

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Minutes of September 22, 2026**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Tim Davis, Lydia Petty, Merry Shernock, and John Stevens. Also present were Town Manager Mary Smith, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Kristin Pollard, Lorna Doney, Jerry Tabor, and Elroy C. Hill.

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** There was no change to the posted agenda.

- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.

- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (7:03 p.m.)**

- a. September 8, 2026 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Board member Petty, seconded by Board member Shernock, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- V. APPROVAL OF BILLS (7:04 p.m.)**

- a. Approval of Warrant #06-27 & #06-27A.** Motion by Board member Shernock, seconded by Board member Davis, to approve Warrant #06-27 & #06-27A in the amount of \$2,074,485.46. Chair Maxwell noted that of the total warrant amount, \$1,660,500 represented property taxes collected by the municipality and then forwarded to the Paine Mountain School District. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. Receipt of Biweekly Payroll through September 13, 2026.** Motion by Board member Stevens, seconded by Board member Shernock, to receive the biweekly payroll in the amount of \$125,593.50. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- VI. SELECT BOARD (7:07 p.m.)**

- a. Main Street Bridge Replacement Project Traffic Detours.** Manager Smith wanted to bring this matter to the Select Board members' attention because this project is scheduled to commence next spring and some decisions need to be made beforehand. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) in its last presentation to the Select Board about this project (08/12/25) provided its recommendations for traffic and pedestrian detours while the Main Street Bridge is out of service. Their recommendation is to have two-way traffic on the south side of Depot Square with the detour route then travelling to Wall Street and Water Street and ending at the Water Street intersection with North Main Street. Manager Smith said the Highway Department has expressed concerns about how adjacent streets also will be affected by this detour route so she is recommending that parking along Pearl Street be banned for the duration of the project. This would make it safer for any overflow traffic and improve pedestrian safety as well. Board member Davis believes many drivers will be using Central Street to bypass the additional traffic on Depot Square so it also might be best to restrict parking on lower Central Street near its intersection with Wall Street. Board member Petty noted VTrans said the municipality could add additional signage and other temporary safety measures provided it paid for them. She felt that the intersection of Water Street and Union Street definitely will need additional pedestrian safety signage. Board member Shernock suggested that flashing pedestrian signs be installed at that location. Board member Davis said there are overhead utility lines there that could be used for hanging additional lighting. Board member Petty thought the intersection of Wall Street and Water Street also will require extra consideration as possibly hazardous. Chair Maxwell assumes that the detour signage will start just south of the closed bridge near the intersection of North Main Street and East Street. Board member Davis believes that VTrans will discern the optimal location for the start of the detour route. There should be a massive amount of signage at this location.

Chair Maxwell said it sounds like some Northfield Common parking will be eliminated on the south side of Depot Square due to the temporary two-way traffic there. Board member Davis said it appeared from the map that the parking spaces adjacent to the Common will be eliminated during the bridge closure. Lorna Doney works on the Common and said that the current signage there is already a bit confusing. Board member Shernock noted that the two-way traffic will only be for one block and only for the twelve (12) weeks when the bridge is out of operation. Board member Stevens asked why the additional traffic and pedestrian safety signage will need to be removed after the project is completed. Board member Petty said the signage is probably designed to be temporary only and not for longtime usage, i.e. plastic barriers, etc. Board member Davis added that any temporary parking bans, etc. would have to be included in our traffic ordinance to become permanent. Board member Stevens would like any curb cuts and other lasting pedestrian safety measures made permanent. He also wanted to know why the sidewalk on the south end of the Common would be temporarily closed. Chair Maxwell said that was probably for pedestrian safety due to the proximity of the temporary two-way traffic there. He added that the Select Board members will need to keep these planned traffic and pedestrian detours in mind as the project approaches and decisions need to be made about temporary parking bans, purchasing additional safety signage, etc. Board member Petty felt it was important to remind residents that these will be temporary measures only that are needed to address the three-month closure of the major downtown bridge.

- b. Household Hazardous Waste Collection: Saturday, September 26, 2026.** Chair Maxwell noted this event will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. behind the Northfield Fire Station (128 Wall Street). A complete list of the materials that will and will not be accepted is available on the municipal website (www.northfield-vt.gov/public-notices) and also has been posted on Front Porch Forum.

VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT (7:30 p.m.) Manager Smith said there have been developments regarding important municipal vacancies as interviews were held recently for the Financial Director and Highway Superintendent positions. She added that ongoing major construction projects either are being completed or being prepared for winter shutdown so they can be finished next spring.

VIII. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS (7:31 p.m.)

- a. Night on the Common.** Board member Shernock wanted to thank all those who helped organize and operate this annual event that was held earlier this evening. She wanted to especially thank Board member Davis, who also serves as Assistant Chief of the Northfield Fire Department (NFD), who helping local photographer Bill Croney take the community photograph from atop the NFD tower truck. Board member Shernock said that this was a very successful event that highlighted the efforts of many local volunteer groups.
- b. Friends of the Winooski River.** Board member Shernock also wanted to thank the Friends of the Winooski River representatives who were not only present at their informational booth to provide brochures to Northfield residents but also led interested parties on walkthroughs of the proposed river path route near the location of the recently removed Cross Brothers Dam.
- c. Vermont Routes 12 & 12A Sewer Expansion, etc.** Board member Stevens asked about the status of the planned southward expansion of the municipal sewer lines. Manager Smith will confer with Director of Public Works James Russo to see if there have been any recent developments. Board member Stevens also would like to see a job description for the new Director of Public Works position.

- d. **Northfield Post Office Curb Cut.** Board member Stevens asked if this curb cut will be installed when the water main installation contractor comes back to complete its punch list. Board member Davis believes an engineer would have to design the curb cut first. Board member Petty believes former manager Jeff Schulz had informed the Select Board that he had been told by civil engineers that installing a curb cut in front of the post office would create safety problems. Manager Smith will look into this and report back to the Select Board. Board member Shernock noted that the post office in Northfield Falls is fully handicapped accessible.
- e. **Northfield Community Goals.** Chair Maxwell would like to see an updated list of short-, medium-, and long-term community goals as determined by the most recent board retreats. Manager Smith will provide this information.
- f. **FY 2027-2028 Town Budget.** Chair Maxwell would like a formal report regarding the status of the budget process. He also would like the upcoming budget sessions to start earlier than last year and (hopefully) include more input from members of the public. The budget meetings are where many important decisions are made regarding the budget to be presented for public approval on Town Meeting Day.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED) (7:40 p.m.)

- a. **Jerry Tabor, Tabor Earth Extractors: Sand & Gravel Bid Process.** Mr. Tabor wanted to get some clarity on the recent bid process. Manager Smith said bids for road sand and crushed stone were solicited from regional providers. Based on price, quality, and availability, the bids were awarded to Northeast Material Group. Mr. Tabor is confused by this because he submitted a lower bid for winter sand and the quality of his material has never been questioned. Manager Smith is willing to discuss the decision-making process with Mr. Tabor should he want to meet later.
- b. **Elroy C. Hill: Vehicle Speeds in Northfield Falls.** Although Mr. Hill is grateful for the increased law enforcement presence on local roads, he doesn't feel that the speeding problem in Northfield Falls has been truly resolved. Manager Smith is disappointed to hear this as the Northfield Police Department (NPD) has made a real effort to address this public concern. Mr. Hill suggested that additional road signage might be slow down traffic, which he felt now constitutes a real safety hazard to anyone walking along Vermont Route 12 North. Chair Maxwell has seen patrol vehicles operating near the Falls General Store on several occasions. He said that a pro-active stance with additional signage might be the correct approach.

- X. EXECUTIVE SESSION** Motion by Board member Shernock, seconded by Board member Petty, to go into executive session, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (a)(1)], in order to discuss contract negotiations and a legal matter. Manager Smith and Town Attorney Mick Leddy both will be present for the first discussion but not for the second one.
Motion passed 5-0-0.

The Board went into executive session at 8:15 p.m.

Manager Smith and Mr. Leddy left the executive session at 8:25 p.m.

Motion by Board member Shernock, seconded by Board member Petty, to come out of executive session. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board came out of executive session at 9:00 p.m. No action was taken.

- XI. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Board member Shernock, seconded by Board member Petty, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

A video recording of this meeting is available at: <https://youtu.be/iuhD0RQNISM>

These minutes are subject to approval at the next Select Board regular meeting.