Selectboard Minutes
June 2, 2026

Present: Robert Mantegari, Chair
Jim Michaud
Letty Bedard
Paul Kleinman
David Menter

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

Following the reading of payroll and accounts payable, Bedard made a motion to sign this week's manifest and a revised one from the prior week with the addition of one payroll check. Menter seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Michaud made a motion to approve the 5/12/26 & 5/19/26 meeting minutes. Bedard seconded the motion but asked to have the 5/12/26 minutes changed to reflect that she did not attend the Library Trustees meeting, just updated on it. All voted in favor of the minutes as amended. Michaud made a motion, seconded by Bedard, to approve the Nonpublic minutes from 5/5/26, 5/12/26 and 5/19/26. All voted in favor.

Treasurer Linda Lambert presented the Treasurer's report. Kleinman made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Michaud seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Dexter Swasey of the Historical Society came before the Board asking that they consider the approval of funding for a matching grant for window repair at the Grange. He detailed the work to be completed on the windows. The entire project would cost approximately $18,700. The 50% matching grant would be $9,350. They have volunteers that have offered to install the storm windows. The $2,000 savings that would provide has been approved to be used towards the matching grant. Therefore, the amount they are seeking is $7,350. Mantegari made a motion, seconded by Menter, to approve the matching grant up to $7,500 to be paid from the Capital Reserve Fund for the Maintenance of Town Owned Buildings. Mantegari, Michaud, Kleinman and Menter voted in favor; Bedard abstained. Motion carried. Swasey also wanted to give a shout out to the donors and volunteers who will be saving about $1,600 to perform work on restoring the stairs and installing a vapor barrier. These items were not included in the grant.

Fire Chief Olson submitted an updated permitting fee schedule. Michaud made a motion, seconded by Menter, to approve the updated fee schedule. All voted in favor.
Chief Olson presented to the Board a proposal regarding Fremont's ambulance service. He explained that Raymond will no longer be covering Fremont's ambulance calls. It would cost Fremont $1.2-$1.5 million to start their own ambulance service. Chief Olson initiated a conversation with Fremont to see if they would entertain a bid from Brentwood to take over their Ambulance. He informed Fremont that the only way he would consider this is if Brentwood could make enough money to cover the 3rd person in the Fire Station. This would be done through a contract and ambulance billing. He crunched the numbers and spoke with the ambulance billing company to come up with a cost of $90,000 for the contract. It would cost approximately $300,000 to have a paramedic and Firefighter in the station. Olson continued that we average $613.50/ambulance call. Fremont does about 410 calls per year. The 410 calls @ $613.50 = $251,535. If you add the $90,000 for the contract, that comes to $341,535. This leaves $41,535 for wear and tear on the ambulance, extra EMS equipment and to keep the lights on. This will be zero impact to the taxpayer and give us a 3rd person in the station. In addition, the new SB245 bill that

Congress put in place will allow us to bill more for insurance. This will increase our ambulance cost recovery. Michaud asked that Olson explain the advantages within the department of adding Fremont's Ambulance Service. The Chief said it will open the door to more grants, assist with recruitment, and allow for students to do ride time on Brentwood's ambulance.Mantegari said he met with someone from the County and that they realize that Brentwood does take the burden of responding to the nursing home and jail. He asked what happens if they decide to start their own ambulance? Additionally, Mantegari questioned why Fremont, with a Fire Budget of $250,000 vs. Brentwood's $1.5 million budget, is not looking into going with a private company? Mantegari also questioned if it is a conflict of interest whereas Olson is a Fremont resident? Chief Olson suggests it would be a good idea to consult with legal counsel. Lastly, Mantegari asked how it would affect our response time to our own citizens? Olson said the response time to their town will be higher than ours. In addition, he responded that if our ambulance was in Fremont during the day, the 3rd person would still be in the station, the inspector is available more during the day, the EMS Captain is there 3 days a week and Kat is willing to pinch hit when needed. Michaud added that he has a concern: If we are going to increase our call volume by 2/3, are we capable of doing that with the addition of only 1 more hire? The Chief responded yes.
Mantegari stated that he thought it was a little premature to be coming to the Board and that it should first be brought to the subcommittee that was established in April to explore options with fire and ambulance. He continued that his objective is to make sure the Department is putting Brentwood's interests first. Chief said he is as well as he is coming up with an alternative way to fund the 3rd person that will not cost the Town additional money.
Kleinman said what he needs to see is how $90,000 equates to the extra usage and how the $613 is achieved – is it gross or net? He would like to see the analysis of the numbers. What would be the incremental cost to the town of taking on Fremont's ambulance service? He would like to see a spreadsheet with the analysis of the numbers. He also inquired about the length of the proposed contract. Chief Olson said his thought is 3-5 years but said he can do a probationary one year. He does recommend that legal look over the contract.
Mantegari suggests expanding the subcommittee which currently includes Jim Michaud and Jim Hajjar, and adding a couple of citizens and fire department representatives. Mantegari made a motion to make them a formal committee to review the contract, gather information, and make recommendations. Michaud feels that the Chief should let Fremont know that the Brentwood Select Board is intrigued but there is more data collection that needs to happen and the contract needs to be reviewed.

