

Selectboard Minutes

January 27, 2026

Present: Paul Kleinman, Chair
Letty Bedard
Andrew Artimovich
Jim Michaud
Bob Mantegari

At 6:00pm Kleinman called the Public meeting to order.

Mantegari motioned to approve the payroll & A/P manifest. Michaud seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Mantegari motioned to approve the consent agenda. Michaud seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Planning Board member Doug Marino was in to ask the Selectboard for their support on Legislative Bill 1294-FN that would reduce the speed limit on Route 125 to 45 mph. The Planning Board voted to support it at their last meeting and is hoping the Selectboard will as well. Mantegari made a motion, seconded by Kleinman, to support the Bill. All voted in favor. Town Administrator Stevens was asked to draft a letter of support.

Town Administrator Stevens presented a couple of items on behalf of the Assessor:

1. At last week's meeting the Board approved two abatements for two different parcels as well as a supplemental warrant for these parcels related to incorrect owner names on the tax bills. It was discovered that one of these tax bills was indeed paid on time by the current owner. Therefore, a revised supplemental warrant was presented to the Board removing the taxes for the paid property and only including the other. Mantegari made a motion to approve the revised supplemental warrant. Artimovich seconded the motion; all voted in favor.
2. A 2025 Municipal Assessment Data Certificate for the NH Department of Revenue Administration was presented for signing. This certificate is required as part of the State's annual equalization process. An equalization rate of 100 represents full market value. The Town's Assessor calculated Brentwood's rate at .9469. This falls within the DRA's acceptable range of .9 – 1.10 for a revaluation year. Mantegari made a motion, with a second by Bedard, to sign the Certificate. All voted in favor.

The Board reviewed a letter from a representative for Brentwood Dam Ventures, LLC. Brentwood Dam Ventures (BDV) is the owner of the dam on Mill Road. They recently secured an award of \$675,000 for the removal of the dam and restoration of the natural river channel. As part of the removal, BDV is required to convey the flowage rights or the entire property to a qualified entity. BDV is asking the Town to accept ownership of the property, or at least the flowage rights. The Board would like to invite them in to discuss the letter.

Stevens mentioned that she was approached by a resident regarding some large pine trees in a cemetery that is next door. He is concerned that they may fall down and hit his house/barn. It has been determined that it is not a town owned cemetery, it is a private cemetery. Kleinman recommends that the Town not get involved as would potentially open the town up to some exposure. Jim Hajjar, chair of the Cemetery Committee, said the Town does not maintain that cemetery. He said there are a lot of private

cemeteries in town and does not feel we should get involved as we don't want to set a precedent. The Board agreed.

The Selectboard reviewed warrant articles to vote whether or not to include them in the Town Warrant and/or if they were going to recommend or not recommend them. Stevens informed the Board that the Budget Committee has requested the vote count be included in their "recommend" or "not recommend" notation. The Selectboard agreed to do the same.

CRF: Multiple

1. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$160,000) to be added to the following existing capital reserve funds:

CRF Information Systems Hardware: \$30,000

CRF Revaluation: \$25,000

CRF Maintenance of Town Buildings: \$25,000

CRF Fire Vehicles: \$50,000

CRF Public Safety Radios: \$30,000

(Majority Vote Required)

Bedard made a motion, seconded by Artimovich, to approve the \$30,000 for Information Systems Hardware. All voted in favor.

Mantegari made a motion, with a second by Michaud, to approve the \$25,000 for Revaluation. All voted in favor.

Mantegari made a motion to approve \$25,000 to Maintenance of Town Buildings. Michaud seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Artimovich made a motion, seconded by Mantegari, to approve \$50,000 for Fire Vehicles. All voted in favor.

Bedard made a motion to approve \$30,000 for Public Safety Radios. Motion was seconded by Michaud; all voted in favor.

Artimovich made a motion, with a second by Mantegari, to approve the \$160,000 Warrant Article. All voted in favor. A vote to recommend was taken: Mantegari, Artimovich, Michaud, Bedard and Kleinman voted in favor of recommending.

2. Amend Special Details Revolving Fund

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Special Details Revolving Fund, established in 2009 pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, to eliminate the maximum accumulated cap of \$40,000, allowing the fund to accumulate from year to year without a specific limit, and to permit any currently accumulated Fund balance exceeding the prior cap to remain in the Fund.(Majority Vote Required)

Kleinman explained that the warrant article from 2009 that created the Special Details Revolving Fund also states that the Special Detail Funds shall not be considered part of the general fund. The question that would be, where any funds in excess of \$40,000 would then go.

Artimovich commented that the \$40,000 cap that was put on the Fund 16 years ago does not reflect today's cost of a new cruiser now. Artimovich moved to accept the warrant as written. Motion seconded by Mantegari.

Bedard would want to make sure that the townspeople did not foot the bill for details. She's concerned that monies paid to officers for detail work was never reimbursed from this fund. Stevens has done the transfer for 2025. Bedard asked if Stevens could make sure it was done in 2024. Stevens explained that the 2024 audit is still on-going and she does not want to make any adjusting entries that will affect or duplicate what they are doing. Mantegari feels we should not reopen, rehash and revisit prior years. We need to wait to see what the audit report, that we expect to receive by the end of May, says. Kleinman added that it's simply an allocation issue. He stressed that that is all it is; it is not an issue of malfeasance.

