# Select Board Meeting Mount Holly Town Office July 8th, 2025

**6:00 pm**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:** Mark Turco, Diana Garrow, Jeff Chase, Faith Tempest, Clinton Woolley, David Johnson, Elizabeth Karle, Carol Garrow-Woolley, Christine Pratt, James Seward, Donna Seward, Edgar Pauk, June Capron, Zena Gates, Craig Fortier, Maria Fortier, Stephen Michel, Alexandra Yuster, Jeffery Warfle, Gavin Capozzi, Dennis Devereux, Paul Wellin, Kevin Plew, Patti Plew, Christine Boudreau, Dave Tilly, Alissa Chronert, Michael Chronert, via Zoom - Phil Crane, Phil Leonard, Mary Leonard, Mark Knoll

1. Call to Order at 6.02pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance: Mark Turco dedicated the pledge of allegiance to Paul Barton who had donated the flags to the Town Office.
3. Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda: items 6b, 7a and 7c where tabled until the next meeting; appointment of Conservation Commission member added to 5c; Catering liquor license request added to item 6a; Ludlow Police Traffic enforcement services moved to follow item 6a; new item 6g Town office electrical systems; item 8 additional comment Katie Kleczkowski.
4. Approval of June 10th Minutes. Diana Garrow moved to approve the minutes, Mark Turco seconded, approved unanimously.
5. **Reports**
   1. Highway and Transfer Station Update - Clinton Woolley: Road maintenance has been completed on Lake Ninevah Road, and culvert work on Hortonville Road. Mowing has started but has been delayed by an equipment failure. The Transfer Station was inspected with no contamination or major issues reported. A couple of signs are needed, and the inspector proposed measures to control odor and flies in the food scrap bins, including purchase of biodegradable bags. These are available at a cost, although Casella does not require them. Mr Woolley will take other recommended steps to see if this improves the situation. He also reported that Casella have introduced a cost of $45 per mattress and per box spring ($90 per set). Information on this will be circulated in the Chit Chat, Newsflash and other venues. Paul Wellin requested the Town make repairs to a culvert at his property on Windy Hill Road. Mr Woolley noted this was not installed by the Town or up to Town standards so would not be Town responsibility. Mark Turco agreed to inspect along with Clinton Woolley. Mr Wellin also asked for calcium chloride to be applied on Hortonville Road to reduce dust; Mark Turco responded that due to the rainy conditions this is not effective.
   2. Listers’ Report - David Johnson
      1. Grand List Errors and Omissions: the utility companies (Vermont Transco, GMP and Comcast) had filed grievances with the Town which had not received relevant information from the State. Following receipt of that information the Grand List errors and omissions were rectified. There were no other errors or omissions.
      2. Waiving Homestead Penalty: Diana Garrow moved to waive the Homestead Penalty, seconded by Jeff Chase, approved unanimously.
   3. Town Treasurer Update - Elizabeth Karle
      1. Monthly Income and Expenses Report: the cash position is relatively good and should remain so until tax revenues come in. This partly reflects FEMA reimbursements for work undertaken in FY24.
      2. FY26 Tax Rate: The tax rate has been set reflecting the State’s rates which increase the Homestead rate by almost 16% and the non-homestead rate by 3.1%); the proposed rate for Mount Holly is 0.4823, representing approximately a 4.5% increase in the non-homestead rate and almost 15% in the homestead rate; almost three quarters of this is for education. Mark Turco made a motion to approve the tax rate at 0.4823, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously. Dennis Devereux stated that in his experience there may be some reduction in the education taxes later in the year. Liz Karle noted that the bills will go out no later than July 28th, and proposed the last date for the early payment discount be August 28th. Diana Garrow made a motion to set the last date for a 4% early payment discount on taxes to be set for 28th August. Mark Turco seconded, approved unanimously.
   4. Planning Commission Update - Jon McCann: tabled
   5. Conservation Commission Update - Phil Crane. Phil Crane noted the interest by Birgir Nilsen to join the Conservation Commission and encouraged the Select Board to approve his nomination. He then asked Alexandra Yuster to speak regarding Star Lake. Ms Yuster noted that since the designation of Star Lake as a wetland the proposed weed harvesting will require a permit costing approximately $20,000 before any work can be done. The recent Arrowood Study of the Lake shows its good condition and the proposed selective harvesting would not affect that, and would improve opportunities for recreational use by the community. The Commission is proposing to write to State legislators to get a waiver allowing the weed harvesting and Ms Yuster asked for the Select Board’s support for this initiative. Select Board members gave their support. Jeff Chase made a motion to appoint Birgir Nilsen to the Conservation Commission, seconded by Mark Turco, approved unanimously.
6. **New Business**
