10. Cathy presents the Town Clerk Report in Demetrius’ absence. The vote tabulator has been serviced. Ballots have been received for the election. Demetrius attended a voter training. The “Remote Capture” from People’s Trust will be installed this week.

Brian made a motion to approve the minutes of 06/08/2026. Damian seconded. All in favor.

11. Cathy says the paving grant paperwork has been received. Structures grant paperwork should be on its way. This construction could happen next summer, but the grant term may be through 2028. There has also been progress on the easement for McKenzie Rd that had been delayed due to current use. Paradee bridge easement also has progress, with our legal counsel helping to move it forward.
12. Tom Ryan can fix the Town Offices generator for \$876 and will come in a couple of weeks.
13. The Historical Society will begin opening the downstairs collection on the weekends so the upstairs hallway door to offices will be locked. Keys to be given to all employees who need one.
14. Amanda reached out to Brian to discuss two items- the most appropriate way to use the proceeds of last year’s property sales (\$164K prior to accruing interest), and the use of the operating account’s Fund Balance. According to Amanda’s research there are two ways to use the property sales money. One is to include an article on the next Town Meeting warning for the town to vote on it’s use. The other way is to expend it transparently as part of a capital project or other expenses, to relieve the tax burden on voters for these types of projects. Potential projects should include infrastructure long lasting projects versus equipment purchases. Use of these funds would be documented in the operational budget and the Selectboard can point it out during their update at Town Meeting. Regarding the Fund Balance, Amanda recommends that the Selectboard make a plan to spend it down so it doesn’t get much more than \$500K. Cathy reminds us that the fund balance has accumulated over time and allows us to delay or avoid tax anticipation loans, which saves the town money in interest.

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

Brian made a motion to enter executive session for a legal matter. Ron seconded. AIF

Brian made a motion to exit executive session. Ron seconded. Information only.

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

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