

TOWN OF MARLBORO, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD INFORMATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2026

Meeting	Marlboro Select Board – Informational Meeting
Date / Time	Saturday, September 26, 2026, 2:12 PM
Location	Marlboro Community Center and via Zoom
Select Board Present	Molly Welch (Chair), Jeff Skramstad (Vice Chair), Kate Kirkwood
Staff Present	Nick Morgan (Town Administrator)
Others Present	Tamara Stenn (Energy Committee), Nick Sherefkin (Energy Committee consultant), Donald Sherefkin (Planning Commission)
Residents Present	Catherine Rhodes, Nancy Anderson, Gussie Bartlett, Peggy Tiffany

1. Call to Order

Chair Molly Welch called the informational meeting to order at 2:12 PM.

BEGIN ZOOM RECORDING

Audio of the meeting is available on the Town of Marlboro SoundCloud page. The meeting was also recorded by BCTV. A power surge interrupted the recording for approximately five minutes during the Energy Committee presentation (Item 5).

2. Announcements and Meeting Schedule

Nick Morgan reviewed meeting procedures, asking Zoom participants to use the raise-hand feature or chat to be added to the queue, and asking in-person speakers to state their name each time they speak so the transcript can identify them.

Chair Welch explained that the first portion of the meeting would review what the Select Board has been working on and how residents can place articles on the ballot for the March election. Upcoming Informational meetings:

- Saturday, November 14, 2026 (MCC) – 2-4p – Town budget presentation. Treasurer Rebecca Sevigny will present a detailed breakdown similar to last year's.
- Thursday, December 10, 2026, 6:00–8:00 PM, Marlboro Community Center – Road budget presentation by Road Supervisor Andrew Richardson, held at the regular Select Board meeting time.
- Last Saturday in February 2027 (MCC) – 2-330pm– Statutory informational meeting before Town Meeting.

3. Petitioning Articles onto the Ballot

- To place an article on the ballot, residents must submit a petition signed by registered voters directly to the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk recommends 45 to 50 signatures to safely meet the 5% requirement.
- A few residents have asked that charitable appropriations again be listed individually on the ballot. The Board's current view is to keep the existing approach, under which each organization is voted on individually every third year, because listing them all

individually adds counting time, ballot pages, and postage. The Board welcomes public input on this.

4. Select Board Update

Chair Welch reviewed items the Select Board and Town offices are working on:

4.1 Policies and Procedures

- The Treasurer is developing policies for handling the Town's financial operations, and the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk are documenting their processes so future staff do not have to start from scratch.
- The Select Board is drafting a communication to all Town commissions and committees clarifying matters such as how and when to access the Town attorney, how budgets are requested, and ways to save money. The draft will be posted for public comment.

4.2 Highway Standards

The Board has finished the Road Standards. Originally proposed as a road ordinance, the document was revised in response to public feedback, including clarifying that it does not apply to private roads, and is now a set of standards that allows more flexibility for individual situations. It will be posted once final wording is received from attorney Bob Fisher.

4.3 Recycling Center

- PACIF, the Town's insurer, agreed there are safety concerns at the current recycling center site at the highway garage, where residents drive between heavy equipment and road crew operations.
- Illegal dumping of household garbage has worsened despite cleanup by volunteers. The Town has sent warning letters to about seven residents whose mail was found in the dumped trash.
- The Board wants to keep a local recycling center and is evaluating Town-owned sites. The leading option is the school property, where recycling was once located, provided traffic can be separated from school buses and children (for example, with jersey barriers or a separate entrance). The Board will meet with school representatives to discuss this. The former dog pound site at the bottom of Town Hill was considered but would require significant site work and may involve wetlands.
- Limiting hours of access was discussed but is considered difficult. An additional security camera would cost roughly \$5,000.

4.4 Municipal Planning Grant and Zoning Bylaws

- The Town will apply in October for a Municipal Planning Grant of up to \$50,000, with awards announced in December. The grant requires no local match.
- The funds would be used to revise the zoning bylaws, which are difficult to interpret, possibly working with Mike McConnell of the Windham Regional Commission (WRC). Work over \$25,000 would require three bids or an RFP.
- In response to a question from resident Nancy Anderson, it was explained that the goal is mainly to make the bylaws clearer and more consistent rather than to change the underlying rules (setbacks, lot sizes, wildlife corridors, etc.), although a professional may recommend changes that make it easier for residents to use their property. More than one grant may be applied for.

4.5 Reassessment and Tax Abatement

The Town Clerk's office has fielded questions from residents about the town-wide reassessment. The Board of Civil Authority has held two tax abatement hearings, one involving Potash Hill and one involving a North Pond resident.

4.6 Capital Equipment Replacement Plan

The Treasurer and Road Supervisor are developing a Capital Equipment Replacement Plan that lists each piece of Town equipment with its age, expected lifespan, and replacement cost, along with how much to set aside each year. The goal is to avoid sudden large expenses (such as a \$400,000 grader) and reduce borrowing. The plan will be posted when completed.

4.7 DVFiber

The Board approved DVFiber's request to install fiber underground along North Pond Road rather than cutting trees and setting poles. Some poles were still needed where ledge prevented underground installation.

