

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2025

Present: Benjamin Brickner, John Peters, Steve Chamberlin, Meg Emmons, Emily Grube

Public: Frank Rogers, Cynthia Hewitt, Betsy Rhodes, Jim Potter, Bill Emmons

1. **Call to Order** – Ben called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. **Agenda Review** – Ben moved and Meg seconded adding Town Hall Revitalization Committee Expenses and Fiscal Year 2025 Accounting Questions immediately before Item 5I (Warrants) Unanimous.
3. **Public Comment** – Cynthia Hewitt reported that she has passed her HIPAA certification exam. This will allow her to receive confidential medical information to assist the town in reviewing unpaid ambulance bills. Jim Potter raised several concerns regarding the Caper Street/Pomfret Road landslide repair project and the town's grading procedures.
4. **Road Foreman Report** – The Wayside Road bridge was paved this week. The town office parking lot paving will begin later this week. Crack sealing for the season is complete, covering sections of Stage Road and Pomfret Road. The centerline was also repainted on Pomfret Road. M&W Soils Engineering performed core sampling on Pomfret Road this week, which is the reason for the much-discussed white dots on the pavement. The road crew is starting the second round of road grading and roadside mowing is continuing. D&D Excavating has begun delivering sand, hauling on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The Pomfret Road landslide repair project is coming along well. Emily asked Frank to inspect a section of the bank on the Howe Hill turnout that appears to be giving way. Jim Potter suggested contacting the engineer who designed the original project. Frank said he would look at the bank first before potentially reaching out to the engineer.
5. **Items for Discussion or Vote**
 - a. **Municipal Equipment Loan Fund** – The Selectboard discussed applying for a state-administered loan of up to \$175,000 at 2% interest over 5 years to purchase highway equipment. After discussion, the Selectboard decided to take the matter under advisement and make a decision at the October 1 meeting. The application deadline is October 15.
 - b. **Fuel Supply Agreements (2025-26 Season)** – Emily presented figures from Dead River and Irving; a third vendor, Simple Energy, did not submit a quote. The key factor in the discussion was diesel pricing, which comprises most of Pomfret's fuel expense. Dead River offered a one-year fixed price of \$3.010/gal., whereas Irving offered only a spot price of \$2.791/gal. Last year, however, the town's average diesel price through Irving was nearly \$1.000/gal. higher than the initially quoted spot price, resulting in an estimated \$11,000 in additional cost. It was noted that Irving's quote remained valid until midnight while Dead River's quote had expired earlier in the day and needed to be refreshed. Steve moved and Meg seconded to award the town's fuel supply contract for the 2025-26 season to Dead River, provided that final prices are no more than 5¢/gal. higher than the prices quoted on September 16, 2025. Unanimous.
 - c. **Municipal Road Grant-in-Aid Agreement (SFY 2026)** – The Selectboard reviewed the SFY26 Municipal Road Grant-in-Aid agreement from VTrans. The town was awarded \$33,500, with a required in-kind match of \$8,375. Emily moved and John

