



**SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
OF JANUARY 20, 2026**

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

Absent:

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

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Dan McLaughlin, Jamie Jaret, Martin Green, Evelyn & Jerry Throne

**participating via Zoom*

5:30PM - CALL SELECTBOARD MEETING TO ORDER

Don McDowell called the Selectboard Meeting to order at 5:30 PM at the Tegu Building.

5:31PM - AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

None

5:33PM - COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Jerry Throne announced a joint forum between the Stowe Land Trust and Conservation Commission scheduled for February 18th at the Wing Center. Laura shared information about Carissa Smith's death from complications of the new flu and encouraged mask-wearing.

5:47PM - APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes of 1-5-26

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 1/5/2026. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried with a roll call vote. (5/0)

2. Approve minutes of 1-9-26 Special Meeting

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 1/9/26. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried with a roll call vote. (5/0)

3. Approve minutes of 1-10-26 Community Meeting Day

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 1/20/26. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried with a roll call vote. (5/0)

4. Approve minutes of 1-12-26 Special Meeting

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 1/12/26 with amendments. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried with a roll call vote (5/0).

5:50PM - NEW BUSINESS

1. Tax Letter - Common Level of Appraisal dated 1-2-26

The Select Board discussed the impact of the new state education tax rate formula on local tax rates, with Sarah confirming it primarily affects education taxes rather than municipal rates. The board reviewed property assessment data, noting that while CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) is below market value, recent sales data suggest property values may be increasing.

2. Review and sign Letter of Support for Vermont Recreational Trails Program Planning Grant

The board approved a motion to sign a letter of support for a Vermont Recreational Trails Program Planning Grant, the result of a collaborative effort among the Morristown Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, and Morrisville Water and Light Department.

Motion made by Richard Craig to move to approve and authorize Chair Don McDowell to sign the letter of support on behalf of the Selectboard for the town of Morristown's application to the Vermont Recreational Trail Association (RTP) Planning Grant for the Morristown Trail Inventory, Assessment, and Connectivity Planning Project. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried by roll call vote (5/0).

3. Discussion and possible action — Discontinuing use of postmark date for property tax payments.

Sara Haskins, Town Treasurer, presented a proposal to discontinue accepting postmarked dates for property tax payments, requiring physical delivery to the town treasurer by the deadline. She cited issues with post office services and the availability of alternative payment methods. This will go into effect for November 2026 tax due date.

Motion made by Laura Streets to discontinue the use of the postmarked date for property tax payments, requiring physical delivery to the Town Treasurer by the deadline. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried by roll call vote (5/0).

4. Finalize FY 26/27 budget

Motion made by Richard Craig to finalize the FY 26/27 operating base budget in the amount of \$10,382,316, with \$8,913,048 to be raised by taxes. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried by roll call vote (5/0).

5. Review draft warning for Town Meeting

The board reviewed a draft warning for the upcoming town meeting. The Board also addressed a petition from PVCA regarding cemetery maintenance, which they determined was not obligated to include on the warning due to legal reasons. The Select Board discussed concerns about the Pleasant View Cemetery Association's (PVCA) financial management and ethical practices, leading to the termination of their fiscal and operational management in early 2025. A motion was made to approve a petition article for the annual town meeting on March 3, 2026, requesting the appointment of PVCA to manage the cemetery and allocating \$37,000 in town funds for this purpose. Despite support for PVCA's efforts, the board expressed the need to address legal and ethical issues, and the motion was defeated with all the selectboard members voting nay.

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the placement of the following petitioned article on the warning for the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for March 3, 2026. "Shall the legal voters of the Town of Morristown demand that the Selectboard appoint Pleasant View Cemetery Association, Inc. to provide care and management of Pleasant View Cemetery located on Washington Highway in the Town of Morristown for the purpose of caring for, maintaining, beautify and improving the Cemetery in the Village of Morrisville pursuant to the Articles of Association of Pleasant View Cemetery, Inc., dated January 21. 1915 and that the Selectboard allocate \$37,000 of Town of Morristown funds in the

next fiscal year to the Pleasant View Cemetery Association, Inc. for such purposes?" Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion failed by roll call vote (0/5).

The board discussed the order of articles in the warning, with a suggestion to move Article 7 to follow Article 3. The board approved the town meeting draft warning with a change to article sequencing and removed a postmark requirement.

