

MARLBORO SELECT BOARD

Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 15, 2026

Date	Monday, June 15, 2026
Call to Order	4:05 PM
Adjournment	4:50 PM
Location	Marlboro Town Office
Members Present	Molly Welch, Chair; Jeff Skramstad, Vice Chair; Kate Kirkwood, Member (via phone)
Also Present	Nick Morgan, Town Administrator; Rebecca Sevigny, Town Treasurer; Andrew Richardson, Road Supervisor

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 & Purpose of Meeting

Chair Molly Welch called the special meeting to order at approximately 4:05 PM on Monday, June 15, 2026. The meeting was called for the specific purpose of discussing the Town's road department equipment situation, including the failure of the Ford F-550 pickup truck motor and options for repair or replacement. Member Kate Kirkwood participated by phone.

2. Road Department Equipment — Ford F-550 Motor Failure & Replacement Options**2a. Background and Current Status**

Road Supervisor Andrew Richardson and Town Treasurer Rebecca Sevigny presented the Board with a detailed overview of the situation. The Town's Ford F-550 pickup truck (Truck 5), purchased new in 2019, has suffered a second motor failure. Key facts:

- Truck purchased new in 2019.
- First motor failure: 2021, at approximately 11,000 miles — repaired under warranty at no cost to the Town.
- Second motor failure: June 2026, at approximately 53,921 miles — out of warranty; Ford has declined to provide financial assistance.

NOTE: These minutes were prepared with the assistance of AI (Claude by Anthropic) as authorized by Select Board vote on May 28, 2026. The Zoom transcript was uploaded to Claude, which generated a draft that was reviewed and edited by the Town Administrator for accuracy.

2. Road Department Equipment — Ford F-550 Motor Failure & Replacement Options (continued)

2a. Background and Current Status (continued)

- Current repair estimate: approximately \$26,000 for the motor replacement; the repair shop has also flagged potential transmission issues, which could add an estimated \$8,000–\$10,000.
- The truck is used primarily in summer months to tow the road grader rake at low speeds (approximately 3 mph), a use pattern that Ford representatives indicated may contribute to diesel emissions system failures due to extended low speed idling.

A Lemon Law inquiry was submitted to VLCT for review. Preliminary guidance from VLCT indicated that Vermont's Lemon Law would not apply because the original manufacturer's warranty has expired; however, the matter is still under review, and VLCT was asked to confirm whether the fact that the first repair was made under warranty while the truck was still new may affect eligibility.

2b. Vehicle Options and Pricing

Road Supervisor Richardson reported on vehicle options researched through multiple dealerships:

- **Option 1 — Repair the F-550:** Estimated \$26,000–\$36,000 (motor + possible transmission). Not recommended given the truck's history of repeated motor failure and the uncertainty about future reliability.
- **Option 2 — New 2026 Chevrolet (Bennington Chevrolet):** Approximately \$75,000. Not in stock but can be sourced. Plow: \$8,000–\$9,000 (straight blade) or \$12,000 (V-plow). Trade-in offer on the F-550: approximately \$10,000.
- **Option 3 — New 2026 Chevrolet (Brattleboro Auto Mall):** \$73,499. In stock. Plow pricing pending.
- **Option 4 — Used 2024 Chevrolet (Brattleboro Auto Mall):** \$58,981, with approximately 9,500 miles. Trade-in value on F-550 pending from this dealer.

The Board discussed the diesel versus gasoline question. Ford's stated explanation for the motor failures is related to diesel emissions system stress from extended low-RPM operation while towing the rake. Road Supervisor Richardson noted a preference for staying with diesel/existing fuel infrastructure, as switching to a gasoline vehicle would require either making fuel runs during extended operations (e.g., snowstorms) or installing an on-site gasoline storage tank, which would require certification training and carries its own complications.

