

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**March 5, 2026**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, Kurt Gamari, John Dunn, and Jedidiah Gramlin.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Alden Finney, Lisa Gramlin, Debra Righi, James Righi, and James Stimpson.  
Callie Fishburn, Bennington County Regional Commission.  
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.  
Lori Shepard, Select Board Secretary.

Nancy Bushika opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda. Jed Gramlin recorded the meeting for his YouTube.

**REORGANIZATION OF BOARD**

MOTION by Mike Denault to nominate Nancy Bushika as Selectboard Chair. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to nominate Mike Denault as Vice Chair. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to nominate Kurt Gamari as Clerk. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

**JUDICIAL BUREAU APPOINTMENTS**

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to remove Doug Wright as Issuing and Appearing Official and the former Assistant Clerk as a Custodial Official and add Jed Gramlin as an Issuing and Appearing Official and Jean Kurpiel as a Custodial Official. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

**DESIGNATION OF MEETING DATES**

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Meeting dates are subject to review and may be changed.

**DESIGNATION OF NEWSPAPER FOR PUBLICATIONS**

The board discussed using Facebook to share information. They felt that the Berkshire Eagle is the newspaper with the most circulation in town.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to designate The Berkshire Eagle as the newspaper for publications. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

**DESIGNATION OF SELECTBOARD MEMBER TO REVIEW WARRANTS**

MOTION by Mike Denault to designate Nancy Bushika to review bills and have the authority to approve payments prior to Selectboard meetings. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

**DESIGNATION OF HIGHWAY LIASON**

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint John Dunn as liaison to the highway department. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DESIGNATION OF SHERIFF/STATE POLICE LIASON

MOTION by John Dunn to appoint Mike Denault as liaison to the sheriff's department/state police. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DESIGNATION OF SCHOOL LIASON

MOTION by John Dunn to appoint Kurt Gamari as school liaison. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DESIGNATION OF ETHICS LIASON

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Jed Gramlin as ethics liaison. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DESIGNATION OF DV FIBER REPRESENTATION

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to appoint Bill Levine and Robert Briggs as DV Fiber representatives. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DESIGNATION OF BENNINGTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE (BCSW) ALLIANCE REPRESENTATIVE

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Nancy Bushika as BCSW Alliance representative. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### APPOINTMENTS

Nancy Bushika cautioned everyone that town appointments should not be used for personal advantage, they should be for the good of the town. She also encouraged everyone to show up for scheduled meetings and be prepared. All board members need to be aware of the Open Meeting Laws and Conflicts of Interest because violations can be costly to the town and will cause a distrust of the town. The board discussed the expiring appointments and decided to renew the appointments tonight and send out letters confirming them, with a few exceptions.

1. Zoning Administrator. Nancy Bushika would like to wait until after the executive session before making a decision.
2. Zoning Board of Adjustment: Theodore N. Dobbert – 3 year term.
3. Zoning Board of Adjustment, alternate: Angela Trudeau – 1 year term.
4. Emergency Management Director: Robert Briggs – 1 year term.
5. Emergency Management Coordinators: Sheila G. Lawrence – 1 year term, Stewart Johnson – 1 year term, and Stephanie Shelburne – 1 year term.
6. Dog Officer: Luke McKay – 1 year term.
7. Energy Coordinator: vacant – 1 year term. Anyone interested in serving as Energy Coordinator should contact a Select Board member.
8. Septic Officer: Maura Hawkins – 1 year term.
9. Planning Commission. Jim Stimpson and Lisa Gramlin said the Planning Commission would like to request that their membership be reduced to 7 people. Nick Zaiac from the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) said that there should not be an alternate position to the Planning Commission; only the Zoning Board of Adjustment should have an alternate. He also stated that 7 members is the ideal, most manageable amount of people. It will be easier to reach a quorum. The board agreed to remove the alternate position as recommended.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to reduce the membership of the Planning Commission from 9 people to 7 people. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Nancy Bushika recognized the resignation of Peter Greenbush from the Planning Commission.

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept Peter Greenbush's letter of resignation with regret. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

The board discussed balancing the expiring terms more evenly.

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Jim Stimpson to the 4 year term ending in 2028 vacated by Peter Greenbush and terminate Jim Stimpson's 4 year term ending in 2027. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to not re-appoint the four year term expiring 2026 currently held by Sheila Lawrence and send her a letter thanking her for her many years of service. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

10. Conservation Commission: Sheila Lawrence – 4 year term.

11. Road Commissioner: David R. Tatro – 1 year term.

12. Tree Warden: vacant – 1 year term. Anyone interested should contact a Select Board member.

13. BCRC Representatives: Debra Burchard – 1 year term and Lisa Gramlin – 1 year term.

14. The BCRC has asked the town to appoint a representative to serve on their regional Transportation Advisory Committee. Anyone interested should contact a Select Board member.

Green Up Day Coordinator: vacant – 1 year term (Marta Miller is not able to serve this year). Anyone interested in serving as Green Up Day Coordinator should contact a Select Board member.

15. Community Projects Committee: MOTION by Nancy Bushika to phase out the Community Projects Committee since the money has been depleted. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to make all the appointments as discussed and send letters to each person letting them know they have been re-appointed. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

16. Health Officer: Luke McKay – 3 year term. This position expires on March 31, 2026 and is appointed by state with the town's recommendation. MOTION by Mike Denault to recommend to the state that Luke McKay should be reappointed as Town Health Officer. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Callie Fishburn from the BCRC spoke to the board about the municipal planning grant awarded to the state. The town signed the state agreement through the portal. She presented an agreement between the town and BCRC to contract with them to complete the town plan.

