

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECT BOARD MEETING
September 17, 2026
(UNAPPROVED)

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, John Dunn, and Jedidiah Gramlin.
Kurt Gamari was not present.

Visitors: Brian Arnold, Debra Burchard, Rep. Jonathan Cooper, Christopher Derby-Kilfoyle, Lisa Gramlin, Sheila Pecor, James Stimpson, Julie Swanson, Beth Thomas, Pamela Tworig, Mary Lou Wright.
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. The reappraisal agreement and an executive session were added to the agenda. Jed Gramlin recorded the meeting for his YouTube video.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Representative Jonathan Cooper came to discuss changes from the recent legislative session and answer questions from the Select Board. He focused on changes to the municipal tax sale law such as requiring the posting of a notice on the building of any structure going up for tax sale which has become a difficulty for the town. It creates an uncomfortable situation, potential conflict, jeopardizes the safety of the municipal officer and liability for the town. If the town hires a police officer to assist with the posting, the cost is not reimbursable. He was questioned how he learns what his constituents want. He attends town meetings, holds public events, attends Select Board meetings and listens to the committee chairs. Beth Thomas asked about the rising health care costs and Julie Swanson and Jim Stimpson were interested in hearing about playground grants available for the school. Pam Tworig mentioned Act 181 and the disconnect between the law makers, the regional planning commissions and the people. Nancy Bushika brought up the mandate for towns to reappraise every six years and the planning of regional assessment districts. The board thanked Representative Cooper for coming.
2. Mary Lou Wright is looking for Select Board support for the Green Mountain Hometown Heroes program. Families can sponsor a banner to be displayed on poles and there should be no cost to the town. She presented the rules and regulations to the Select Board. She would like to spearhead this program and still needs to work through how the banners will be installed on the poles, as well as some other details. The board questioned installing banners along the state highway, but agreed there are several other towns with banners on state highways. The board gave its approval for her to proceed.
3. Lisa Gramlin felt that the September 3, 2026 minutes sounded like the Planning Commission was exploring a municipal water and septic system. The board is not pursuing a municipal water or sewer system and is proactively trying to protect the town's water sources to prevent having to go down that road.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 3, 2026 as written, with the Planning Commission's clarification. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #37 \$11,245.21 payroll

WARRANT #38 \$92,720.65 accounts payable

HIGHWAY UPDATE

1. The sweeper arrived but had several breakdowns. Dave Tatro has hired another company to complete the road sweeping.
2. The highway crew has been ditching on Sumer Road and will begin ditching Mill Road next.
3. There has been some equipment breakdowns and the Freightliner is back in Westminster, NH for repairs.
4. Dave Tatro does not feel he will be able to complete the culvert project at the intersection of Sportsmen Road and Suzanne Drive this year. The weather is changing and the ground will be too wet. Dave Tatro expects the East Road culvert project will probably be done next year also.
5. The board discussed the days the school will be closed this fall and Dave Tatro will try to coordinate the tennis court cleanup when school is not in session.
6. The bill for the paving project is about \$7,000.00 higher than the signed contract. Dave Tatro spoke with the company and they estimated the amount of tonnage needed for the contract, but the actual amount used was slightly more. Obtaining the loan has been a difficult process but the paperwork was signed this week and the loan is complete.

MOTION by John Dunn to pay the All States Construction paving bill. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

RECYCLING

1. Dave Tatro said the Casella saga continues. The company is so large, there is no local contact and it requires a lengthy phone call to schedule a pickup. He needed to have the container dumped and called Hill Town Recycling & Waste in Clarksburg who came up that day. Dave Tatro has contacted Delmolino whose quotes are much more expensive than Casella. He will request a price from Hill Town, who also dumps waste at the same place as Casella so there should be no problem with the state. The board reviewed the costs and discussed higher fees for non-residents and other ways to bring in funds.
2. The Household Hazardous Waste facility in Bennington will be closing on October 5, 2026 for the winter season.
3. The Alliance is working with the Department of Transportation and Emergency Management on a disaster debris plan.
4. Nancy Bushika reminded the board that one of them will need to join the Alliance. There are only a few online meetings a year.

REAPPRAISAL AGREEMENT

The Select Board reviewed the proposed agreement from Nemrc for \$86,400.00. The appraisal work would begin in 2030 with a 2032 completion date.

MOTION by Mike Denault to sign the reappraisal agreement. SECONDED by Jed Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

JOINT MEETING WITH THE LIBRARY TRUSTEES AND SCHOOL BOARD

The Select Board has scheduled a joint meeting with the Library Trustees and School Board members on Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 6 p.m. Nancy Bushika cannot attend but would like the board to discuss the removal of the slide near the Leo Ethier Memorial Garden.

HALLOWEEN HOURS

The Select Board agreed to set Halloween trick or treat hours the same as last year (6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on October 31, 2026). The Fire Department will be contacted for traffic control.

NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION

The state will be mailing a ballot to every registered voter. Anyone who wishes to vote in person should bring their mailed ballot with them. Voters who do not bring their ballots will be asked to sign an affidavit indicating that they have not already voted by absentee ballot.

BUILDING PERMITS

At the last meeting, the board discussed a minimum size building that would not need a permit and questioned if there was a minimum size that would not be assessed. Nancy Bushika spoke with the town's assessor. The assessor said the Select Board could designate a minimum permit size requirement, but if the assessor feels a shed would add value to a property, she will assess it, regardless of the size. The board debated a minimum building size, perhaps under 300 square feet, that would not need a permit. Deb Burchard said the setbacks would still need to be met. The Select Board agreed that the Zoning Administrator does not need to post a "P" for structures less than 300 square feet that only require the filing of a notice.

DELINQUENT DOG LIST

The town clerk has licensed two more dogs since the last meeting. One dog owner is waiting for a rabies vaccination appointment in October. There has been no response to the letter imposing fines that was sent out. The next step will be increased fines and then court.

DELINQUENT TAX SALE

The delinquent tax sale is scheduled for Thursday, September 24, 2026 at 1 p.m. There are two properties left, the rest have been paid and removed from the tax sale list.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Jed Gramlin to find that premature general public knowledge of a real estate matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Jed Gramlin to enter executive session concerning a real estate matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F)(2). SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Select Board entered executive session at 8:00 p.m. Lori Shepard was invited 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 8:17 p.m. Action: The board made provisions for the posting of the next tax sale notice and finalized plans for the upcoming delinquent tax sale.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 8:18 p.m.

Nancy L. Bushika, pro tempore
Chair

/las

REMINDERS

1. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at vtalert.gov to receive notifications. You can choose how you would like to be alerted and what type of alerts you would like to receive, i.e. weather, road closures, public health, etc.

2. Anyone interested in serving as Lister, Energy Coordinator, Tree Warden, or BCRC Representative to the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, should submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.
3. Anyone interested in serving on the Finance Committee should submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.
4. Anyone interested in organizing the Christmas tree lighting ceremony this year should contact a member of the Select Board.
5. 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.