4.8 Hogback Facility Use Agreement and Event Insurance

- The Board learned that the Town could be liable for incidents during activities on Hogback Mountain. The insurance requirement in the facility use agreement had routinely been waived. The Board is working out which activities should require insurance (for example, large active groups rather than an individual bird counter).
- Volunteers from the Hogback committees who do trail maintenance with chainsaws and heavy equipment should also be insured. The Board is working with both committees on affordable, fair ways to do this.
- PACIF advised that sponsors of events using Town roads, such as bike races, must carry insurance naming the Town as an additional insured, which had not been done before. A new race organizer planning an event for next July has agreed to this.

4.9 Regional Policing

Windham County Sheriff Mark Anderson is developing a pilot regional policing program in which deputies would be positioned around participating towns to respond more quickly, rather than being hired by individual towns for set hours. Kate Kirkwood is serving as Marlboro's liaison to the Windham County Law Enforcement Governance Council, made up of nine of the county's 27 towns.

- Ms. Kirkwood reported that the Council has met two or three times and is meeting weekly to draft bylaws and define what towns can expect.
- The goal is to provide more services, possibly as an alternative to relying on the State Police, without increasing costs. Initial figures suggest it could cost less than the Town's current contract.

4.10 School Building Committee

A committee has been formed to consider future use of the school building. It has held its first meeting and will meet monthly on the first Monday or Wednesday, with participation from Dan McCarthy and other school representatives. The committee has shown interest in a proposal to make part of the building available as the Town's overnight emergency shelter, which would require storage for cots and bedding and backup power. The building already has a full kitchen. The Town currently has a daytime warming center arrangement through Vermont Emergency Management but no overnight shelter.

4.11 Marlboro Volunteer Fire Company

- The MVFC has asked the Town to take over the fire company from its current non-profit status. The MVFC has been consulting with Berlin, Vermont, the one other Vermont town known to have made this change.
- Under the proposal, fire company funding would become part of the Town budget, with the Town paying expenses and equipment costs directly. Two paid part-time positions would be needed: an administrator (possibly the fire chief) and an administrative assistant (about 15 hours per week).
- The Board is trying to proceed carefully, but the MVFC would like it done quickly because its volunteers are burned out.

5. Energy Committee – Community Energy Event

Chair Welch turned the meeting over to Energy Committee member Tamara Stenn and Nick Sherefkin to discuss the Energy Committee's upcoming event on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the Marlboro Community Center.

- Nick Sherefkin introduced himself. He recently finished his PhD at Stanford, is applying for academic positions, and is helping the Energy Committee through its grant.
- Mr. Sherefkin noted that many energy ideas have come up over the past 15 years, such as sizing a solar array to meet the Town's total energy demand and locating electric vehicle charging stations. The event aims to identify which ideas have the most support and who can help carry them out.
- Ms. Stenn said the event will include food, childcare, and BCTV coverage, and asked residents to attend and bring friends. The Town now has new assets: the Marlboro Music campus, the school facilities, and the Route 9 corridor. These create opportunities for businesses serving Brattleboro, Wilmington, and visitors, such as a restaurant or Brattleboro Food Co-op location in the campus building, or educational and technology programs on campus.
- Ideas generated will remain on display in the Community Center lobby for a couple of weeks, with an online option, so residents who can't attend can still take part.
- Other ideas discussed included energy-efficient building guidance for new homes being planned (including on Ames Hill), retrofitting existing homes, window inserts, and passive solar design.
- A resident asked how the plans would help low-income residents and seniors. Ms. Stenn said this is why broad participation is needed and noted transportation ideas such as a shared community car. It was noted that MOOver offers on-demand rides and reimburses volunteer drivers for mileage.
- The Town will purchase two handheld FLIR infrared cameras that residents can sign out from the Town Office to check their homes for heat loss. A sump pump for residents to borrow, requested by the fire company, has been budgeted. A lending library of tools and equipment was also suggested.

6. Recess for Public Hearing

At 3:00 PM, the informational meeting recessed for the public hearing on the proposed Marlboro Subdivision Regulations. The hearing is recorded in separate minutes.

7. Reconvene – Final Questions and Comments

The informational meeting reconvened at 3:25 PM.

- A resident thanked the Board for summarizing the work of the Select Board and other Town commissions and asked that it be captured in the minutes. Board members suggested a quarterly report in the Marlboro Mixer or on the Town website.
- The Board is starting to use a binder for each meeting with the agenda, minutes, and resulting to-do list, at Nick Morgan's suggestion, so follow-up items are not lost.
- Nick Morgan noted that public input will be needed as the fire company transition, regional policing, and recycling center issues develop.

7.1 Town Website

- The Town website, built on WordPress and hosted through GoDaddy, crashed and lost its drop-down menus, and customer support was poor. In the meantime, Nick Morgan is posting links on the home page (MarlboroVT.us) to documents and board and committee pages. All documents remain available.
- The website is being redesigned by Civilly, a Vermont company that specializes in municipal websites. Each board and committee will be able to update its own pages. The cost is \$6,800, with lower annual costs than the current site, and the Town is under budget in several other areas.
- Treasurer Rebecca Seigny is managing the project. No firm completion date was given, but the site needs to be running before the elections. Westford, Vermont's site was shown as an example.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. Moved and seconded. ***Passed unanimously.***

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nick Morgan, Town Administrator

Minutes recorded by: Nicholas Morgan - Town Administrator Date: 9/30/2026.

Approved by Select Board at 10/8/26 meeting