All voted in favor of including the warrant article. All 5 members voted in favor of recommending the warrant article.

3. The Board discussed the warrant article regarding Rubbish/Recyclables collection that they voted to include during last week's meeting. (Please refer to the 1/20/26 meeting minutes to read the full warrant article.) They reviewed a prototype informational postcard submitted by Casella that would be distributed. Jim Hajjar, Budget Committee Chair, read a letter he received from Gabby Kelly, Budget Committee member, regarding this warrant article. A copy of this letter is attached. Hajjar urges the Board to recommend this warrant article. The Board asked Stevens to ask Casella about having a container for cardboard and if the top of the residents' barrels need to be able to close. Michaud voted in favor of recommending the article; Artimovich, Bedard, Kleinman and Mantegari are opposed. The warrant article will Not be Recommended by the Board by a vote of 4-1.
4. Regarding the Warrant Article approved by the Board last week to add \$125,000 to the Municipal Building Capital Reserve Fund: Kleinman, Michaud, Artimovich and Mantegari voted to recommend the article; Bedard voted not to recommend it. It will be Recommended by a vote of 4-1.
5. A vote of 5-0 was taken to Recommend the Warrant Article to raise and appropriate \$350,000 for road repairs and maintenance.
6. The Board voted to Recommend, by a vote of 5-0, the Warrant Article to add \$8,500 to the Master Plan Expendable Fund.
7. A vote of 5-0 was taken in favor of Recommending the Warrant Articles for increasing the tax credit for service-connected permanent and total disability, increasing the elderly exemption, and increasing the disabled exemption.

The Selectboard voted on the following encumbrances:

- \$35,000 for salt from Morton Salt. Mantegari made a motion to approve, seconded by Michaud. All voted in favor.
- Artimovich made a motion to encumber \$3,365 for Plodzik & Sanderson's audit. Mantegari seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

The Board members shared Committee updates and Old Business.

- Mantegari informed the Board that the Recreation Department is looking to change its department name to Parks & Recreation as that would allow them to apply for more grants. They will be discussing that at tomorrow's Recreation Commission meeting.
- Kleinman mentioned that there is a Planning Board Public Hearing scheduled for Thursday.

- Artimovich mentioned that the Budget Committee hearing is Thursday, 2/5/26 at the Recreation Center.
- Michaud mentioned that the Highway Dept has been busy with the major snowstorm we had Sunday/Monday. He said they did a phenomenal job! He asked the residents to be patient during these storms where we get 2-3"/hour because it may be an hour or two before a truck can get back. Police & Fire were prepared for the worst.

Stevens updated the Board on some new policies she has put in place. All cash & check receipts are being processed through the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office where they are properly coded for the correct accounts the revenues belong in (including revolving accounts). In addition, expenses from revolving accounts are now being processed by the bookkeeping clerk and the expenses are being paid directly from these accounts without the need for journal entries.

Artimovich inquired about the Emergency Management vacancy. Stevens said she has a couple of candidates she needs to reach out to and the position will also be posted. Stevens added that she spoke with the Deputy Emergency Management Director Paul McFarland and he has no knowledge that the Seabrook Drill in early February will be taking place. He reached out to the State and they indicated that their funding has been cut drastically and that as of this point they're not aware of any upcoming Seabrook drills.

Kleinman opened the floor to public comment to which there was none.

At 8:40, a motion to adjourn was made by Mantegari and seconded by Michaud. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Stevens

Comments by Gabbie Kelly regarding Waste & Recycling Warrant Article shared by Jim Hajjar at 1/27/26 Selectboard Meeting

Public comment regarding the Warrant Article on manual versus automated waste and recycling collection.

This statement is shared in support of continuing manual collection for the full year, as outlined in the warrant article requesting funding to maintain the current system rather than converting mid-year to automated pickup.

The Trash Subcommittee has been working to evaluate the long-term future of waste and recycling services for the town. That work is not finished. A transition to automated collection is a major operational shift that affects safety, cost structure, environmental impact, and day-to-day logistics for residents and haulers alike. Making a permanent change now, before that analysis is complete, risks locking the town into a system that may not prove to be the best overall fit.

There are real tradeoffs that deserve fuller review. Automated collection can introduce safety concerns related to large equipment operating on narrow roads and in winter conditions. It can also create challenges for residents who may struggle with moving and storing large carts, particularly seniors and those with physical limitations. Other concerns include educating our townspeople on new limitations (aka 1 barrel and paying a rental fee for any additional barrel - and everything like recycling - having to fit inside the barrels). In addition, questions remain around long-term maintenance costs, cart replacement, contamination rates in recycling, and the environmental impact of heavier trucks and different routing requirements.

The subcommittee is actively working on scenario analysis that looks at multiple paths forward, including cost effectiveness, environmental considerations, service levels, and community impact. That work will allow the town to compare options side by side and make a well-informed decision, rather than a rushed one.

Supporting this warrant article does not mean rejecting change forever. It simply allows the town the time needed to do this right, with data, public input, and a full understanding of the consequences. It prevents a situation where the town converts systems now, only to reconsider and potentially change again later at additional expense and disruption.

Respectfully submitted,

Gabbie Kelly