

TOWN OF PEACHAM
Wednesday, September 30, 2026
Selectboard Meeting
Hybrid meeting in the Peacham Town Offices and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: William Kempton, Selectboard, Christian Snow, Selectboard, Andrea Otto, Selectboard, Christina Rumery, Selectboard, Anna Carvalho, Selectboard Clerk, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Robert Starbuck, Dave Edwards, Dave Stauffer, Rusty Barber, Karen Lewis, Eric Page, Ross, Page, Charlotte Mooney, Jeff Slade, Milton Cat, Michael Howrigan, United Construction & Forestry

Via Zoom: Alfred Dedam, Selectboard Chair, Rebecca Washington, Town Clerk, Janie Carle

Minutes

1. Call to order by William at 06:30pm, on Wednesday, September 30th, 2026
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. Tree damage near roller barn – Dave Stauffer
 - i. Dave visited the Roller Barn and 12 stakes that were marking oak saplings he'd been nurturing were mowed down by a brush hog. The mowing went into the woods about 10ft from the snow mobile path. He felt this destructiveness was purposeful. Ross Page noted the groomer is 8.5 feet, but needs more room and explained it was his work. Some members of the board has been able to check out the area. Christian felt Dave's work had been well marked. Eric Page noted he checked it out too, but felt that the phone call from VAST was harsher than was deserved. Dave clarified where the damage was, maintaining that he couldn't understand why it was necessary. Ross explained he cut back the trees so they don't hang over the trail, and the rest appeared to be bushes to him. He agreed to meet Dave to address the issue. Alfred noted the disregard for the land is his concern and would like to discuss the threshold of what's acceptable. William asked Ross if he had permission from the Town to cut there, which Ross said he did not, but has been doing it for a long time. William feels the board needs to have a procedure for granting permission for any town property. When asked what he hoped would come from the discussion, Dave Stauffer noted that while they are not his trees, he cares for them because he recognizes the importance of oak trees. Dave Edwards suggested reaching out to VLCT.
3. Highway Department Update – Jeremy Withers
 - a. Mill Trace Bridge – lumber was delivered incorrectly. Hoping to get it corrected by next week.

- b. Requested discussion about Peacham Pond Rd and Onion Point plowing. We have subcontracted out the last couple of years with 802 Lawn Care and Plowing, who lives in the area and is interested in doing it again. He did it for \$18,000 the last two years, but this year he has requested \$20,000. We provide some materials. It was noted that he has done a great job the last couple of years. Board will confirm the purchasing policy and add it to the next meeting agenda.
- 4. Open grader bids
 - a. 2 bids. Both representatives were present. Jeremy has seen the John Deere and a comparable Cat. He noted his preferences for each.
 - i. John Deere – \$375,841 with a 7 year warranty, \$200 deductible and 5000 hours
 - ii. Caterpillar - \$425,000 with 7 year warranty, \$0 deductible and 4500 hours, 1st year of travel included. Resale value at 10,000 hours could be around \$20,000.
 - iii. Alfred stated his preference for the John Deere for price and for comparison-sake. Jeremy noted the controls and maintenance would be the same on the Caterpillar, and the cab is his preference. William commented that he preferred the John Deere for price, but would prefer the Cat for Jeremy's preference. For the Town's 7.5% responsibility, the difference is approximately \$3000. Alfred felt it would be disrespectful of the purchasing policy and defeat the purpose of the previous meeting's justification to go with the Cat. Alfred asked Charlotte Mooney for her opinion as an auditor, if we were to choose the Cat, but she did not have enough information to provide an answer. Ross Page asked if it was put out for the lowest bid, but William clarified our purchasing policy does not require it. Rusty asked that regardless of Jeremy's preference, if the John Deere was an acceptable equivalent, to which there was agreement that it was. Eric Page asked about Barnet's grader. Jeremy noted some further differences, emphasizing the length of time we'd be using it. Andrea noted how she values Jeremy's perspective, but she is undecided if his points warrants an additional \$50,000, so she's inclined to go with the lower price. Christina asked about the available funds, whether or not the money has another use. Jeremy noted that it was still dependent on FEMA approval of the project.
 - 1. **Alfred moved to accept the bid from the John Deere, seconded by Christian, Christina and Andrea in favor, William abstained, so moved.**
- 5. Town Clerk/Treasurer update
 - a. Secretary of State mailed all active registered voters a ballot, so if any resident has not yet received it, they should reach out to Rebecca.

