

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2025

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

Public: Frank Rogers, Alan Graham, Ellen DesMeules, Patrick Potter

1. **Call to Order** – Ben called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
2. **Agenda Review** – Ben moved and Meg seconded deletion of Item 6A (Municipal Complete Streets Program) and addition 2025–26 Salt Quote and FY 2025 Audit Proposals immediately after Item 6C (Pomfret Road Slide Project Update). Unanimous.
3. **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 finding that the premature general public knowledge of which would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 7:04 pm.
 - b. John moved and Emily seconded exiting executive session. The Selectboard exited executive session at 7:19 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
4. **Public Comment** – None.
5. **Road Foreman Report** – Frank reported that the crew is winding down summer work and preparing for winter; two trucks are winterized. Grading is mostly finished, with some spot grading remaining. Trees are down on Bartlett Brook; Mike Avery removed the stumps, and they have been trucked away. Avery also corrected the bank issue at 7904 Pomfret Road. Frank confirmed that the state inspector approved the correction and erosion control measures.

Steve and Emily pointed out shoulder issues on Howe Hill and Pomfret Road that need hardpack, particularly on inside corners, to prevent pavement damage during winter operations. John also mentioned that the AT trail parking area needs fill due to low pavement edges. Frank confirmed he would tidy up the perimeters of the office parking lot paving.

Frank reported that residents at 4496 Pomfret Road (opposite Labounty Road) would like to bury electrical sleeves/cables beneath Pomfret Road. John moved and Steve seconded approval for the crossing, provided a permit is secured. Frank will provide the paperwork to the residents, and Ben will sign off once the completed permit is satisfactory to Frank, as the work is seasonal and must begin before the next Selectboard meeting. Unanimous.

6. **Items for Discussion of Vote**
 - a. **Veterans Memorial Design** – Alan Graham distributed preliminary plans for a Veterans' War Memorial, noting that most towns have such a memorial. Alan's design is for a timber structure on a concrete slab, placed between the Brick Building and Town Office. The design would incorporate the historic bell, currently located above the choir loft in the Town Hall. The structure is to be surrounded by a garden, designed by Alan's wife. The Pomfret Historical Society (PHS) has committed \$10,000 toward the total anticipated \$20,000 cost, to cover the timber frame and upkeep. John explained that the proposed site overlaps with the planned

location for the underground propane tank, requiring Dig Safe involvement to determine placement and clearance from other underground utilities (water, sewer, electric). Alan requested a go-ahead to develop a site plan and begin fundraising. The Selectboard agreed to proceed with concept development.

- b. **Pomfret Road Slide Project Update** – Frank reported that Mike Avery has completed the construction, and he is satisfied with the outcome. Following the second executive session described below, Ben moved and Emily seconded that Ellen be instructed to write a check to Avery Excavation in the amount of \$520,160 as partial payment for the Pomfret Road Slope Stabilization Project, and that Ben be authorized to sign the warrant immediately so the payment may be mailed before the next meeting. Unanimous.
- c. **2025–26 Salt Quote** – Frank presented a salt bid from Cargill. Pricing is up significantly since last year, but is still slightly better than the alternative state bid pricing. Cargill’s quote also includes their proprietary ClearLane salt, which performs better in cold temperatures and less corrosive and longer lasting. Ben moved and John seconded approval of the Cargill quote for 900 tons of ClearLane at \$118/ton and 500 tons of white salt at \$98.25/ton, specifying that the approval was subject to Ben confirming the updated terms and dates with Cargill, as the quote contained outdated information, and any change in pricing would require the Selectboard to revisit the approval. Unanimous.
- d. **FY 2025 Auditor Proposal** – Ben noted that the Selectboard needed to hire an auditor due to two vacancies among the locally elected auditors. Proposals were received from Sullivan Powers (Chad Hewitt) at \$22,000 and Mudgett, Jennett at \$18,000. Ellen recommended hiring Chad Hewitt's firm because he is familiar with the town’s economics and uses federal government standards. Emily moved and Steve seconded awarding the contract to Sullivan Powers, Chad’s firm. Unanimous.
- e. **FY 2027 Budget Discussion** – The Fire Department postponed their budget presentation to the November 19 meeting. Line-item review focused on those needing Ellen’s input
 - i. *Treasurer Assistant Position (Line 88)* – Ellen proposed budgeting for a fully trained assistant, intended as her eventual successor, citing the need for adequate staffing to cover absences and ensure segregation of duties. She noted the current \$17,000 estimated cost was based on 18 hours per week. Discussion shifted to keeping a placeholder of \$20,000 for this position, subject to refinement once a candidate is identified
 - ii. *Assessor Position (Line 94)* – The high cost and strict certification associated with transitioning from elected Listers to an Assessor (\$48,000 based on Barnard) were discussed considering anticipated state changes complicating the Lister's role.
 - iii. *Accounting Support (Line 138)* – The existing line-item amount was noted as pending depending on future audit decisions.
- f. **Warrants** – Steve moved and John seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

26036	\$	50.00	A/P (marriage license corrective payment)
26038		10,047.07	Payroll
26041		44,404.15	A/P (corrected)
26042		519.20	Tax Refund

Unanimous.

- g. **Approval of October 15, 2025 Minutes** – Meg moved and Steve seconded approval of the October 15 meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.
- 7. **Meeting Wrap Up**
 - a. **Correspondence** – John reported that Dan Maxham offered to repair the road/parking lot area between the Brick Building and the Town Office in the spring as a donation to the Town, suggesting the town supply materials. Ben stated that Two Rivers Regional Planning Commission (Peter Gregory) will provide input ahead of the Town Plan hearing describing how the draft plan conforms to State’s planning goals.
 - b. **Review of Assignments** – Ben will review and approve a permit application for the 4496 Pomfret Road right-of-way crossing and confirm Cargill rates and dates; he will also finalize the auditor services contract. Frank will notify GMP and ECFiber of the road crossing and reach out to GMP regarding pole relocation needs following the slide project. Ellen will work with Meg to prepare a list of requirements and experience for the Assistant Treasurer job description, to be posted to the listserv.
 - c. **Agenda for Next Meeting** – Town Plan Public Hearing; FY 2027 Budget Discussion (Fire Department, FAST Squad, Listers, TPF, Highway).
- 8. **Executive Session**
 - a. Ben moved and Meg seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss contracts, finding that the premature general public knowledge of which would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 9:48 pm.
 - b. Meg moved and John seconded exiting executive session. The Selectboard exited executive session at 10:37 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
- 9. **Pomfret Road Slide Project Payment** – See Item 6(B) for the motion to make partial payment to Avery Excavation for work completed on the Pomfret Road Slope Stabilization Project.
- 10. **Adjournment** – Emily moved that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 pm.