

# MARLBORO SELECT BOARD

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 14, 2026

<b>Date</b>	Thursday, May 14, 2026
<b>Call to Order</b>	6:00 PM
<b>Adjournment</b>	7:33 PM
<b>Location</b>	Marlboro Town Office
<b>Members Present</b>	Marlboro Select Board Members: Molly Welch, Chair; Jeff Skramstad, Vice-Chair; Kate Kirkwood - Member
<b>Also Present</b>	Town Administrator (Nick Morgan), Road Supervisor (Andrew Richardson), and members of the public: Michael G, Jim Herrick, Megan Littlehales, Gill Garb-Sieff, Hollis Burbank-Hammarlund, Arne Hammarlund, Paul Love, Nora Wilson, T. Wilson, Gail MacArthur, Jonathan Morse

### **BEGIN ZOOM RECORDING:**

*(Please note: As these minutes are not intended to be a "transcript" of the meeting, a complete Audio recording of the meeting can be found on the Town's Soundcloud page here: <https://soundcloud.com/marlboro-select-board>).*

## 1. Call to Order & Approval of Prior Minutes

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM on Thursday, May 14, 2026. No changes to the agenda were noted.

The board addressed unscheduled public comments; none were offered (public attendees were present for the scheduled road standards discussion).

**MOTION:** Approve minutes from April 23, 2026. **(Welch/Kirkwood – Passed unanimously)**

**MOTION:** Approve minutes from May 5, 2026 (Special Meeting). **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

## 2. Pay Orders & Consent Items

### 2a. Private Road Signs — Northeast Municipal Order

The Town Administrator presented the Northeast Municipal quote for needed private road signs. The total cost is \$1,058.04, covering signs and installation equipment. Board members confirmed this is within the appropriate budget line. A tracking system will be maintained so property owners who lose signs after the initial installation will be responsible for subsequent replacement costs.

**MOTION:** Approve the Northeast Municipal Order quote for private road signs in the amount of \$1,058.04. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

## 2b. Deerfield Valley Stump Jumpers — Landowner Use Authorization

The board considered a multi-year landowner permission form for the Deerfield Valley Stump Jumpers snowmobile club to use town-owned land (HOGBACK VAST TRAILS). Previous practice was annual approval; the board discussed moving to a 5-year authorization to reduce administrative burden. Stipulations include revisiting all trail markings and replacing any ropes or markers as needed. The Town Administrator confirmed he has signing authority; board approval of the motion is required.

**MOTION:** Approve the Deerfield Valley Stump Jumpers Use Authorization Form for 5 years, subject to the club maintaining trail markings and ropes. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

## 3. Road Standards Ordinance — Rescission & Public Discussion

### 3a. Background

The primary agenda item was the Road Standards Ordinance, adopted March 26, 2026, and scheduled to take effect June 7, 2026. Prior to the public session, the board had consulted with town counsel (Bob Fisher) and determined that rescinding the ordinance was the best course of action to allow for a more thorough and inclusive revision process. Key concerns driving the rescission included:

- Language ambiguities, particularly around obligations for private road owners
- The ordinance was adapted from Wilmington's road standards, and several provisions were not appropriate for Marlboro's rural, hilly road network.
- Insufficient incorporation of public comments received at November 2025 informational meetings.
- Resident concern sufficient to trigger a potential petition process (5% of population signature threshold for a ballot vote)

### 3b. Rescission Vote

**MOTION:** The Select Board of Marlboro, Vermont hereby rescinds the Road Standards Ordinance adopted on March 26, 2026. The ordinance will no longer take effect on June 7, 2026. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

### 3c. Public Discussion — Road Standards & Practices

Following the rescission, the board opened discussion with members of the public. Road Foreman Andrew participated to answer questions and provide technical context. Key themes raised and discussed:

- **Private Roads:** It was clarified that it was never the intent of the ordinance to impose maintenance standards on private road owners. The intent was to set standards for private roads seeking to be taken over by the town, and for new private roads connecting to town roads. The language will be revised to make this clear.