2c. Financial Considerations

Town Treasurer Rebecca [Last Name] presented the Board with the Town's current financial position and options for funding a vehicle purchase. Key financial data discussed:

2. Road Department Equipment — Ford F-550 Motor Failure & Replacement Options (continued)

2c. Financial Considerations (continued)

- **Tax Anticipation Note (TAN):** Total line of \$825,000; approximately \$257,000 drawn to date; approximately \$635,000 available. TAN must be repaid by March 31. Funds from the TAN can be used for a vehicle purchase.
- **State Road Money:** Approximately \$35,000 in quarterly state aid is expected in July. The Board discussed directing this payment immediately toward TAN repayment to reduce the outstanding balance.
- **Municipal Equipment Loan Fund (MELF):** The Town has received MELF approval for \$150,000 toward the new 10-wheel dump truck currently being built. Annual loan payment on this amount will be approximately \$33,000, with the first payment due June 2027. A second MELF application could be submitted in October for consideration at the December MELF approval meeting, with funds available by January.
- **Existing Loan Payoff:** An existing \$120,000 equipment loan falls off in August 2026, freeing up that annual payment going forward.
- **Equipment Replacement Fund:** Approximately \$100,000 is held in a CD maturing in December, earmarked as a contribution toward the new 10-wheel truck (combined with a planned budget ask of \$50,000 and the \$150,000 MELF, totaling \$300,000 toward the new truck). The Board noted that this fund is restricted by town vote to equipment purchases and cannot be redirected to cover general fund obligations such as school payments.
- **School Payment:** The Town's annual education payment to the state is estimated at approximately \$2,000,000 (last year's actual was \$2.4 million, but the school budget is lower this year). The exact amount will be known in September. This is the primary cash-flow concern around any large near-term expenditure.

2d. Discussion and Recommended Path Forward

After extensive discussion, the Board reached consensus around the following approach:

- Do not repair the Ford F-550 — the cost-to-benefit ratio is poor given the truck's history, and the risk of additional failures is high.
- Purchase the used 2024 Chevrolet pickup from Brattleboro Auto Mall at approximately \$58,981, less any trade-in value on the F-550 (estimated \$8,000–\$10,000, bringing the net cost to approximately \$50,000).
- Fund the purchase using TAN funds initially.
- Upon receipt of the July state road money installment (approximately \$35,000), direct those funds immediately to pay down the TAN, reducing the net TAN exposure to approximately \$25,000.

2. Road Department Equipment — Ford F-550 Motor Failure & Replacement Options (continued)

2d. Discussion and Recommended Path Forward (continued)

- Monitor cash flow through August and September as tax revenue begins coming in and the school payment obligation becomes clearer. The Board expressed confidence that the remaining \$25,000 exposure is manageable within the general fund given current projections.
- Road Supervisor Richardson will visit Brattleboro Auto Mall the following day to inspect the vehicle and obtain a trade-in value on the F-550. If satisfactory, the Treasurer (Rebecca) is authorized to proceed with the purchase using TAN funds.

The Board also discussed a longer-term equipment strategy: once existing loan obligations are retired, the Town should consider purchasing an inexpensive used gasoline pickup truck for light-duty tasks (road checks, parts runs, towing the rake in summer), preserving heavier diesel trucks for work they are designed for. This is intended to reduce wear on larger vehicles and reduce the risk of repeat motor failures due to low-load diesel engine operation.

Road Supervisor Richardson also noted the need to secure a plow for the replacement truck before winter. The Board discussed that a standard plow mount (similar to what is currently on other town vehicles) does not require a specialized build and can be sourced separately at a later date.

3. Motion & Vote

MOTION: Authorize the purchase of a used 2024 Chevrolet 3500 pickup truck from Brattleboro Auto Mall to replace the Ford F-550 (Truck 5), at a cost of approximately \$58,981 less trade-in value for the F-550, to be funded initially from the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN), with the July state road aid installment of approximately \$35,000 to be applied directly to TAN repayment upon receipt, and the remaining balance to be addressed through general fund revenues. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

4. Adjournment

MOTION: Adjourn the special meeting at 4:50 PM. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**