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the draft warning with a change to article placements and remove the postmarked requirement. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried by roll call vote. (5/0)

6:50PM - OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion on Draft Local Option Tax Fund Use Policy

The Select Board discussed a draft policy for managing Local Option Tax (LOT) funds. Don thanked Brent and Judi for the creation of the draft policy. They agreed to publish the policy before the upcoming vote to inform voters, though it was noted that policies are not legally binding. A few minor tweaks were mentioned. The changes will be addressed and brought back to the next regular meeting.

7:10PM - APPROVE WARRANTS

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the warrants. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried by roll call vote. (5/0)

7:14PM - SCHEDULE

- 1. Monday, January 26, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM**
Monday, February 2, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM
Tuesday, February 27, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM

The SB Informational meeting is schedule for Monday, Feb 2, 2026 at 5:30pm

7:18PM - OTHER BUSINESS

Leah Hollenberger requested adding Formation of Recreation Committee to a future meeting.

7:20PM - ADJOURN

Motion made by Richard Craig to adjourn. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried by roll call vote. (5/0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm
Submitted and filed this 1/21/26.
Bonnie McDermott, Scribe

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

Postmarking Myths and Facts

Jan. 2, 2026

MYTH: How the Postal Service applies postmarks is changing.

FACT: The Postal Service has not changed and is not changing our postmarking practices, which have been consistent since we began moving away from hand-canceling every item at Post Offices decades ago. Postmarks are generally applied by machines at our originating processing facilities and will continue to be applied at those facilities in the same manner and to the same extent as before. Postmarks applied at those facilities will continue to contain the name or location of the facility that applied the postmark and the date on which the first automated processing operation was performed on that mailpiece.

While we are not changing our postmarking practices, we have made adjustments to our transportation operations that will result in some mailpieces not arriving at our originating processing facilities on the same day that they are mailed. This means that the date on the postmarks applied at our processing facilities will not necessarily match the date on which the customer's mailpiece was collected by a letter carrier or dropped off at a retail location.

As before, a customer can ensure that a postmark is applied to his or her mailpiece, and that the date on the postmark matches the date of mailing, by visiting a Postal Service retail location and requesting a manual (local) postmark at the retail counter when tendering their mailpiece. Manual postmarks will be applied free of charge.

MYTH: The Postal Service has long offered the postmark as a way of proving when mail was sent.

FACT: Customers have used postmarking for their own purposes, but postmarking is not and has not been a service that the Postal Service has provided to the public for such purposes. The postmark has always fundamentally existed to perform functions (including cancelation of postage) internal to Postal Service operations.

Customers who wish to obtain a postmark aligning with the date of mailing may request a manual (local) postmark at a retail location. Customers who wish to retain a record or proof of the date on which the Postal Service first accepted possession of their mailpiece(s) may purchase a Certificate of Mailing. Registered Mail and Certified Mail services also provide mailing receipts for individual mailpieces.

MYTH: The Postal Service didn't notify the public about this update to its language.

FACT: The Postal Service engaged in discussions with customer groups, posted information on our website, and initiated a public notice and comment period in the Federal Register in August 2025, which concluded when the Postal Service published its final notice on this topic, including responses to the comments received, in November 2025. Federal Register :: Postmarks and Postal Possession. The filing also includes details about our efforts to communicate this information with the public and various interest groups. The updated Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) language clarifies our practices so that customers who need a postmark, including a postmark with a date that aligns with the date of mailing, can plan accordingly.

MYTH: Postmarks show when and where the Postal Service took possession of my mail.

FACT: A postmark date does not necessarily indicate the first day that the Postal Service took possession of the mailpiece. Rather, it confirms that the Postal Service accepted custody of a mailpiece, and that the mailpiece was in the possession of the Postal Service on the identified date. Also note that the absence of a postmark does not necessarily imply that the Postal Service did not accept custody of a mailpiece, because the Postal Service does not postmark all mail in the ordinary course of operations and because occasional circumstances may arise where a legible postmark is not applied.

Again, if a customer wants to ensure that their mailpiece receives a postmark, and that the date on the postmark aligns with the date of mailing, the customer may take the mailpiece to a Postal Service retail location and request a manual (local) postmark at the retail counter when tendering their mailpiece. The manual postmark will be applied free of charge.