TOWN OF MARLBORO, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Date: August 25, 2026	**Time:** 6:00 PM – 7:26 PM
Location: Marlboro Town Office / Zoom	**Minutes Prepared By:** Nick Morgan, Town Administrator
Present: Molly Welch, Chair; Jeff Skramstad, Vice Chair; Nick Morgan, Town Administrator; Rebecca Sevigny, Treasurer; Andrew Richardson, Road Supervisor **Excused:** Kate Kirkwood, Selectboard Member	

BEGIN ZOOM RECORDING

This meeting was recorded via Zoom; the audio recording is available on SoundCloud.

1. Call to Order

Chair Molly Welch called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The Board signed the Code of Conduct acknowledgment, which had been inadvertently omitted at the prior meeting.

2. Public Comment

No members of the public were present for unscheduled public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 13, 2026, Select Board meeting.

(Welch/Skramstad – Passed Unanimously)

4. Pay Orders and Contract Signatures

The Board reviewed and signed the pay orders.

4.1 Windham County Sheriff's Office – Animal Control Officer Contract

MOTION: To grant final approval and signature on the Windham County Sheriff's Office animal control officer contract.

(Welch/Skramstad – Passed Unanimously)

4.2 Windham Regional Commission – Zoning Assistance Contract

MOTION: To approve the contract with the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) for as-needed zoning assistance.

(Welch/Skramstad – Passed Unanimously)

5. Subdivision Bylaw Amendment – Timeline

MOTION: To move the date associated with the Select Board meeting to provide SB approval of subdivision bylaw amendment process from January 28, 2027, to January 21, 2027, in order to allow sufficient time for inclusion in the Town Warning to meet statutory deadline.

(Welch/Skramstad – Passed Unanimously)

6. Pay Scale / Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Administration

The Board discussed administration of the town's pay scale, confirming that all step and COLA adjustments take effect on January 1 of each year regardless of an employee's hire date, to simplify budgeting. It was clarified that the annual COLA and step increases were already approved as part of the adopted pay scale, and that no additional Board approval is required for employees to move through their scale in the ordinary, pre-established progression. The Town Administrator agreed to work with the Treasurer to finalize the pay-scale-related budget item in time for the October 8, 2026, SB meeting so it can be incorporated into the FY27 budget.

7. Capital Equipment Replacement Plan

Treasurer Rebecca Sevigny, with assistance from Road Supervisor Andrew Richardson, presented a draft Capital Equipment Replacement Plan spreadsheet developed to help the Board plan for the future replacement of highway department vehicles and equipment. The spreadsheet catalogs each piece of equipment with its purchase year, cost, and estimated useful life, and projects the annual amount the town should set aside so that funds are available when a replacement is due, along with a projected fund balance, interest earnings, and estimated sale value of retired equipment (modeled in part on a similar tool used by the Town of Dover).

Ms. Sevigny and Mr. Richardson noted that reliable depreciation data is difficult to obtain from dealers, so the projections represent a best estimate rather than a fixed schedule; the plan is intended as a planning guide that the Board and Road Supervisor can revisit and adjust each year as actual equipment condition, repair costs, and maintenance history warrant, rather than a mandate to replace equipment strictly by the chart. The Board discussed at length how much to set aside annually for the Capital Equipment Fund, currently $50,000 per year. It was agreed that, rather than an arbitrary flat increase, the annual set-aside amount should increase each year by the Producer Price Index (PPI) noted as approximately 4.7% for the current period — so that savings keep pace with the rising cost of replacement equipment without large, unexplained jumps.

The Board discussed how to present this to taxpayers and agreed that the worksheet used internally by the Board and Treasurer should show the base amount, the PPI percentage, and the resulting total as three separate lines for reference, but that the town budget itself should show only a single combined line item, with the PPI-based rationale available on request. It was estimated that adding $100,000 to the budget would increase the tax bill on a $100,000 property by approximately $39 per year, and on a $150,000 property by approximately $59 per year. The Board also discussed the distinction between the restricted Capital Equipment Fund, which may only be used for equipment replacement, and the Operational Reserve Fund, which is available for other emergency needs, and agreed to be cautious about over-funding restricted accounts; the Board discussed adding approximately $25,000 to the Operational Reserve Fund as part of the coming budget.

The Board also discussed including a limited, multi-year version of the capital plan (e.g., a five-year outlook) in the annual Town Report so residents can see that a plan is in place from which the single budget line item is generated. The Board thanked Ms. Sevigny and Mr. Richardson for their work on the plan, noting the significant effort involved and that the plan reflects a collaboration between the Treasurer's financial expertise and the Road Supervisor's knowledge of the equipment.

No formal action was needed or taken; the Treasurer will continue to refine the spreadsheet and incorporate the PPI-based adjustment for the FY27 budget.

