



**SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
OF JULY 6, 2026**

Members: Don McDowell, Richard Craig, George Cormier, Leah Hollenberger, Rose Belanger

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Brent Raymond, Town Manager; Judi Alberi, Executive Assistant

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Carol Lauber, Jerry Throne, Dan MCLAughlin, Laura Green

**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.

5:31PM - AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

None

5:33PM - COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Don thanked Judi Alberi and Adele Taplin for their work on the Fourth of July and the sponsors for the successful event.

5:47PM - APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes of 6-15-26

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 6/15/26. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (4/0/1) with amendments.

2. Approve minutes of 6-22-26 Public Hearing

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 6/22/26. Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried. (4/0/1)

3. Approve minutes of 6-26-26 Joint Public Hearing

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the minutes of 6/26/26. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried. (4/0/1)

5:50PM - NEW BUSINESS

1. Approve SP&F Attorneys, P.C. to conduct the Town's tax sale

Sara Haskins presented a request to hire SP&F Attorneys PC to conduct the town's tax sale, explaining that new state laws have made it more difficult to collect delinquent taxes.

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve SP&F Attorneys, P.C., to conduct the Town's tax sale process commencing in 2026. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (5/0).

2. Fireworks Permit approval - Kathy Demars private event 8-15-26

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the fireworks permit application submitted by Kathy Demars for a

private event at 279 Earl Gray Road on August 15, 2026 (rain date: August 16, 2026), and to authorize Don McDowell to sign the permit on behalf of the Selectboard. Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried (5/0).

3. Act 162 of 2026 - Vermont Forest Fire Warden Law change - Chief Dennis Digregorio

The Selectboard discussed a new state law, Act 162 of 2026, that requires fire chiefs to serve as fire wardens, with Denny, the current fire chief, expressing concerns about the additional responsibilities and lack of proper training for chiefs. Denny, who has nearly 40 years of experience as a fire warden and firefighter, agreed to continue in the role temporarily but emphasized the need for proper support and clarification from the state. Denny agreed to keep Brent, the town manager, informed and potentially bring the issue back to the select board for further discussion once more information is available from the state.

4. Morristown Police Department - 2026 Chevy Tahoe Review bids

The Police Department is requesting authorization to replace a 2020 Chevrolet Tahoe K9 Unit. This vehicle is six years old and currently has 90,000 miles. Historically, the police department has sought to replace front-line patrol vehicles every five years to ensure they remain mechanically reliable and capable of responding safely to emergencies. Replacing vehicles on a scheduled cycle helps reduce maintenance costs, minimize downtime, and maintain dependable service to the community. The proposed replacement vehicle is a 2026 Chevrolet Tahoe PPV (Police Response Vehicle). The quote from Key Auto Group for \$93,655.22 was recommended as the best purchase price.

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the purchase and outfitting of one 2026 Chevy Tahoe from Key Auto Group Inc. in the amount of \$93,655.22, and to authorize the Town Manager to select the most favorable financing option through the Town Treasurer's bid process. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

5. MOSA Exhibit - Carol Lauber & Saylor Ruggles

Carol Lauber of the Morrisville Alliance for Culture and Commerce (MACC) and Saylor Ruggles, the curator of the Morristown Outdoor Sculpture Art (MOSA) exhibit, presented their plans for the first annual MOSA exhibit, which will feature 3–5 local Vermont artists' sculptures located at five locations throughout Downtown Morristown. This is planned for August 5th through October 12th, 2026. Don noted that this art exhibit is a benefit to the town as a result of its achieving the Downtown Designation status.

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the Morristown Outdoor Sculpture Art (MOSA) exhibit to be held from August 5, 2026 through October 12, 2026, as presented by the Morrisville Alliance for Culture and Commerce. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

6. Presentation and Discussion - Proposed Morrisville Arts Festival (Spring 2027) - Averill McDowell

Averill McDowell, an art teacher wrote a proposal for a public art festival in Spring 2027, funded by a Roland Fellowship, which would involve PA students working with professional artists to create murals and installations in the community, culminating in a festival at the Oxbow. The Rolland Fellowship Grant will fund half the costs, and private business sponsors will support the other half. Averill is working with Carol from MACC and asked for the Selectboard's support. The Selectboard approved the concept and authorized Averill McDowell to continue planning the festival in coordination with Town Administration.

Motion made by Richard Craig to support the concept of the proposed Morrisville Arts Festival for Spring 2027 and to authorize Averill McDowell, in collaboration with participating Peoples Academy students, to continue planning in coordination with Town Administration. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried

(4/0/1).