- b. She received reimbursement from FEMA for the last outstanding reimbursement for FEMA's share of road repair from 2024.
- 6. Transfer Station prices
 - a. Christian reviewed the prices with the board. Truck load prices were a big concern, and where we were losing a lot of money. Many items only a slight increase, some stayed the same, but truck loads were increased significantly. Christina clarified that the goal is to make the dump self sustainable, as we are currently losing money. Rebecca explained the increase in personnel and low prices have caused the deficit. Rusty noted the contractor bag prices seemed low, and board agreed to increase that price to \$10. Rusty suggested redoing the cards to facilitate the new prices.
 - i. **Christina moved to approve the price increases, seconded by Andrea, all in favor, so moved.**
 - ii. Karen asked to confirm when it was effective, which Christian suggested it take effect immediately, but Rebecca noted we need the signage to help communicate the change in prices, so the effective date was determined to be pushed out to Nov 1st. Janie asked about the salaries of the attendants and if we needed two attendants. Alfred clarified the work is enough for more than one person.
 - b. Christian reviewed the signs needing to be ordered, noting the new ones would have adjustable numbering for future changes.
- 7. Cemetery Endowment Policy
 - a. Charlotte Mooney provided the background from the previous meeting, noting the considerations they have since taken, and then reviewed the changes.
 - i. **Christian moved to accept the Town of Peacham, Vermont Cemetery Fund Endowment Investment Policy, seconded by Christina, all in favor, so moved.**
 - b. Dave Stauffer noted that the fence in the old cemetery is rotting, and asked for permission to remove it.
- 8. Peacham Emergency Management – Next Steps – Robert Starbuck
 - a. Robert gave background about the plan, noting the state requires follow through on the steps we need to take. Due to the unavailability of the fire department during an emergency, there needs to be a group who can run the emergency relief in their absence. Many towns have started Emergency Management Committees. William suggested working with the previous group created, referring to the Peacham Disaster Recovery Auxiliary Committee. Robert noted will be a follow up meeting on Oct 14th at 7:00pm.
- 9. Town Hall Renovation update – Rusty Barber
 - a. Front door has been installed.
 - b. The front entry – the granite has been poured, but the mason for the next step is delayed two weeks. Then there will be a ramp poured. Timber is ready. Roof will

be built hopefully by the end of November. Then the painter would be the next step, but it may be too late.

- c. The area around the ramp will need to be adjusted in order to make sure the water goes where it should. The work may not be able to be done until spring, but they will work to make it wheelchair accessible in the interim.
- d. Heat pump change order for \$9000 due to fan changes needed. Rusty explained why he felt it was unnecessary, and offered an alternative. He's waiting to hear back.
- e. The Senturias provided grant opportunities for handicapped accessibility projects, so Rusty has reached out. If there is money available, he suggested places it could be used.

10. Public comment – none

11. Approve minutes

- a. **Christian moved to approve minutes from Wednesday, September 16, 2026, seconded by Christina, all in favor, so moved.**

12. Review and approve bills

- a. **Christian moved to approve bills as presented by the Town Treasurer seconded Andrea, all in favor, so moved.**

13. Review correspondence

- a. Italians who got approval to fly drones this fall can't make it after all, and requested permission for next year. Board agrees.
- b. John Reiss email asking if board had received his previous emails. Board acknowledged his email regarding open meeting law last meeting, but did not respond. Regarding the message about missing minutes from a long time ago, the board acknowledged it, but did not respond.
- c. Laurie Kozar emailed to encourage the board to change the speed limit in the village to 25mph and to use curb cut ins. Jeremy advised doing a traffic study via VTrans before taking the next steps. Discussion reviewing some of the previously discussed options, including sidewalks.
- d. Alfred and William attend a Groton Cemetery Committee meeting, and have since received a letter stating that Groton will be responsible for the Peacham/Groton Cemetery on odd years, and Peacham will do so on even years. Each town will apply their own standards based on their mowing contracts. Both towns had previously agreed to this, so it was just the documentation of the agreement.

14. Christian moves to adjourn at 8:27pm, seconded by Andrea, all in favor, so moved.

Documents provided to the Selectboard and discussed at this meeting are available by request to the Town Office.