8. DVFiber Underground Installation / Liability and Insurance Matters

The Board received an update on the DVFiber project: due to a ledge and an existing culvert, the contractor will install three poles rather than trenching in the area previously discussed.

9. Liability Insurance Coverage for Events Using Town Property

The Board discussed the status of liability insurance coordination with outside organizations that use town property or equipment, including a checklist developed by the Treasurer to help determine when an outside group (e.g., a nonprofit, the Girl Scouts, or an event organizer) needs to be added as a co-insured party on its own policy before the town's coverage applies. The Board discussed following up with the relevant nonprofit and with its insurance contact (Kelly) regarding a management plan that had been sent for review, with no response received to date. The Board agreed to revisit the matter at the September 10, 2026, meeting in order to outline next steps to convey to the HPC & HMCA.

10. Subdivision Bylaw Update – Public Hearing Process

The Town Administrator reported that the Planning Commission has completed its work on the subdivision bylaw update and that the final document is posted on the town website for public and Board review. The public informational meeting and public hearing on the subdivision bylaw update are scheduled for Saturday, September 26, 2026, preceded by official public notice to be posted by September 11, 2026. Board members were asked to review the document before that date and flag any concerns. The Town Administrator will confirm with legal counsel whether Board-requested changes at this stage would require an additional public hearing. The Board discussed the possibility of having legal counsel (Bob Fisher), or WRC's Mike McConnell (at approximately $104 per hour) review the document, and agreed to decide on that at the next meeting.

11. Grant Opportunities Discussions

11.1 Community Development Government Buildings Grant

The Town Administrator reported that a Planning Commission member has proposed pursuing a Community Development Government Buildings planning grant to evaluate town buildings, potentially including the school and town office. The Planning Commission member has been invited to the Board's September 10, 2026, meeting.

11.2 Municipal Planning Grant – Bylaw Revision

The Town Administrator reported on a Municipal Planning Grant of up to $50,000 available to fund a full rewrite of the town's bylaws, a use commonly funded under this program. The grant application window opens October 1, 2026, and closes December 1, 2026; funds awarded for 2027 remain available through the end of 2028. Regional Planning Commission expert Mike McConnell has agreed to assist with the grant application. The Town Administrator will follow up with Tim Seager, or another Planning Commission contract, since the resulting bylaw revisions will ultimately be the Planning Commission's responsibility.

12. Health Insurance Plan Renewal

The Town Administrator reported that the town's health insurance representative, Gail, will have FY27 plan cost information available in September and will be invited to the October 8, 2026, meeting, allowing enough time for the Treasurer to incorporate the figures into the FY27 budget.

13. Marlboro Fire Department – Future Structure Discussion

The Board discussed the previous discussions regarding the Town incorporating the Fire Department and the discussions with Fire Department leadership regarding the department's operations and long-term structure. It was noted that the department's leadership, including Carol Ann, is under significant strain and at risk of losing key volunteers, and that this prompted informal discussion of the town formally taking over operation of the department, following models used by other Vermont towns.

The Board discussed the significant logistical and liability issues that would need to be addressed before such a step could be considered, including the current lack of formal training documentation and related equipment liability exposure, which was characterized as a major concern separate from the department's existing property and vehicle coverage.

13. Marlboro Fire Department – Future Structure Discussion (continued)

The Board discussed comparison points from other towns: in Wilmington, the volunteer fire department's chief is a salaried town employee who works from the station daily and handles grants and administration; in Berlin, VT, a similar transition took roughly one year once formally started, and that town's fire chief and town manager have offered to share their process and documentation with Marlboro. The Board noted that Marlboro's Fire Department currently receives stipends for two assistant positions and per-call compensation for firefighters, and that a significant share of calls are highway-accident responses on Route 9.

The Board discussed that Marlboro would likely need to fund at least one paid professional point-person to manage grants and administration if the town took over the department, and that developing a formal job description, salary estimate, and budget impact analysis would be a necessary first step. The Board agreed not to ask Fire Department leadership to develop a full transition plan themselves, given their current workload, but instead to request current financial figures (operating and capital needs, historically approximately $100,000 combined) from Fire Department leadership (Carol Ann, Fred, and Michael) and to reach out to the Town of Berlin for its transition documentation and process for comparison. No formal action was taken; the Board will continue this discussion in September.

14. School Update to the Board

The Board discussed reinstating a past practice of the Marlboro College (now POSTASH HILL) providing periodic (semi-annual) updates to the Select Board on programs and facility needs and agreed to follow up to schedule a future meeting with POTASH HILL (tentative date 9/24 meeting) for this purpose.

15. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:26 PM.
(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)

Minutes recorded by: Nicholas Morgan - Town Administrator Date: 08/28/2026.

Approved by Select Board at _______ meeting