- seconded approval of the Grant-in-Aid agreement and authorized the chair to sign it on the town's behalf. Unanimous. Frank will finalize project details with Rita Seto.
- d. **Class 3 Road Stop and Yield Signs** – The Selectboard discussed adding stop or yield signs at intersections with limited sight distance, such as Caper Street/Pomfret Road, Bunker Hill Road/Pomfret Road, and Skyline Drive/Webster Hill Road. The Selectboard debated the effectiveness, cost, risk of theft, and potential liability associated with new signs. Jim Potter noted that adding stop signs requires maintaining stop bars, which may necessitate paving gravel intersections. Meg noted that according to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, stop bars are optional. Discussion to continue at the October 1 meeting to allow time for Meg to seek guidance from the Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) and for Frank to get pricing on new signs.
 - e. **Municipal Complete Streets Program** – Discussion postponed to the October 15 meeting, after Scott Cone (the town's representative to the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee) attends a training on the subject and is available to present to the Selectboard.
 - f. **Small Tax Account Balances** – The Selectboard discussed a request from the Town Treasurer to zero out dozens of small ($\leq \$1.00$) tax account balances that resulted from a discrepancy between state accounting systems. The Selectboard recalled advice from VLCT last May stating that towns cannot write off credits owed to taxpayers, even very small amounts. Acknowledging the significant administrative burden this state-created issue places on the Treasurer, the Selectboard decided to postpone a decision until the October 1 meeting and to seek guidance from the Vermont Department of Taxes' Division of Property Valuation and Review (PVR). Ben will follow up with Ellen.
 - g. **DLL License Renewal (Teago General Store; First Class Commercial Caterer)** – Emily moved and Meg seconded renewal of the commercial caterer license for Teago General Store. Unanimous.
 - h. **Appointment of Public Officers** – Ben reported that one resident has expressed interest in the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District representative board position but has not yet committed. Two residents who volunteered for the two vacant Auditor positions were either ineligible or declined after further consideration, leaving the board with only one auditor. This presents a significant challenge for completing the annual audit and producing the town report, as the workload is too much for one person. Ben will discuss the situation with the remaining auditor to get her input.
 - i. **Town Hall Revitalization Committee Expenses** – Meg asked for clarity on how expenses for Town Hall Revitalization Committee events should be paid. Funds raised at a recent event were given to the Pomfret Historical Society to be part of a matching grant campaign to benefit the Town Hall. Emily questioned the committee's authority to fundraise, as it was not part of its charge from the Selectboard, and noted that no specific renovation plan has been presented to or approved by voters. The Selectboard reached a consensus that the Historical Society, as the recipient of the fundraising proceeds, should be responsible for reimbursing event expenses. Meg will seek reimbursement via Alan Graham of the Historical Society.
 - j. **Fiscal Year 2025 Accounting Questions** – Discussion postponed to the October 1 meeting.

- k. **Warrants** – Ben moved and Meg seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

26022	\$	10,068.60	Payroll
26023		1,819.50	Payroll
26025		1,492,782.83	A/P (incl. 462.98 August debit card expenses)

 Unanimous. Emily noted a minor error on the Windsor County Sheriff's Department invoice. Ben will follow up for a corresponding credit on next month's invoice.
 - l. **Approval of September 3, 2025 Minutes** – Meg moved and Emily seconded approval of the September 3 meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.
6. **Meeting Wrap Up**
- a. **Correspondence** – Ben responded to a Caper Street resident about road closures for the slide repair, confirming that at most one more partial-day closure might be needed later in the project. Regarding a question from the Town Treasurer about opioid settlement funds, the Selectboard confirmed its practice is to consider the funds spent as part of its annual social service appropriations to agencies that provide addiction and recovery services. Meg will follow up with Ellen on this.
 - b. **Review of Assignments** – Assignments were reviewed, including: Frank to finalize Grant-in-Aid scope with TRORC, price new road signs, and inspect Howe Hill Road; Ben to follow up with Ellen on small tax account balances, sign and return Grant-in-Aid agreement, contact the Sheriff's office re: potential double billing, and confer with Auditor Annie Mears Abbott re: auditing and the Town Report; Meg to seek guidance from VLCT about stop and yield sign placement, seek reimbursement from PHS of event expenses, and follow up with Ellen re: opioid expenses; and Ben and Emily to finalize the fuel contract.
 - c. **Agenda for Next Meeting** – Highway Access Permit Application (2912 Pomfret Road; site visit at 6 PM on October 1), Small Tax Account Balances, Class 3 Road Stop and Yield Signs, Municipal Equipment Loan Fund, Fiscal Year 2025 Accounting Questions, Better Roads Grant Application.
7. **Executive Session**
- a. Ben moved and Meg seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(E) to discuss pending civil litigation to which the town is a party and the premature general public knowledge of which would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 9:13 pm.
 - b. Emily moved and Meg seconded exiting executive session. The Selectboard exited executive session at 9:51 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
8. **Adjournment** – Steve moved and Emily seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 pm.