MOTION by John Dunn to accept and sign the agreement with the BCRC as provided. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. Deb Burchard asked about the hiring of the third laborer. The cost is nearly \$100,000.00 when you include benefits and she didn't see any discussion about the cost in the minutes. Decisions to hire and set salaries are done during executive session, so although it was discussed, it was not during open meeting.

3. Deb Burchard asked about the status of the logging operation since the surface of Mill Road was beginning to soften with the change in weather. Dave Tatro advised that Hunter Excavating on Risky Ranch Road has stopped and moved out. There are two other logging operations and Dave Tatro talked to one of them. He will be posting the roads soon and they will only be able to use the roads when they are frozen. He feels they are very considerate and do less damage than other trucks that use the road frequently.

#### MINUTES

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to accept the regular meeting minutes of February 5, 2026 as written. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### HIGHWAY UPDATE

1. Dave Tatro discussed the updated Road and Bridge Standards. He recommended that the Select

Board sign it in order to be eligible for grants.

MOTION by John Dunn to accept and sign the Road and Bridge Standards as presented. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. Mud season is coming and Dave Tatro asked for everyone's patience with the roads. He can't run a truck of heavy stone to fix a muddy spot unless the road is frozen. He asked residents to limit their travel back and forth until mud season is over. He will be posting the roads.

3. The Ram truck is back at Bedard Brothers to have the turbo fixed.

4. Dave Tatro has received a quote for the new truck from Chrysler Ford in Claremont, New Hampshire. The dealer will work with H.P. Fairfield so the town can pay once and they will order the truck with the specifications the town needs. The purchase and sale will be coming soon.

5. Dave Tatro ordered salt two months ago but has not received it. New York has contracted with the salt companies for large amounts this year and it has reduced the salt available. The town still has salt and Dave Tatro is using it sparingly.

6. Dave Tatro will work with the town clerk to prepare bid packages for the paving projects that were approved at town meeting. It was suggested that if the company is willing to honor their quote from last fall, we could forego the bidding process.

7. Dave Tatro has been shoveling the entrances at the school. He is willing to do it this year, but feels the job needs to go back to the school next year. Mike Denault would like to resume joint meetings with the school board and feels the town should be part of the janitor discussion. Dave Tatro said the school has a separate line item with extra money for snow removal beyond the janitor's regular pay that they are not using.

#### RECYCLING

Buzz Wheeler has been having some difficulty and asked to be moved to the substitute position and let Joe Fachini do the regular weekly shift. He and Steve Senecal can fill in as needed. The board was agreeable.

#### TOWN MEETING RESULTS

The Select Board felt town meeting went well. If Green Mountain Power is planning some underground wire work, Dave Tatro doesn't feel they will be doing it this year. He will contact Green Mountain Power to confirm. John Dunn stated that John Paul Potvin did a good job as moderator.

#### AUDITOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Lori Shepard reviewed the auditor's recommendations from the 2025 audit. They continue to recommend the consolidation of accounts and have set up easy forms for the treasurer to allocate interest. They recommend that the salaries to the Zoning Administrator and Delinquent Tax Collector be paid differently since the money is not raised through taxes. The auditor also suggested creating a highway capital account to set aside money for re-occurring projects.

#### GRAND LIST for 2025

MOTION by Mike Denault to sign the 2025 Grand List stating there were no suits pending. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### ROAD AGREEMENT

The Select Board signed the agreement with Hunter Excavating permitting them to plow the Class 4 section of Risky Ranch Road due to the National Forest logging job. The insurance certificate and recording fee was received.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve the Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit application from VELCO. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The appropriate fee and insurance information was received from the applicant.

NEMRC CONTRACT

Nancy Bushika noted that the town has one lister who was elected last year. A write-in candidate received enough votes to become a lister but hasn't accepted the position yet. Deb Burchard stated that she has been in touch with Beth Miller, the state's District Advisor assigned to Stamford, and she wants to set up a meeting with the listers and Nancy Bushika. Deb Burchard said Beth Miller will help the town through this transition. Nancy Bushika questioned whether she would remain as Assessor Clerk or if the listers would now do the work. Deb Burchard supported signing the contract with NEMRC since they will not be ready to meet the deadlines this spring. The NEMRC rate will be \$95.00/hour and \$47.50/hour for travel time.

MOTION by John Dunn to sign the NEMRC contract as written. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Select Board received a letter stating that there has been an Open Meeting Law violation. The board will discuss the matter during executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature general public knowledge of a pending or probable civil litigation and personnel matters would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session for a pending or probable civil litigation matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F) and for personnel matters to discuss the Zoning Administrator position and Lister salary, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Select Board entered executive session at 8:00 p.m. Deb Burchard was invited briefly to participate.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:58 p.m.

- Action:
1. A letter will be drafted in response to the Open Meeting Law violation.
  2. The board agreed to appoint Deb Burchard to the Zoning Administrator position for a one year term.
  3. The board set the salary for training by the listers.
  4. The board agreed that Nancy Bushika would continue working as Assessor Clerk for the time being.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 9:00p.m.

Kurt Gamari  
Clerk

/las

REMINDERS

1. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at [vtalert.gov](http://vtalert.gov) to receive notifications. You can choose how you would like to be alerted (phone call, text

or email) and can choose what type of alerts you would like to receive, i.e. weather, road closures, public health, etc.

2. Anyone interested in serving as Energy Coordinator, Tree Warden, BCRC Representative to the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, or Green Up Day Coordinator, should contact a Select Board member or the town office.

3. The town office is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and on Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Closed Mondays.