

**Draft Minutes**  
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET  
April 15, 2025  
7:00 pm  
Pawlet Town Hall  
122 School Street, Pawlet, VT  
& Virtually via Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher  
Bob Jones  
Jessica Van Oort  
Tom Collard  
Rich Hulett

Others in Attendance:

PEG-TV  
Kristin Powers  
Frank Nelson  
Linda Lynton  
Sue LaPorte  
Jon Binhammer  
Ruth Lampi  
Julie Mach  
Nancy Morlino  
David Sausville  
Sarah Hannon  
Bob Morlino  
Julie Mach  
Lars Jacob  
Martha Schoenemann

**EVENT**

1. Call to order at 7:00pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher, with the Pledge of Allegiance and a summary of the Selectboard's Rules of Procedure.
2. Introduction of those present, virtually and in person.
3. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.
  - a. Additions:

- Executive Session to discuss a grievance with Zoning Administrator Morlino
  - MERP Grant signature – Old/Unfinished Business
  - b. Deletions: None
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
- Motion made to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 1, 2025 as printed.
    - Mover: Rich Hulett
    - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jessica Van Oort
    - Discussion: None.
    - Result: Approved.
5. Pre-Requested Appearances by Local Citizens and Visitors:
- Bob Morlino, Emergency Mgt. Director, requested a signature from Chairman Beecher on the Local Emergency Management Plan.
    - Motion made to have Mike Beecher sign the document.
      - Mover: Bob Jones
      - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Rich Hulett
      - Discussion: None
      - Result: Approved
  - Jon Binhammer, Nature Conservancy – Addressed the Board via Zoom regarding the conservancy’s proposed purchase of approximately 192 acres of the Moore property, to be added to their existing North Pawlet Hills land. Mr. Binhammer offered the opportunity for the Board to ask questions, ultimately seeking support of this project.
    - The Board had no questions, however Julie Mach and Nancy Morlino both questioned whether there was access to this property from Rte. 30, as well as whether the fields currently in use by a local farmer would continue to be used agriculturally.
      - Mr. Binhammer shared that this acquisition is in conjunction with the VT Land Trust, and the intention is to have the land continue to be utilized by the current farmer. Re: access, VTrans needs to be approached and, due to stringent regulations, the current proposal will be to establish access for land management. Public access will be off of Tunket Rd as well as N. Pawlet Rd.
    - Motion made to offer Pawlet Selectboard support for this project.
      - Mover: Jessica Van Oort

- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Tom Collard
  - Discussion: None
  - Result: Approved
- David Sausville, VT Fish & Wildlife – Mr. Sausville, representing both VT and US Fish & Wildlife, spoke to the Board regarding the proposal of a marker (approximately 18”x28”) honoring Pawlet’s role in the preservation of wild turkeys in Vermont.
  - Discussions took place regarding placement of the proposed marker.
  - Lars Jacob added to the topic of the reintroduction of the wild turkey, sharing how this is one of the greatest success stories in wild conservation.
  - The Board determined that they would like to support this partnership, and would like to work with the Pawlett Historical Society to place the marker in a safe and visible place so that it may be viewed and appreciated.
    - Motion made to proceed with working with the VT & US Fish and Wildlife to come up with a plan for the wild turkey restoration marker.
      - Mover: Bob Jones
      - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jessica Van Oort
      - Discussion: None
      - Result: Approved

6. Announcements: None.

7. Reports to the Board:

A. Zoning Administrator’s (ZA) Report:

- Nancy Morlino shared that 10 permits have been issued year-to-date, 3 of which are new builds.
- Rutland Regional Planning Commission is putting on a seminar regarding act 181, which she will be attending.

B. Planning Commission’s Report:

- Frank Nelson, shared a there is nothing new to report, however there will be a training available for commission members.

C. Road Foreman’s Report:

- The Highway Department provided a summary of work completed throughout the past two weeks. They also provided the Board with a list of proposed summer projects, largely revolving around culvert replacements.