Mantegari asked for public input on this topic. Jim Hajjar, of the public safety sub team, said he appreciates Chief Olson's proactive approach, but encourages the Selectboard to pause on making a commitment while the public safety sub team gathers information. He said that Fremont's voters voted against the Town Budget this year that included $70,000 for ambulance services and will have to come up with the funds by taking from other departments. That gives him concern for the possibility of them approving a budget that includes $90,000, as is being proposed. The cost per call for Brentwood, based on last year's numbers, was about $1,100. Even if we keep Fremont's insurance billing revenue, Hajjar is not sure how it's going to work. He continued that taking on a neighboring town's entire 911 load is a huge structural change for Brentwood to consider. It creates the possibility of concurrency risk if our ambulance is in Fremont while a Brentwood resident could be waiting for mutual aid. He's asking the Board to let the sub team work with the Fire Chief to understand the true impact of taking on Fremont before making a commitment for the 2027 budget cycle. He also encourages looking into regionalization that might include partnering with Kingston and Fremont to form a formal unified regional fire department per RSA 53-A. (See attached for complete reading by Hajjar).

Kleinman seconded Mantegari's earlier motion to make the sub-team a formal committee. Bedard is not sure why we need the committee; we should let the Chief run his department. Mantegari, Michaud & Kleinman voted in favor, Menter and Bedard opposed. Motion passed.

Mantegari wanted to give an update on the 287g agreement regarding Eric Turer's comments from the prior meeting that the Sheriff's department did something different. Mantegari mentioned that Brentwood's contract is exactly the same. Turer, Peabody Drive, responded that he knows the agreements are the same but what the Sheriff's department did is write a separate internal policy that says they are declining most of the powers that are included in the 287g. He is trying to get a copy and will share it with the Board when received. Kleinman requested that Turer also request a copy of the acceptance of that policy.

Stevens presented some Veteran Exemption applications that met all the criteria for approval. Bedard made a motion to approve a total disability application. Mantegari seconded the motion; all voted in favor. An abatement for $375 for a veteran's credit that did not follow through from the old system. Mantegari made a motion, seconded by Menter to approve. All voted in favor. An abatement for $46 for a conservation parcel – a motion was made by Mantegari and seconded by Menter to approve. All voted in favor. Two abatements for Rockingham County for state education tax that they pay directly to the state. Mantegari made a motion, seconded by Michaud. All voted in favor.

Stevens presented an update from KRT. They are requesting an extension from 6/4 to 9/1 for the data collection effort. Stevens said it will not have any impact as the first tax bills have already gone out and the 9/1 deadline is well before the mailing of the 2nd bill. Michaud made a motion to give them a 45 day extension (July 20). Mantegari seconded the motion. Mantegari, Michaud, Kleinman and Menter voted in favor; Bedard opposed. They asked that it be noted that this will be the last extension and they expect all of the work to be complete, including data entry, at that point.

Stevens presented a petition from Public Service to place a pole on South Road. Bedard made a motion to approve, seconded by Michaud. All in favor.

Stevens gave an update on the impact fees report. The spreadsheet provided by the auditors has been completed through 2025.

Mantegari opened discussion of Old Business:

- Kleinman is working on the deed for the property being donated to the Town from Bruce Stevens.
- Kleinman also reported that the folks with the easement for the Poor Farm Cemetery are coming to the 7/7 meeting.
- Lastly Kleinman said we should be getting the Recreation by-laws soon.
- Bedard questioned the letter regarding the tipping fee increase as of 7/1. Mantegari said he believes it was contracted that way with SRRD.

Mantegari asked for Committee updates:

- Michaud updated on a number of items:
    1. The Forestry has been lettered. The Lions Club donated 2 very large toolboxes for it as well.
    2. He is working with Wayne & Jillian to figure out the surveillance system at the Highway Dept.
    3. 4th of July plans are moving along nicely. They are encouraging residents to register on-line. The 6/1 deadline has been extended.