7. Consider approval of Morristown Bike & Ped Scoping Proposal - VHB Civil Engineering/Consulting

Adele Taplin and Mason Kemmerer, a traffic engineer and Morrisville resident, presented the following report. The Town of Morrisville was awarded a VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Scoping Grant for the project, commonly referred to as the Morrisville LVRT (Lamoille Valley Rail Trail) Connectivity Improvement Study. The study will evaluate opportunities to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between the rail trail and downtown Morrisville, including the Portland Street and Pleasant Street trail crossings, key downtown intersections, and the Congress Street corridor. The study will identify conceptual alternatives, evaluate environmental and right-of-way considerations, estimate project costs, and develop recommendations for future implementation. The board confirmed that traffic calming measures would be included in the scope of the study. Brent thanked Adele and Mason for their work on the grant funding for this project.

Motion made by Richard Craig to award the contract for the Morrisville LVRT Connectivity Improvement Study to VHB in the amount of \$64,877, authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract, and approve an additional appropriation of \$14,877 from the Bridge, Sidewalk, and Infrastructure Fund. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

8. Noyes House Museum preservation project - Review proposal and award contract

The Selectboard reviewed Adele's report on the Noyes House preservation project and the construction contract for the Noyes House Museum Preservation Project with Ben Levitt, Timber Frame Restoration, for \$37,844, including a 15% contingency. They also authorized the town manager to execute the contract and approved the town's required cash contribution of approximately \$24,000, with \$8,000 in-kind services to be completed by the Highway Department. Adele procured a \$14,000 grant for the assessment. Brent acknowledged the Noyes House's value to maintaining the community's history.

Motion made by Richard Craig to award the construction contract for the Noyes House Museum Preservation Project to Ben Levitt Timber Frame Restoration in the amount of \$37,844, authorize the Town's required cash and in-kind contributions as presented, and authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

9. Laporte Road Sidewalk Project - Contractor Selection

Jordan St. Onge presented the sidewalk project overview for the Selectboard's consideration. This involves installing 680' of sidewalk and granite curb from the Feline Loop to Gordon Lane, and Audy Ln to Jersey Heights. There is currently no sidewalk along these 2 stretches of road, but there is sidewalks in between and beyond them. By filling these gaps in our sidewalk network, we will connect around 250 housing units to Downtown Morrisville via sidewalks. The project is fully funded through a Downtown Transportation Fund grant worth \$136,625, with \$85,000 in hard costs and the remainder in in-kind labor and equipment, resulting in a \$24,000 surplus for the general budget. There was no additional cost to the town. This was a complex grant that depended on the town's Downtown Designation status and was administered by Adele Taplin. Don thanked Adele for her work and noted that the contractor had been used successfully previously by Jordan.

Motion made by Richard Craig to award the contract for the Laporte Road Sidewalk Project to EEC Excavating for their low bid of \$81,700.00, and to authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

10. Recommendation to Transition Payroll and HR Information System (HRIS) Vendor to Paylocity

Tina Sweet, Finance, and Cyndi Wiltshire, HR, discussed transitioning to Paylocity for payroll and HR services, with an estimated annual cost of \$16,781.70 plus a one-time implementation fee of \$2,800. Tina explained that all data is now manually entered into their 3-year-old system. The new system will improve accuracy and significantly reduce labor costs. Both the payroll department and HR will benefit. Brent noted that the system would allow a dual payroll testing period starting in October before the full January 1st go-live date. The board approved the transition motion unanimously. Brent thanked Tina and Cyndi for their combined efforts.

Motion made by Richard Craig to authorize the transition of the Town's payroll and HRIS services to Paylocity and to authorize the Town Manager to execute a contract for an estimated annual subscription cost of \$16,781.70, plus one-time implementation fees. Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried (5/0).

7:10PM - OLD BUSINESS

None

7:11PM - APPROVE WARRANTS

Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the warrants. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried. (5/0)

7:15PM - SCHEDULE

1. **Monday, July 20, 2026 - SB Meeting - 5:30PM**
Monday, August 3, 2026- SB Meeting - 5:30PM

7:20PM - OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Executive Session - Labor Relations Agreement**

Motion made by Richard Craig to find that premature general public knowledge of the Town's strategy regarding labor relations and union contract negotiations would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage by revealing its negotiating position. Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried (5/0).

Motion made by Richard Craig to move that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) to discuss a labor relations agreement/union contract, and to invite the Town Manager, Finance Director, HR Director, and Highway Superintendent to attend. Motion seconded by Rose Belanger. Motion carried (5/0).

Motion made by Richard Craig to adjourn the Selectboard meeting and enter into executive session. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

Motion made by Richard Craig to reassume the Selectboard meeting at 7:35 PM. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried (5/0).

7:45PM - ADJOURN

Motion made by Richard Craig to adjourn. Motion seconded by Leah Hollenberger. Motion carried. (5/0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm
Submitted and filed this 7/8/26.
Bonnie McDermott, Scribe

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