

Selectboard Meeting - August 17, 2026 6:00 pm

Call to Order: 6:05 pm

Attendance: Joe Nolan, Linda Schmidt, Jessica Pendleton, Rob Viglas, John Phelps (by phone).
Also in attendance: Julie Robertson, Jay Wilson, Jim Henderson, Tanya and John Davis, Tom Santelli, Jessica Lewis. Minute taker: Jessica Lewis

Citizen Concerns

Tanya Davis states she has had 9 blown tires and damage to her truck over the last year. She states this week alone she has had 3 tires blown out. Joe states the Board has not heard these complaints from others, so he asked around to those he knows drive the roads frequently. He spoke to Rita the mail carrier who stated she had one tire blown out about a year ago when she was using 6-ply tires purchased on Amazon, and she has since upgraded her tires and not had issues.

John Davis says the State memorandum states gravel over 1" should not be used and currently the town is using 1¼-1½". Jay, Road Foreman, describes the Road Crew's plan to lay a base that will be ground up over time and covered with smaller gravel. John and Tanya state they don't think there's a binder in the gravel and they have experienced significant sliding. Tom Santelli says sometimes he experiences pushed-off large gravel on the side of the road that feels like rolling on marbles. John states the front and rear tires blew out on Wuerslin Road after it was graded last week, and they iterate that they are using high grade tires.

Rob asks if they are consistently going the speed limit, and the Davis' and Tom all state they go under the speed limit due to carrying heavy equipment. John asks if calcium chloride is being used. Jay says it is used when needed. Tom reiterates that the calcium chloride would help with the dust.

Jim Henderson suggests possibly sending samples of road material to VTrans for a third party opinion. Joe states he spoke to someone from VTrans today from West Rupert who travels Rupert Road daily and stated the Rupert Road is in good shape and he agrees with Jay's plan to lay a solid base before adding a top layer of smaller gravel.

Jay says it's a good idea to use 4-wheel drive on Wuerslin Road to avoid washboarding.

Jessica P. points out that based on the pictures she was sent by Tanya, the gap in the tread may be too large, and suggests tire insurance.

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Tom Santelli states there are other residents in town who have experienced popped tires. Tom states he knows the Road Crew is working hard, and that maybe there are just other things that need to be done. He said he thinks the material for the roads is too large.

The conversation becomes loud and chaotic, and John and Tanya abruptly leave the meeting.

Joe reads an email from VLCT in response to the situation stating that it could be useful to investigate the materials, and a claim can be submitted through VLCT, however the Town is protected through “sovereign immunity” from handling these claims independently, especially when only one resident is experiencing this degree of issues.

John Phelps responds by saying the conversation he was listening to via speakerphone was very chaotic, and as far as he was concerned as a Selectboard Member, the Board has a duty to listen to citizen concerns and he believes there was too much defensiveness on the part of Board members.

Jim states he believes the Board members were not being defensive, but instead just responding to behavior and communication that became disrespectful. Jessica P. states the behavior and communication started off in a disrespectful manner with texts she personally received on Sunday from Tanya.

On a final note, Jay states the Crown Maple trucks who drive fast up the road into Beartown have not been experiencing these issues. Jay spoke to a resident who has lived in West Sandgate for many years and the resident stated he did not experience tire problems, but instead his primary concern regarding the roads is the significantly increased volume of traffic in recent years, including box trucks and the damage they do to the roads.

As a next step, the Town will seek out an evaluation and possibly pursue a VLCT claim.

In further citizen concerns, Rob Viglas states that several residents have raised concerns about the Davis’s truck speeding in town, both near Wuerslin Road and on Rupert Road.

Cemetery Commission

Julie states the West Sandgate cemetery still needs an access road. One landowner offered a way to access but it would be a difficult entrance. Another neighboring landowner has previously allowed the Town to use an access point from his property to get the mowing equipment in, and

he no longer wants to allow this access. Julie says she thinks there's enough space to make a single lane driveway, and asks the Board to consider having the Road Crew look at the property and see if this is possible and if they could do this work. The Board agrees, and Jay will meet with Julie Tuesday morning.

Road Report

Jay states the Road Crew is currently working in Beartown on grant-funded work to replace culverts and stone-line ditches. They are also cutting brush and branches that could be dangerous during wet snow season.

The International truck was sold at auction for \$48,400.

Ongoing Business

- **Short-Term-Rental Ordinance**

Jessica spoke with the Zoning Administrator from Sunderland who manages their STR program and typed up the synopsis of their conversation and shared it with the other Board members. In short, he said it was a 4 year process with two years of writing the ordinance and 2 years of holding hearings and moving it through. The Board will review the notes from this meeting.

- **Drinking water at Town Hall**

John states he did drop off the water testing results at FW Webb but has not yet received word on a quote or recommendation for a system. John will reach back out to follow up.

- **MERP Grant Update**

The propane boiler is in over at the Town Garage. Blue Flame came to do an inspection today and determine where and how many tanks will go in.

Jay says the tank was taken out for the pressure washer, and the electric one was put in. Jay will gather quotes for a heated pressure washer they can use in the winter. This would be outside of the MERP grant.

2026-2027 Tax Bill/Local Agreement

The tax bills were sent out without the additional .0026% billed under the Local Agreement Rate. The total amount the Town will not collect from this Local rate is \$1500, and Jessica L. suggests using funds from state money that is available as surplus from previous years.

Joe motions approve using these funds, Linda seconds; all in favor.

Treasurer's Report

No issues raised.

Looking at the Constable line item in the budget, Rob asks if the Constable could be asked to approach citizens about speeding complaints. The Board agrees that this would be a reasonable request.

Approval of August 3rd Meeting Minutes

Joe motions to pass, John seconds; all in favor.

Orders Signed

Other Business

Regarding the dry hydrant on Chunks Brook Road, the property owner sent in her water testing results to Linda and the property owner was advised to speak directly to the fire department to move forward.

Phyllis will meet with BCRC on Friday to discuss mapping.

Linda offers to look for the Town charter to determine whether the charter specifies that the Town Clerk & Treasurer positions must be elected, and if it does not the Board can discuss at a later meeting whether to make these appointed positions.

Jessica motions to adjourn, Rob seconds; all in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 7:25 pm

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Lewis