4. NE Dragway has the big national event this weekend. Adequate police coverage will be provided. Exit 8 off of Rte 101 will be closed.

- Menter made mention that the Conservation Commission meets on 6/10.
- Bedard read an email submitted by a resident complaining about the traffic related to NE Dragway. Michaud said he spoke with the Police Chief about that today. Changes will be made for this event in the future to make sure these issues don't happen again. Stevens mentioned that Chief Murch did stop at the residence of the citizen that wrote the letter and had a good conversation.

Mantegari opened the floor to public discussion:

- Betsy Ibbitson of Scrabble Rd inquired if any of the Board members have received free tickets to the Dragway event? All members responded no. She also said she listened to the Trash Talk Committee meeting and asked for confirmation that our legal counsel did say that we can not get out of the contract. Michaud confirmed that to be true.
- Dexter Swasey gave Kleinman a copy of a document related to the L-Chip Grant that he had requested.

At 8:55pm, Mantegari made a motion, with a second by Michaud, to go into nonpublic session per 91-A:3II(c). All voted in favor.

At 9:05pm, a motion was made by Mantegari and seconded by Michaud to come out of nonpublic. All voted in favor.

Mantegari made a motion, seconded by Michaud, to seal the minutes. All voted in favor.

At 9:05pm, Mantegari made a motion, with a second from Michaud, to adjourn. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Stevens

Jim Hajjar Reading

Good evening, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. My name is Jim Hajjar, speaking tonight as the Chair of the Brentwood Budget Committee and as a member of the Public Safety Strategic Planning Sub-Team.

While I respect Chief Olsen's proactive approach to regional emergency trends, I am here tonight to urge this Board to hit the pause button on any immediate agreements regarding taking over Fremont's EMS coverage. This proposal should be formally referred to our newly established Public Safety Strategic Planning Sub-Team for a comprehensive, data-driven review before any commitments are made. Fremont has historically operated a system with zero full-time fire or EMS staff. While Raymond Ambulance winds down operations, Fremont is paying a temporary stop-gap fee of just $70,000 for 24/7 coverage in FY2026. That works out to be an incredibly low $162 per call. To make matters worse, Fremont voters actually rejected the proposed FY2026 operating budget containing that $70,000 line item. They are now on a default budget and are forced to strip that money out of their existing FY2026 $297,595 fire budget or other town departments.

By contrast, Brentwood taxpayers fully fund a $1.29 million structural overhead to keep a staffed, 24/7/365 department on duty. Our cost per call is over $1,100 dollars. Even if we keep Fremont's insurance billing revenue, which historically averages only 400 to 500 dollars, the math does not work. We do not "make money" on EMS transports because our embedded cost to run a call far exceeds the standard insurance reimbursement rate. If Fremont's voters are actively rejecting a $70,000 contract, they are politically and structurally unequipped to pay Brentwood the true embedded readiness costs of our full-time staff, and Brentwood taxpayers should not absorb that gap.

Fortunately, we already have the perfect mechanism to evaluate this. Following the creation of the Public Safety Strategic Planning Sub-Team, Vice-Chair Jim Michaud was appointed to serve alongside me. The primary objective of this team is to evaluate long-term service demands, staffing models, and inter-municipal opportunities objectively, without advocating for predetermined outcomes.

Taking on a neighboring town's entire 911 EMS load is a major structural shift. It creates immediate call concurrency risks, meaning our ambulance could be tied up in Fremont while a Brentwood resident is left waiting for mutual aid. This proposal belongs squarely in the Sub-Team's ongoing 10-year planning process so we can deliver a fact-based report ahead of the FY2027 budget cycle. Let the sub-team work with the fire chief to understand what the true impact of taking on Fremont would be, what the proper fee to charge Fremont is, and the ultimate impact to future Brentwood fire budgets and the Brentwood taxpayer.

I also would suggest that if we are truly going to talk about regionalization, we shouldn't do it piecemeal through a lopsided EMS contract with Fremont that burdens Brentwood. Instead, the Sub-Team can properly investigate whether the towns of Brentwood, Fremont, and Kingston should establish a formal, unified Regional Fire Department under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, RSA 53-A. A true regional consolidation merges budgets, pools tax assets proportionally, and spreads the 24/7 structural overhead equally across all three town tax bases, rather than forcing Brentwood to carry the weight.

I respectfully request that the Select Board pass a motion tonight directing the Fire Chief to provide all the necessary operational data to the Public Safety Sub-Team, and work with us to vet this thoroughly before any municipal agreements are drafted.