- **Road Widening Concerns:** Multiple residents raised concerns that roads appear to be widening over time. The Road Foreman explained this is not intentional and is related to grading techniques, berm buildup from snowplowing, and the need to move material to restore crown. Specific roads mentioned include Butterfield Road and Adams Cross Road. Photographic evidence from Mr. Wilson was acknowledged; the Road Foreman committed to addressing one blocked culvert when conditions permit.
- **Ditch Depth & Water Quality:** The Road Foreman explained that deeper ditches are needed to carry snowmelt and stormwater runoff, particularly given climate change reducing road freezing. Roads without adequate ditches erode faster, requiring more frequent and costly gravel replacement. The state is shifting its mandate focus from water quality alone to broader erosion prevention. Residents acknowledged the environmental argument while expressing concern about aesthetics and road width.
- **Stone vs. Grass in Ditches:** Discussion covered state guidelines allowing grass lining for grades up to 5% (optional up to 8%) and stone above 8%. A concern was raised that stone-lined ditches fill with gravel over time (from winter plowing), making them difficult to clean out. The Road Foreman acknowledged this issue and indicated a preference for hydroseeding wherever possible going forward. The Brattleboro Public Works Director's experience with the same problem was mentioned.
- **Vehicle Speed & Road Width:** Residents noted that traffic speed increases as roads widen and that increased tractor-trailer traffic is a growing safety concern (partly due to GPS routing). The board acknowledged the tension between wanting narrow rural roads and needing adequate road width for drainage and maintenance. Traffic calming measures were suggested but the Road Foreman noted limited available options.
- **Tree Cutting:** The Road Foreman noted that Marlboro cuts far fewer trees than comparable municipalities. He committed to continuing the practice of notifying abutting landowners before any tree work and expressed interest in whether town-wide notification should be incorporated into the revised ordinance.
- **Budget Constraints:** The highway budget was reduced by approximately ~\$180,000 in the most recent budget cycle. The Road Foreman noted that the department is approximately 15–20 years behind on road maintenance across roughly 50 miles of dirt roads.
- **MRGP Grants & State Requirements:** Road erosion mapping was performed by Jeff Nugent (2014) and is the basis for grant-aided projects. State-identified priority segments (those within 200 feet of a waterway) qualify for MRGP grant funding. The board discussed whether it is financially and practically worthwhile to continue participating in the grants program; the Road Foreman confirmed it is, since the work is mandated regardless.
- **Green Mountain Power (GMP) Grid Resiliency Project:** Trenching and cabling work on Moss Hollow Road and the Marlboro portion Lucier Road is complete. GMP will be doing above-ground electrical work on the roadside for several more weeks; a one-lane situation may cause brief delays. GMP has cut its summer project schedule and will not be doing Hamilton Road this season. Communication and coordination with GMP have improved significantly compared to last year.

### 3d. Next Steps — Ordinance Revision Process

The board outlined the following plan for revising the Road Standards Ordinance:

- Board members will each review and markup sections of the current (rescinded) ordinance, using Google Docs with redline/comment tools.
- The ordinance has 11 sections; members will divide sections to work on them.
- A public revision session is planned for June 25, 2026, to which interested residents will be invited to review proposed changes and provide further feedback.
- A follow-up special meeting will be held before any formal adoption of a revised ordinance.
- The revised document will be issued as an ordinance (not a policy), but the board discussed the possibility of issuing road maintenance guidelines as a separate policy document.
- Key revisions anticipated: clarification of private road provisions, language about tree notification, overweight vehicle provisions, and discretionary authority for the Road Foreman on ditch treatment by location.

## 4. Other Business

### 4a. Event Liability Insurance

The board briefly discussed a policy of requiring liability insurance from organizations using town facilities or land for events, including Hogback Mountain. The Town Administrator was asked to tell relevant groups that the town will consider this at the next SB meeting.

### 4b. Recycling Sign

One of two recycling signs at the transfer station has gone missing. The board discussed whether a replacement was needed. Consensus: one sign is sufficient; no replacement needed at this time.

### 4c. Meeting Schedule

The July 23 regular meeting cannot be held as scheduled. After discussion, the board agreed to hold meetings on July 9 and July 16 instead and skip July 23.

### 4d. Informational Meetings

Scheduling of public informational meetings will be added to the May 28 agenda for discussion.

### 4e. Windham County Humane Society Contract

The Town Administrator circulated the Windham County Humane Society contract for the coming year, noting it differs from the prior year's contract. Board members were asked to review it before the next meeting.

## 5. Executive Session

**MOTION:** Move into executive session to discuss personnel issues pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A), finding that premature public disclosure would be detrimental to the public interest @ 7:29p **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

**MOTION:** Return to open session at 7:32 PM. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**  
No action was taken as a result of executive session.

## 6. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Adjourn the meeting at 7:33 PM. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**