

Franklin Selectboard Meeting
April 15th, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.
Town Office/Zoom hybrid

Members Present: Dave Bennion, Brooks Sturtevant, Michael Grant- arrived late, Jay Hartman, Justin Rainville

Guest: Lisa Larivee-Town Clerk

Virtual: Jordan Bushey- Asst Town Clerk, Jeremy Barnum

Meeting Called to order: at 6:04 pm by Dave; pledge of allegiance said.

Agenda amendments: Add to town clerk concerns: Vermont OSHA violation

Add to highway: 3rd truck/part time driver

Add to 5199 Main St: site visit for upstairs rental.

Public comments: None

Minutes: Justin/Jay made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 18 meeting. All members voted to approve; Jay noted to add "Towle" to Neighborhood Road for driveway permit. All members voted in favor; motion passed 4-0.

Liquor License board:

- **Marns LLC (winery) vinous consumption-** Marns LLC/Due North Vineyard is working on their licenses, and will get it submitted on the DLL portal soon. Brooks/Jay made a motion to approve the 3 licenses at 206 Skunks Misery Rd for Marn LLC. All members voted in favor; motion passed 4-0.

Highway Department:

- **Truck sale discussion-** the auction on Municibid is now closed, with the highest bid being \$22,100, which did not meet the reserve the town wanted to get. There were two people inquiring about the bid outcome, but Lisa did not disclose anything until talking to the SB. The trade-in offer with Charlebois was \$24,000, but the board would like it sold for more than that as we put repairs into it to sell. It is still listed on Facebook marketplace at \$45,000, but Jeremy will drop it to \$40,000, and will reach out to the highest bidder of the auction to discuss further a private sale by town. Lisa will officially close out the municibid listing.
- **Grant in aid FY27 letter to participate in program- NRPC agreement for assistance w/ admin work-** Every year, the Town is awarded roughly \$14,000-\$16,000 in Grant in Aid funding from the State to bring the hydrologically connected segments of roads that do not meet erosion standards up to standard. NRPC also offers municipal assistance with the administrative side of Grant in Aid duties. Justin made a motion to authorize the SB chair to sign the agreement with the State for Grant in Aid funding and NRPC for admin assistance. Dave signed. All members voted in favor; motion passed 4-0.
- **3rd truck running-** Jeremy has taken time off the last couple of weeks for sugaring and was needing the help with the spring road maintenance spreading stone/grading. At

some points, three drivers were out at the same time, which Jeremy said was very helpful. Justin is worried about the budget, and the potential for damage to the truck while trying to sell it.

5199 Main St:

- **Bournes Energy- LP vendor discussion-** The Luce house was receiving fuel from Bournes Energy for the cook stoves/monitor heater at the time of purchasing the property. The most recent delivery of 10 gallons cost was \$5.60 per gallon. All other town buildings use Blouins for LP. Lisa doesn't see the point in having two vendors; will inquire about swapping to Blouins and tanks.
- **Porch grant/engineering full scope/grant discussion-** There was a meeting with FCIDC, NRPC, State Historic Preservation folks a few weeks ago to visit the 5199 Main St property and discuss funding for engineering scope, projects, etc. The current porch grant was discussed and the cost for the porch reconstruction. They were made aware of the cost hesitation from the tax payers for any work on the property at this time. Current historical preservation porch grant will cover 50% of the project, and they will work to find coverage for the remaining 50% with other sources, so there would be no cost to taxpayers for this project. If for some reason the property was sold within the next 5 years of completing the grant project, the town would need to pay back the entire grant (the town could add that cost to the sale price). If the Town retains the property after the 5 year mark, the grant coverage does not change. Board members want to go ahead with the project knowing there is no taxpayer dollars going forward with this. They still want to hear from the voters before starting any projects though. NRPC planning grant-for full scope/cost of restoration/conversion of the building; Lisa will apply for this fall. Reach out to historic preservation on match amount, and reach out to Brian for quotes for the replacement.
- **Rental agreement (downstairs) discussion-**
 - There were two people who showed interest; one was a Franklin resident, and the other hasn't submitted an application. The Franklin resident asked about bringing their little dog. The board would consider depending.
 - There needs to be a sump pump installed in basement; Jeremy has one they could use that is not currently being utilized, but he may need it next winter.
 - The whole downstairs area still needs to be cleaned before a tenant can move in.
- **Site visit at upstairs rental-** The rental agreement states the landlords may do monthly site visits, as long as there is a 24 hour notice. Brooks will give them notice for a date in May to make sure no town property is damaged.

Old Business:

- **Northwest Fiberworx/CUD withdrawal-** Lisa inquired on how to withdraw from the CUD. The town can leave the same way they joined per VCBB Attorney, which was done by a motion at a board meeting in May 2022 sent via email. Lisa will send them an email that includes the meeting minutes stating Franklin wants to withdraw. Justin/Brooks made a motion to withdraw from Northwest Fiberworx/CUD. All members voted in favor; motion passed 5-0.

Town Clerk Concerns:

- **Cameras-** Jordan and Lisa have been talking about getting security cameras. The idea is to have one outside the office door, one inside the office, and one outside the library

entrance. Maybe have one facing the rental property? Jordan found camera options through 'Ring' and 'Blink', but will look for something more affordable. There might be grants that cover security cameras through PACIF, but not the subscription.

- **Reappointment of NWSWD representative-** Jared Blake has already been appointed as Franklin's representative in March, signed the appointment form.
- **Vermont OSHA-** Franklin had an OSHA visit in late March, with a few violations noted. Highway buildings are required to have material data safety sheets on all products within the building. All the violations were fixed and addressed within the two week time frame, but there was still a fine of \$398. The town has 20 days to contest this fine, so Lisa will reach out to them on the option to get this reduced by 50%, as we responded timely to the violations.

New Business:

- **Town hall lights-**
 - John Ho, who plays pickleball at the Town Hall, is requesting new lighting. When they are playing on sunny days, the curtains need to be closed due to the reflection on the floor, and the current lighting is not bright enough. After this year, Efficiency Vermont will not give assistance for power/electric upgrades. The Town made improvements to the lights about 8 years ago, so are not looking to do that anytime soon.
 - John also asked if coat racks could be put up.
 - Can a bench be placed when you first walk into the door? People want a place to change their shoes without having to track dirt/snow inside. The board suggested getting a larger rug to put underneath the bench that's already inside.
 - Suggested some type of programable/timer on the thermostat so it sets to different temps throughout the day; there have been issues with the thermostat not being turned down after it is rented.
- **Water Dept line-of-credit approval-system upgrade work-** This project work will be reimbursed after submitting to the state; but reimbursement can take 4-6 weeks. The Water Dept would like to get a line-of-credit to cover costs. People Trust Company is offering a 2.75% interest rate for a 1 year term. The Water Dept needs approval from the SB before moving forward. Brooks/Jay made a motion to open a line-of-credit for \$743,750 with Peoples Trust Company of St. Albans with a 2.75% interest rate for a 1 year term. All members voted in favor; motion passed 5-0.
- **Village Cemetery mowing contract signing-** The maintenance cost is split between the Town and the church. Brooks/Justin made a motion to accept the contract with MMT Lawncare out of St. Albans for \$3270. All members voted in favor; motion passed 5-0.
- **Reappraisal agreement/contract- review and sign-**
 - Town has received the contract with NEMRC to start reappraisal work in July 2026, with an updated grand list lodging in June 2028. The amount is roughly \$109 per parcel, totaling \$111,120. Jay/Justin made a motion to accept the contract with NEMRC for the reappraisal starting July 2026. All members voted in favor; motion passed 5-0; members signed.
 - Reappraisal does not mean that property taxes will go up, house values change as a total increase to the CLA, but tax rates generally reduce making taxes level; the school rate is affected/calculated by the CLA. Some property values may even lower. The town will provide NEMRC with a 911 list, office space, etc and they will determine what properties will get looked at first.

Review bills and warrants: Done by board members

Treasurer's Report:

- **Budget review/cuts for FY27-** Board members discussed where they can cut \$40,000 from the budget.
 - Highway gravel budget is almost maxed out for FY26.
 - Paving money- Stanley Rd and Square Rd need to be paved soon. If the work gets put off, the roads will likely get worse, and may cost more in the future. Stanley will cost around \$166,000 before any grant funding. Square Road will cost around \$45,000.
 - Lisa and the board suggest reducing the equipment reserve fund by \$10,000, sheriff patrol by \$5,000 (½ hours of patrol), sidewalk reserve by \$5,000, paving by \$20,000. The board will think on this until the next meeting, and will approve cuts when a decision is finalized.
- **Town building projects-expenses & grants (15 years)-** Lisa put a list together of all Town buildings.
 - The Fire Dept. and Garage buildings had minimal work done.
 - Library building had roughly \$83,500 in building maintenance, with grants covering \$50,768.
 - Town Hall building \$140,700 with grants covering \$42,803.
 - Some of these costs may be lower if the town didn't have to meet historical requirements, but then the town would not get the historical funding. It seems that staying on the historical list is beneficial.
- **Highway financial plan- review/adopt-** State aid to highways contributes approx. \$120,000, as long as the Town contributes a certain amount of money (\$300) towards every mile of roads; Franklin meets that requirement. The financial plan needs to be approved by the board & submitted to the State. Board approved and signed plan.

Member concerns/Other business: Justin- Would like to dedicate the next town report to George Godin, and the board agrees.

Adjournment: Brooks/Mike made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.

The next meeting will be on May 6, 2026 @ 6:00pm at the Town Clerk's Office and virtual.

Respectfully submitted,
 Jordan Bushey, Asst. Town Clerk
 April 17th, 2026

These minutes are not official until approved at the next regular Selectboard meeting.

These minutes were approved at the regular Selectboard meeting on May 6, 2026.