

APPROVED MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF BENSON, VT
MARCH 30th, 2026, 6:00pm

Selectboard Present:

Brad Barrett, Guy Charlton, Daryl Burlett, Ben Bartholomew

Selectboard Absent:

Jim Pritchard

Others Present:

Carrie LaFond (Selectboard Assistant), Heidi Chandler (Town Clerk/Treasurer)

Public Present: Jack and Roxy Helm, Paul LaFond, John Binhammer, Adam Stewart

Call to Order:

Brad Barrett (Chair) called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Approve Agenda:

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Ben Bartholomew to approve the agenda as amended, motion carried

Amendment To Agenda:

Add Fire Department to the agenda for every meeting

Nature Conservancy:

- John Binhammer explained to the board they have purchased the development rights to the Walker parcel for forestry management. The land was already under current use, and nothing will really change for the Town.

Fire Department

- Fire Chief Adam Stewart let the board know they are bidding on two items: an air fill station and a rescue truck. The truck has a set cap for the truck, and both are in Rockingham.
- Also, the fire chief gave a reminder to call Heath Perkins (Forest Fire Warden) at 802-884-5055 for a burn permit. There have already been several brush fires.

Approve Selectboard Minutes:

Motion by Guy Charlton to approve March 16th, 2026, minutes as presented, second by Ben Bartholomew, motion carried.

- Discussion on Minutes of 3/23/26
- Board's understanding is the used excavator was to be purchased from the owner in Chester, VT

Motion by Ben Bartholomew, second by Guy Charlton to amend the minutes of March 23rd for the motion to be to purchase the used excavator from the owner in Chester, VT, motion carried

Motion by Ben Bartholomew to approve March 23rd, 2026, minutes as amended, second by Guy Charlton, motion carried.

Pay Bills:

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Payroll in the amount of \$17,944.12 second by Daryl Burlett, motion carried, Brad Barrett abstained.

- Discussion why an hour of overtime was marked as not qualified. **Answer:** overtime was paid at the overtime rate; however it was not considered tax-exempt (qualified) status because some personal time was used the same week (this is for tax purposes only)

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Bills in the amount of \$789,303.72 second by Daryl Burlett, motion carried.

- Discussion on the purchase of the mini excavator for the transfer station
 - The board questioned why the excavator was purchased from Casella Construction instead of the one in Chester. **Answer:** The owner of the one in Chester decided not to sell and the excavator Cassella's had was 7 years newer for the same cost.
 - Discussion the board had given approval at the prior meeting and concerns should have been addressed then.
 - Question was asked if a new one was investigated? **Answer:** Yes, however it would have been around \$80,000-100,000 and there was no zero percent financing.
 - Concerns about the reach of the new excavator.
 - Purchasing Policy to be reviewed and possibly changed at the next regular board meeting.

Motion by Daryl Burlett, second by Ben Bartholomew to authorize payment to Casella Construction in the amount of \$38,000 for the purchase of the CAT305 excavator for the transfer station, motion carried

Motion by Daryl Burlett, second by Ben Bartholomew for Guy Charlton to secure financing at the Orwell bank for \$38,000 for a term of 3 years with payments two times a year, following tax payments in March and September) for the purchase of the CAT305 excavator for the transfer station, motion carried

Highway Department:

Road Foreman Report

1. Grader repaired and the bill was less than anticipated
2. Working on filling potholes
3. Trees on Coates Hill taken care of
4. Charlie Brown wishes to be considered for road material

Excess Weight Permits

Motion by Ben Bartholomew, second by Daryl Burlett for Brad Barrett (Chair) to sign the excess weight permits for the following: Consolidated Communications, Roberts' Energy, D & F Excavating and Paving, S & J Stearns, Q & Q Inc, Camp Precast, Barrett Trucking, John Trombley Construction, HOP Energy LLC, Feed Commodities International, motion carried.

Road Commissioner- Absent

Transfer Station: Nothing

Board of Sewer Commissioners: Tabled

Treasurer Report

- Reminder 3 officers need to sign warrants; they don't all have to sign at the exact same time.

Town Clerk

Board of Liquor Control

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Daryl Burlett to recess the Select Board and reconvene as the Board of Liquor Control, motion carried.

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Daryl Burlett to approve the 1st class, 3rd Class and Catering license for The Wheel Inn, motion carried.

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Daryl Burlett to recess the Board of Liquor Control and reconvene as the Select Board, motion carried.

Old Business:

Fence Between Town office and Bowen Property- Tabled

New Business:

Sign Posting for Appointments and Selectboard Organization

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Daryl Burlett for the board to sign the appointment and board organization posting, motion carried

Correspondence:

VLCT Attorney Smead Hearing Notice

- May 28th remote hearing on the Smead matter, Guy will attend remotely

Motion to adjourn by Daryl Burlett at 7:25 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie LaFond
Selectboard Assistant

Documents referenced in these minutes can be found at the Benson Town Office.