   1. Belmont General Store Liquor License application/ update on Belmont General Store (Alissa Chronert): Alissa Chronert reported that the General Store has now opened for limited hours while staffing options are being considered. She asked for approval of the 2nd degree liquor license. Mark Turco made a motion to approve the license application, Jeff Chase seconded, approved unanimously. Mark Turco stated that the Select Board had received a caterer’s liquor license permit request for an event at 283 Okemo View Lane, also owned by Alissa Chronert. Ms Chronert stated that she was not involved in any way in the event. Dave Tilly stated that the site was offered at no cost to a neighbor for them to hold a wedding and that he himself also had no involvement. Kevin Plew asked if this venue was now being used as a commercial wedding venue, despite earlier assurances to the Select Board that it would not; as such the venue should be properly permitted and the Town should have a chance to vote as to whether they want a wedding venue. Mark Turco responded that the Select Board Clerk would seek further clarification on this and that a decision on the License application would be made at a Special meeting. Mark Turco also noted that the sketches of the elevations of the General Store show that it will improve the Town. Diana Garrow noted that the drawings raise questions regarding the Store’s boundary line and whether the proposals will encroach on the Town’s right of way. Mark Turco responded that he and Clinton Woolley will make a site visit to review the details. Dave Tilly and Michael Chronert noted that the proposals would allow a stop sign on Belmont Road, helping to reduce speeding.
   2. Ludlow Police Department traffic enforcement services. Chief Jeffery Warfle of Ludlow Police Department asked what kind of services the Town is looking for in terms of hours, times of day and location. Ludlow can provide enforcement services at a rate of approximately $80-100 per hour with all costs included in that amount. Services could be started in the next few weeks once details are agreed. Mark Turco responded that the Select Board will discuss and revert to the Chief.
   3. Appointment of Town Health Officer. Mark Turco made a motion to reappoint Chad Farrar as Town Health Officer for a three year period, seconded by Jeff Chase, approved unanimously.
   4. Appointment of Board of Adjustment member: Mark Turco made a motion to reappoint Stephen Michel to the Board of Adjustment, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
   5. Land records software: Carol Garrow Woolley reported that the contract with Cotts for management of land records expires in September; a new proposal was received today. She would like the Select Board to consider switching the land records management to NEMRC. Jeff Chase asked that a representative of NEMRC come to the next Select Board meeting to present a proposal. He noted that a key issue will be transition of records.
   6. Purchase of laptop for Select Board Office: following review of three options, Diana Garrow made a motion to allow Faith Tempest to purchase a 17” HP laptop at a price of $329. Seconded by Mark Turco, approved unanimously.
   7. Town Office electrical issues: Following some power issues in the Treasurer's office Elizabeth Karle asked for an assessment of the electrical system. Jeff Chase proposed getting quotes for a review.
7. **Old Business**
   1. Review bids for Paving Hortonville Road: Jeff Chase gave the details of the three bids received: Fuller $278,600, Pike $290,675, and Wilk $303,870. He noted that with the lowest bid there would also be funds left in the grant to connect to the intersection and undertake crack sealing. Diana Garrow moved to accept the Fuller bid plus $30,000 for connection to the intersection and the remainder of the grant used for striping and crack sealing. Mark Turco seconded, approved unanimously.
   2. Traffic Enforcement:
      1. Purchase of radar speed signs: Jeff Chase noted the two options, Radar Signs at $3796 and Elon City at $3000. He had received recommendations for Elon City from other towns. The Elon City sign is mobile and has the ability to track and record speeds and times. Elizabeth Karle noted that the entire budget for traffic enforcement is only $6000. Mark Turco moved to purchase one sign, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
      2. Speed limit on section of Rte 155: proposed letter to Vermont Traffic Committee. Mark Knoll had prepared a letter on behalf of the Select Board to which they agreed the contents. Mark Knoll reiterated his offer to coordinate signatures of residents to support the effort and be a point of contact. Christine Boudreau and Dennis Devereux both spoke of speeding traffic on Rte 155, including trucks. In response Jeff Chase suggested calling the trucking companies.
8. **Citizen Comments:** 
   1. Evelyn Tully Costa and Katie Kleczkowski - Hortonville Road dust issue and request for speed limit sign: Mark Turco noted that the paving of Hortonville Road would stop the dust issue. Katie Kleczkowski asked for a speed limit sign on Hortonville Road to try to reduce speeding traffic. Mark Turco responded that signs are being stolen, but the Highway Department will check that there is adequate signage.
   2. Dennis Devereux reported that the refurbishment of the Veterans Monument is complete. He also noted that a quote for tree removal at Carlton Cemetery will be submitted - he would like this to be funded through the unutilized cemetery maintenance budget.
9. **Announcements:** none
10. **Review & Sign Orders**
11. **Adjourn** 7.35 pm

In draft form until approved at the Regular Select Board meeting August 12th 2025.

A video recording of this meeting can be found at: <https://okemovalley.tv/mount-holly-selectboard-78>