State of Vermont — Chartered in 1781

MORRISTOWN

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
OF OCTOBER 6, 2025

Members: Don McDowell, Laura Streets, Richard Craig, George Cormier, and Leah Hollenberger

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Brent Raymond, Town Manager; Judi Alberi, Executive Assistant; Sara Haskins, Town Clerk/Treasurer; Kevin Petrochko, Assistant Assessor

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Jerry Throne, Jamie Jaret, Sheila Tarbox, Tony Cote, Tom Cloutier, Molly Pease, Patrick Bilow, Nancy Dunavan*

**participating via Zoom*

5:30PM - CALL SELECTBOARD MEETING TO ORDER

Don McDowell called the Selectboard Meeting to order at 5:33 PM at the Tegu Building. Don McDowell welcomed Leah Hollenberger to the board and congratulated her. Leah Hollenberger expressed that it was an honor and a privilege to serve the residents of the community.

5:31PM - AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

None

5:33PM - COMMUNITY COMMENTS

- Tony Cote noted improvements to the roads and expected paving the following day. He thanked those responsible and congratulated Leah Hollenberger.
- Tom Cloutier expressed growing concerns regarding the effectiveness and transparency of the administration, specifically citing the handling of a recent standard permit request by a local family to access a sewer line via a town right-of-way.
- Nancy Dunovan congratulated Leah. She raised issues concerning town costs and opposed any new taxes.

5:47PM - APPROVE MINUTES

1. **Approve minutes September 15, 2025**
   Motion made by Laura Streets to approve the minutes of September 15, 2025 with amendments. Motion seconded by Richard Craig. Motion carried (4/0/1) Leah Hollenberger abstained.

2. **Approve minutes September 22, 2025**
   Motion made by Laura Streets to approve the minutes of September 22, 2025. Motion seconded by Richard Craig. Motion carried (4/0/1). Leah Hollenberger abstained.

3. **Approve minutes Septebmer 30, 2025**

Motion made by Laura Streets to approve the minutes of September 30, 2025 with amendments. Motion seconded by Richard Craig. Motion carried (4/0/1) Leah Hollenberger abstained.

5:50PM - NEW BUSINESS

1. **On-The-Spot Award - Shane Blaisdell**
   Shane Blaisdell, a member of the Highway Department, was nominated by Jordan St. Onge for his continued volunteerism, including work during the recent RocktoberFest. The award recognizes his exceptional dedication to the community, his department, and his willingness to always help. The award includes a $50 gift certificate and a certificate, which is typically presented in person in front of his team.

   Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the issuance of the On-The-Spot Award to Shane Blaisdell and authorize Chair Don McDowell to sign on behalf of the Selectboard. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (5/0).

2. **Approve the Board of Listers Errors and Omissions Certificate - Cote Property**
   The Listers Errors and Omissions Certificate concerned Edward R. Cody (span number 41412910524). The certificate noted a change in the property value from $412,600 to $356,700, a reduction of $55,900. This was necessary because a 4.67-acre lot associated with the parcel had been sold but was not removed from the parent parcel value, meaning the landowner was still being taxed for it.

   Motion made by Richard Craig to approve and sign the Board of Listers Errors and Omissions Certificate regarding the Cody property as presented. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (5/0).

3. **Review and approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Library**
   Don McDowell read the final version of the MOU into the record for the Board and the public. The MOU intends to remove the library from the town's insurance coverage (VLCT PACIF) and discontinue the town's election of library trustees. Key commitments include: MCLA will procure insurance for library contents, workers' compensation, and directors and officers within 30 days; the Town will maintain liability and property insurance for the Library Building; and the Town will discontinue electing library trustees at annual town meetings starting with the 2026 warning. Town Clerk Sara Haskins stated that the practice of electing trustees was inconsistent with state statute for incorporated public libraries and was causing recurring issues during town meetings.

   Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the MOU with the MCLA as presented and authorize Chair Don McDowell to sign. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (5/0).

4. **Review and approve to remove Library Trustees from the town's election process**
   Motion made by Richard Craig to remove Library Trustees from the town's election process, effective at the signing of the MOU with the library and the chairperson of the board, and ensure the warning for the 2026 town meeting and subsequent warnings contain no provisions for the election of library trustees and authorize Chair Don McDowell to sign. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (5/0).

5. **Discussion and nominations for a Vice-Chair**
   Don McDowell addressed the board vacancy resulting from Chris Palermo's resignation approximately two months prior. The board waited until five members were seated to address the matter. The Vice-Chair's duties include replacing the Chair by preparing the agenda and running the meeting when the

Chair is absent.

Motion made by George Cormier* to nominate Richard Craig as Select Board Vice Chair**. ***Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (4/0). Laura Streets absent

Discussion: Laura Streets raised concerns regarding procedural transparency. She requested consistency regarding procedures and seniority, stating she felt insulted that she was not being considered despite her 10 years of municipal experience. She subsequently left the meeting.

Don McDowell refuted Laura's claims of backroom deals. George Cormier stated that he believes Richard Craig is the best fit for the role based on personal skills, organizational skills, empathy, and introspection. A skill set that is needed to run effective meetings. Leah Hollenberger also agreed that a certain skill set is required for the Vice-Chair role and would continue to support seconding the motion for Richard Craig.

Several community members spoke in favor of Laura Street's bid for Vice Chair, citing her seniority, institutional knowledge and commitment.

Richard Craig made several statements refuting the notion of a "good ole boys club" in the context of the Selectboard's discussion and nomination for the Vice-Chair position. Richard explicitly stated that the thought of a good ole boys club "doesn't have a place here." Richard made it clear that he is not, and has not been, part of any such "club", viewing the suggestion as an unfair and inaccurate characterization of his actions and motivations that causes him personal offense.

George Cormier and Leah Hollenberger supported acting proactively to elect a Vice-Chair now to ensure the board can function smoothly if the Chair is absent. The board confirmed that because Laura chose to leave the discussion, the remaining four members could proceed, and the motion carried.

6:30PM - OLD BUSINESS

None

6:35PM - APPROVE WARRANTS

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the warrants. Motion seconded by George Cormier . Motion carried. (4/0)

6:40PM - SCHEDULE

1. **Tuesday, October 7, 2025 - Special SB Meeting - Jeff Carr - 5:30PM**
   Monday, October 20, 2025 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM
   Monday, November 3, 2025 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM

6:45PM - OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Executive Session - Legal & Personnel**
   Motion made by Richard Craig for the Selectboard to go into executive session, finding that premature general public knowledge of the discussion concerning legal and personnel matters would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (4/0)

Motion made by Richard Craig to enter into executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E) and § 313(a)(3) to discuss legal and personnel matters, to include Town Manager Brent Raymond, Executive Assistant Judi Alberi, and Chief Jason Luneau. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (4/0).

Motion made by Richard Craig to come out of executive session with no action taken. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (4/0).

7:00PM - ADJOURN

Motion made by Richard Craig to adjourn. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried. (4/0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm
Submitted and filed this 10/6/2025.
Bonnie McDermott, Scribe

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Selectboard meeting.