- The application for the VTrans Municipal Highway Grant (for paving a portion of Rte 153) was submitted.
- D. Assessor Report: No report at this meeting.
- E. Town Clerk's Memo:
- Town Clerk, Deb Hawkins, shared a memo with the Board:
    - Two rental contracts for use of Auditorium:
      - Pawlett Historical Society – 4/26 & 5/4
      - Ruth Lampi – Growing Community – 4/22
        - Motion made to approve the auditorium use requests.
          - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
          - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Rich Hulett
          - Discussion: None
          - Result: Approved
    - Two applications from the Department of Liquor and Lottery
      - Motion made to approve application #57288 & #57300.
        - Mover: Rich Hulett
        - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jessica Van Oort
        - Discussion: None
        - Result: Approved
    - A quote for the service of the vault door was provided by the Royal Group. The price of this service will primarily be covered by grant funds and monies generated from land record requests.
      - Motion made to approve the Royal Group performing this service and replacing the door lock if necessary.
        - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
        - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Tom Collard
        - Discussion: None
        - Result: Approved
    - Constable Tom Covino submitted a sub-grant agreement application that he's requesting the Board's support and signature on. The gist of this sub-grant would help the Town to recuperate some of the monies obtained from traffic violations.

- Mr. Beecher expressed the desire to review the document more thoroughly before signing. This sentiment was echoed by the Board.
  - Deb provided the Board with an informational document regarding the SAVE act following a training attended.

F. Town Treasurer's Memo:

- Town Treasurer, Julie Mach, shared a memo with the Board, including: an overview of payroll, accounts payable, monies from the General Fund, Highway, Wastewater.
- Motion made to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #25062 for \$39,800.38 Payroll Warrant #25061 for \$8,304.10.
  - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bob Jones
  - Discussion: None.
  - Result: Approved.
- Julie attended a VLCT training, "Putting the FUN in Fund Accounting".
- Jessica Van Oort shared a plan to work with Julie to file the final report for the ARPA funds, which is due this month.
- The Board signed the VTrans annual financial report form.

G. Emergency Management Director's Report: No report at this meeting, however Bob Morlino electronically distributed a notice to the Board regarding a training that Board members are encouraged to attend.

H. Health Officer's Report: No report at this meeting.

I. Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF):

- Jill Marsano, VTUMS, shared an electronic report with the board which included reporting numbers and some potential upcoming repairs.

J. Facilities Report:

- Town Hall Door Repair – Conversations continued, and board members will be reaching out to potential wood workers for this project.
- Julie Mach shared that she's heard back from PACIF and we will be reimbursed for the necessary repairs at the West Pawlet Town Garage. Communication to be made with Ski Door to schedule repairs.

8. Reports to the Public:

A. Library Board Report:

- Sue LaPorte shared a report from the Library Board:
  - A window washing schedule is underway, job descriptions for open roles have been approved, and preparation of the book sale is underway. Recent inappropriate phone calls to the Library have inspired research to be done on additional security measures for the facility.

B. Mettawee School Board (MSB) Report:

- Julie Mach shared a report from the April MSB meeting, summarizing items discussed and planned for at their recent meeting.

8. Old or unfinished business:

- Chief Weiss, Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department – Electronically reported to the Board that the PVFD has found a truck for purchase, less than the price offered by state programs. The PVFD thanks the Selectboard for their support in their vehicle acquisition.
- Jessica Van Oort spoke to the updated contract for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission managing the MERP project, following the Board's decision to work with the RRPC on grant management.
  - Motion made to sign the contract with Rutland Regional Planning Commission for grant management on the MERP Grant.
    - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
    - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Rich Hulett
    - Discussion: Frank Nelson added information he gathered about the management fees of the RRPC.
    - Result: Approved
- The Rutland Regional Planning Commission requested a special meeting on 4/29 at 6:00pm to discuss plan updates. The Board agreed to this and a special meeting agenda and warning will be distributed.

9. New Business:

- Chairman Beecher shared a message from the chair of the Middletown Springs Selectboard regarding the poor condition of VT Rte 133, and the desire to have towns along this route advocate together for improvements to be prioritized by the State.
  - Motion made to have Chairman Beecher sign the letter written in conjunction with our neighboring towns.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jessica Van Oort
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

10. Public comment:

- Martha Schoenemann – Sought clarification on the current legal status surrounding the Pawlet Library Board, specifically regarding a possible lawsuit initiated by the former Library Board Director.
  - Mr. Beecher explained that the lawyers involved are working diligently on the matter, but due to the nature of the ongoing litigation, no additional public comment will be made at this time.
- Frank Nelson spoke to technology goals on the PPC, and shared of the upcoming kids fish & game derby.

11. Motion made to enter executive session to discuss labor relations agreements with employees as well as a grievance discussion (ZA Morlino to participate) at 8:30pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Tom Collard
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

12. Motion made to exit executive session with no decisions made at 9:08pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Rich Hulett
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

13. Motion to offer the Highway Foreman position to a qualified applicant

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Tom Collard
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

14. Motion made to adjourn at 9:08 pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Tom Collard
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved