

Greensboro Selectboard

March 12, 2025 – Minutes

[This was a hybrid meeting held at the Greensboro Free Library]

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ellen Celnik, MacNeil, Judy Carpenter, Tim Brennan (remote), Mike Metcalf

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT in person: Jennifer Ranz, Carolyn Kehler, Davis Barnett, Erika Karp, Gary Circosta, Beth Meachem, Meaghan Meachem, Isa Oehry, Renée Circosta, Kent Hansen, Josh Karp, Kim Greaves, Art Wolff

OTHERS PRESENT remote: Vince Cabbage, Andrea MacLeod, Brian Titus, Christine Armstrong, Dan Predpall, Dede Stabler, Elaine Cole-Kerr, Elissa Mackin, Glenn Olds, Janet Long, Lise Armstrong, Liz Steel, Nancy Lammert, Mike Lammert, Ornella Matta-Figueroa, Peter Romans, Rick Lovett, William Noah Scollon, Rob Brigham, Elsa Schultz, Mollie Lambert, Sarah Sangree, Lisa Sartorius, Peter Cook, Melissa Moffatt

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- Beth Meachem: library-Fire Marshal issue
- Steve Fortmann: use of ballfield for soccer club
- Municipal planning grant
- Administrative assistant

MINUTES

Minutes from 2/12/25, 2/27/25 and 3/3/25 meetings approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & CONCERNS

1. Jennifer Ranz asked why the selectboard is not holding meetings in the Collier Room at the Town Hall. Kim said the town doesn't have all the tech required for this, and in the meantime the library has been generous to lend us their equipment. Jennifer suggested the town make the technology investments.
Jennifer said the PSA (Purchase and Sales Agreement) with RuralEdge is poorly drafted and asked if it's been reviewed by an attorney. She also asked selectboard members if they think the PSA is a good deal for the town.
Ellen said there are three new board members who need time to review the PSA before commenting publicly, and since MacNeil has recused himself from involvement with the project, she's uncomfortable being the only board member to comment this evening. Ellen added that the town attorney has reviewed the PSA. Ultimately, she said, the voters will have their say.
2. Gary Circosta welcomed the three new selectboard members. Regarding the March 2025 Town Meeting, Gary said beginning with a selectboard criticism of his memo seemed like an inappropriate way to start the meeting. He said the amounts of money he discussed are enormous, and suggested all selectboard members read the memo. While Eric Hanson relayed VLCT's opinion that the voters don't have to take action on the town report, Gary felt that Eric didn't ask VLCT the right question, which would be: given that the town's audited financial statements weren't distributed as required by statute, how should the selectboard address this problem?

Kim said the audit is underway, and she's getting help from NEMRC. She noted that the town auditor has also been extremely busy these past few months.

Gary said the selectboard should know how much money is actually available in town accounts. He also suggested that the selectboard form a capital planning committee.

Peter Romans suggested to Gary that he serve on this new committee, if its created.

Gary said the website should list job descriptions for all town employees.

3. Vince Cabbage asked if the new wastewater committee will be submitting regular reports to the selectboard. MacNeil said he'll look into this. Mike said the committee is next meeting on April 10. Ellen said she was disappointed that only two members of the wastewater committee were present at a recent meeting where Hoyle Tanner presented their final engineering report.

Vince asked if there was any more information about the RuralEdge project. While he's heard that the project won't include Section 8 housing, it appears to him that the funding sources and documents do not preclude such housing. Ellen said there is no Section 8 housing planned for the RuralEdge project, and the tenant application requires that people must have a certain income level to qualify for an apartment. This income level is higher than Section 8 income limits.

Vince said it appears to him that the PSA is written for the benefit of the buyer. In an effort to be constructive, he said he'll send the board his comments.

Ornella said these are good questions and should be sent to RuralEdge to be addressed in detail before the informational meeting.

Ornella works for VHCB and noted it is subject to public records laws. Vince said he's made an open records request to VHCB and will share what he finds out.

Gary said in Section 15 of the PSA there's a clause stating that if something is not addressed in the PSA, it won't be part of the overall agreement. He said this could mean that the town can't rely on any other document or information unless it's actually included in the PSA. Renee said the situation faced by the public is "trust us, it will all work out". We need to talk about what's included in the PSA, she said.

Tim Brennan said he's read the PSA carefully, and while much of the language is boilerplate, this doesn't mean there's isn't other relevant information that will affect the project. It's common for such contracts to be written in this way. Vince said he's concerned that there may not be protection for the town.

Gary said that the work to closely review and possibly amend the PSA has to be done on the front end of the process, since once you warn the Australian Ballot vote the PSA can't be changed.

Judy asked that folks send public comment to Kim and she'll distribute to board members.

Kent Hansen said he saw a report indicating that \$4.9 million in VHCB funding has been set aside for the RuralEdge project.

4. Regarding members of the public speaking at selectboard meetings, Carolyn Kehler said this is supposed to be public comment, not public debate. She said that most towns don't allow the kind of back and forth that is common in Greensboro. Carolyn said if it was up to her, board members would listen to public comment and not engage.

Gary thanked the selectboard for engaging with the public.

CASPIAN ARTS – Isa Oehry, Art Wolff

Isa welcomed new selectboard members. She and Art Wolff proposed that Caspian Arts put on a one-day festival they are calling the "Greensboro Arts Fest". Caspian Arts would organize and fund the event which would take place on August 16 with a rain date of August 17. They would rent two small tents and a few portolets. Art said they've received offers from other groups that would like to collaborate and be involved in this event.

Isa said they'd like to install a banner across Breezy Ave by the Funky 4th if possible to help advertise the event. Judy said Hardwick Electric puts up banners in Hardwick and would know what regulations need to be followed.

Ellen thanked Caspian Arts for having a vision for the Grange, and for fixing it up. Judy made the following motion:

The board approves the Greensboro Art Fest proposal as presented by Caspian Arts.

Mike seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

SELECTBOARD REORGANIZATION

Peter Romans observed that 2024 was a tough year in town, with a lot of blame to go around. Perhaps, he said, a new selectboard chair is needed. Both Judy and Mike are experienced board members and either would offer a great tone and temper that could help reduce some of the animosity in town. Judy said she's not interested.

Peter said it's not an onerous job, all the chair has to do is set meeting agendas with help from the office staff, and run meetings.

Mike said he spent over 20 years on the selectboard and that the job today is a whole lot bigger than it used to be. He added that, unfortunately, there's a good deal of distemper in many Vermont towns.

1. The Selectboard unanimously approved the following positions:

Selectboard Chair	MacNeil
Selectboard Vice Chair	Tim Brennan
Order Sheets	<i>Primary:</i> MacNeil <i>Secondary:</i> Tim Brennan
BOARD LIAISONS	
Farmers Market	Kim Greaves
Highway Department	<i>Primary:</i> MacNeil <i>Secondary:</i> Tim Brennan
Historical Society	Mike Metcalf
Driveway Plowing	<i>Primary:</i> MacNeil <i>Secondary:</i> Mike Metcalf
Fire Districts	Judy Carpenter
Greensboro Fire Dept.	MacNeil
Legal	Tim Brennan
Recycling	Mike Metcalf
Library	Ellen Celnik
Greensboro Association	Ellen Celnik

2. **Newspapers of Record.** The board unanimously agreed that The Hardwick Gazette and The Chronicle will serve as newspapers of record. While the News & Citizen was a newspaper of record in recent years, it is not currently distributed to Greensboro Bend addresses.

3. **Selectboard Meetings.** Davis suggested that the board hold two meetings a month. Gary agreed, adding that Greensboro has more special selectboard meetings than most towns in the area.

Tim suggested having one regular monthly meeting and adding a second as needed.

The Board unanimously agreed that its regular monthly meeting will continue to be held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM, with a remote option. Until the town acquires the technology to hold meetings at the Town Hall, selectboard meetings will be held upstairs at the Greensboro Free Library.

SELECTBOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. **Development Review Board.** Gary asked if selectboard members can also serve on the Development Review Board. According to Tim, Jane Woodruff checked into this and it's not considered a conflict of interest. Mike made the following motion:

The board reappoints Wayne Young, Mike Metcalf and Tim Brennan to the Development Review Board for three-year terms.

Judy seconded the motion which carried (all in favor except Ellen who had stepped out).

2. **Planning Commission.** Ellen said some members of the planning commission (PC) have served for over a decade, and wondered if the board should consider term limits. Kent said if the board considers term limits for the PC, what about other town bodies such as the DRB and conservation commission?

Kent said the PC can have up to seven members and currently has three openings, maybe only two since he's aware of someone who is interested. Ellen said the town needs to find a way to encourage more people to join. Judy made the following motion:

The board reappoints Christine Armstrong to the Planning Commission for a three-year term.

Mike seconded the motion which carried (MacNeil, Brennan, Carpenter, Metcalf in favor; Celnik abstained).

3. **Positions and committees with annual appointments.** Mike made the following motion:

The board approves the slate of annual appointments as discussed.

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Road Foreman	Thomas Camarra
Fire Chief	Dave Brochu, Jr.
Constable	Mark Snyder
Tree Warden	Cilla Bonney-Smith
Animal Control Officer	Kevin Rich
Civil Defense	OPEN
Recreation Committee	Devin Burgess, David Kelley, MacNeil, Liz Baum
Town Service Officer	Kim Greaves
Caspian Lake Beach Committee	John Schweizer (Chair), Dede Stabler, Rob Brigham, Linda Shatney,
Emergency Planning Committee	Anne Stevens – Chair, Wayne Young, Tim Nisbet, Eric Pilbin, Michael Lapierre
Emergency Mgmt. Chair	Dave Brochu, Jr.
Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District Rep.	Ken Johnston Alternate: OPEN
Hazard Mitigation Committee	Valdine Hall, Kim Greaves, Lorelei Wheeler, Melissa Moffatt, George Young, Tim Nisbet

Energy & Climate Action Committee	Liz Steel (Chair), Blake Auchincloss, Bill Chidsey, Beth Meachem
NVDA Rep.	Mike Metcalf
Grand Juror	David Kelley
NEK Broadband	Mary Metcalf (primary), John Stone (secondary)

Erika asked whether the hazard mitigation committee is active. Ellen said the town is required to have this committee to assist in writing the town's hazard mitigation plan.

GREENSBORO FIRE DEPT.

The monthly report for February was unavailable.

ORLEANS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

The board reviewed the OCSD February report.

ROADS

1. Road Foreman Tom Camarra was not present this evening.
2. **FEMA update.** Gary suggested setting up a committee to help decide how the town should allocate those FEMA funds received by the town that are over and above what was borrowed. He said this could be similar to the ARPA committee or could be a good project for a capital planning committee if the board forms one. Judy said the town could consider putting some of this money in a rainy-day fund.

TOWN CLERK & INTERIM TREASURER – Kim Greaves

Kim said there's a new statewide Municipal Code of Ethics, and many town officials including selectboard members must complete an online ethics training by July 1.

Vince noted that in terms of open records laws, it's important that town officials use their official town email for town business and not their personal email.

Gary requested that the website be updated to include new selectboard members.

RURALEdge UPDATE

MacNeil reiterated that new board members need time review the Purchase and Sales Agreement (PSA). The board will then discuss the PSA and determine when to move ahead with the informational meeting.

Ellen and David Kelley negotiated the PSA with RuralEdge and Ellen suggested that Tim Brennan take Dave's place moving forward. Tim agreed. She also suggested that David could help explain the document to new board members.

Tim asked if there's a deadline for the PSA to be voted on. Ellen said the town can't procrastinate, since ARPA funding earmarked for the project requires construction to begin by August 2026. Judy said this process has dragged out for a long time and things need to keep moving.

She added that the board would like to hear public comments before finalizing the PSA.

Gary encouraged the selectboard to mail Australian Ballots to all town residents.

He also said that if there's a special town meeting for the RuralEdge vote, the selectboard should look into whether voters would need to elect two library trustees, since interim appointments only last until the next annual or special town meeting (the board recently made two interim appointments).

Meaghan said while there is a lot of information on the town website, there are also outstanding questions about water and wastewater. This is likely going to be a common question at the informational meeting and the selectboard should have a good answer for this, she said. Ellen said the PSA states that a number of contingencies must be met, including water and wastewater, in order for the project to move forward. She'll ask David Kelley to write up answers to these and other FAQs and post to the town website.

Kent said it seems unusual that the town doesn't have more answers and a full site plan to review before the town vote is held. He asked if someone from RuralEdge will be present at the informational meeting but received no answer.

GREENSBORO FREE LIBRARY

Beth welcomed new board members. She explained that during a recent inspection of the library, the fire marshal found a possible structural issue in the old basement. He's concerned a beam is failing and said an engineer must perform an inspection within 30 days. Beth said she's scheduled the engineer, but asked who's responsible for the inspection and repair cost: library or town? Should the costs be split 50/50?

Beth said the engineer could cost up to \$1400, with repair costs currently unknown. Ellen said this sounds like a capital budget expense. MacNeil made the following motion:

The board authorizes the library to submit the engineering bill to the town for payment. Payment will be made out of the capital budget.

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Swim Contract.** Mike noted an incidental misspelling in the contract that should be corrected. Ellen made the following motion:

The board approves the swim committee signing the swim contract with Teach America to Swim.

Mike seconded the motion which carried unanimously. Ila Hunt will sign the contract on behalf of the Swim Committee.

- 2. Municipal Planning Grant.** Mike said that Alison Low from NVDA, Kent Hansen and himself met to discuss using a municipal planning grant to develop subdivision regulations.

Kent gave some background. With selectboard encouragement some month ago, the planning commission (PC) agreed to apply for a planning grant to investigate subdivision regulations. Enacting these would lead to local control for large development projects, in lieu of Act 250. However, since there isn't a town consensus on how we want to grow over the next 5-10 years, Alison recommended that planning grant funds be used instead to update the town plan. After the town plan is complete, the PC can reconsider whether to move ahead on the subdivision regulations and could seek new planning grant funds for that process. Mike made the following motion:

The town will apply for a municipal planning grant through NVDA to provide professional assistance to the planning commission as it updates the town plan. Josh Karp will assume the role of grant administrator if the grant is awarded to the town.

Ellen seconded the motion. Discussion.

Ellen said without the subdivision regulations the town falls under Act 250. Developers typically don't want to deal with Act 250, so the whole point of the subdivision regulations is to provide the town with an Act 250 waiver and bring in potential developers.

The vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

- 3. NEK Warrior Soccer Club.** Club board member Steve Fortmann of Hardwick is requesting to use the four-corners ball field for youth soccer. Kim said the town doesn't manage the use of the field, and that the various clubs who use it work out schedules amongst themselves.

The board agreed to connect Steve with Melissa Moffatt, who knows the softball schedule and can help coordinate.

4. Administrative Assistant. Tabled.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mike made the following motion:

The board will enter executive session at 8:50 PM to discuss a personnel matter.

Judy seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The board left executive session at 9:35 PM and took no action.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk