

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2026

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

Public: Frank Rogers, Cynthia Hewitt, Bill Emmons, Bob Crean, Pamela Pickett, Kyle Katz (Two Rivers), Lisa Parsons, Marge Wakefield, Neil Lamson, John Moore, Cathy Emmons, Janet Spangler, Jon Ricketson

1. **Call to Order** – Ben called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. **Agenda Review** – Frank requested an executive session after the meeting to discuss employee management matters.
3. **Public Comment** – Bob Crean presented proposed colors for the new Pomfret town line signs. The Selectboard reviewed and approved the designs, confirming black as the color for the back of the signs.
4. **Road Foreman Report** – Frank began by expressing appreciation for positive comments from residents on the listserv regarding the road crew's performance. The crew successfully navigated the recent significant storm with no major issues. During recent warm weather, the crew conducted truck maintenance and equipment cleaning. Frank has been researching alternative truck body suppliers and noted that new Truck #3 may need a shorter, 12-foot body due to garage space constraints. The grader is due for its 2,000-hour service and the loader for its 1,000-hour service. Both have been scheduled with John Deere. Five trees on Bunker Hill are in the strike zone and near power lines, and therefore cannot be removed without GMP's assistance. The spare one-ton truck's plow requires major repair or replacement. Frank presented two options: rebuild the existing plow for approximately \$6,000 in parts, or purchase a new plow for \$8,100. The Selectboard discussed the cost implications and noted that new equipment would come with warranty coverage. The Selectboard encouraged Frank to purchase a new plow rather than rebuild the damaged one, with the option to salvage any usable parts from the old plow. Frank reported receiving sand deliveries, including pink salt due to supply constraints. While costlier, this salt performs well despite its higher cost.
5. **Items for Discussion or Vote**
 - a. **Act 250/181 Tier 1B Areas Discussion** – Kyle Katz from Two Rivers presented information regarding optional Act 250 exemptions for residential developments in designated Tier 1B village center areas. The exemption would apply to residential developments of up to 50 units on 10 acres or less in the South Pomfret village center area. Katz explained that the exemption is optional and requires an affirmation from the town by the end of March, though there will be opportunities to opt in later as well.

Selectboard members and public attendees raised several concerns: Emily noted that residents had previously expressed opposition to village area expansion; Pamela Pickett questioned the exemption's value given existing zoning regulations and two-acre minimums; and John Moore cautioned that designating a Tier 1B area could signal growth potential and create future expectations for municipal infrastructure.

Katz acknowledged that an adopted town plan is required but noted a window exists before December 2026 regional plan adoption for Pomfret to develop and adopt one. Future opportunities to opt in would exist but would be less streamlined.

After discussion, the Selectboard took no action on the proposal, noting that existing zoning regulations and natural constraints (soils, slopes, floodplain areas) effectively limit development regardless of exemption status. No decision was made to opt into Tier 1B at this time, with the understanding that other opportunities may be available in the future.

- b. **Appointment of Public Officials** – Ben moved and John seconded that Marie Cross be appointed to the Vermont 250th Anniversary Committee with a term expiring March 31, 2028. Unanimous. Ben will notify Ms. Cross of her appointment.
- c. **Municipal Code of Ethics** – Ben noted that a new state Code of Ethics has superseded the town's previous conflict of interest policy. The new state law, effective last year, removed towns' authority to adopt their own conflicts of interest policies and established uniform requirements statewide. All decision-making bodies including the Selectboard are required to complete mandatory training on the new code. Ben noted that VLCT has prepared a helpful flowchart on conflicts of interest that is more accessible than the statutory language. No action was required on this item; it was presented as information and to note that certain conflict definitions are broader under the new code, with more stringent recusal requirements than the previous policy.
- d. **North Pomfret Cemetery Association Lands** – The Selectboard conducted a re-vote on acceptance of the warranty deeds for North Pomfret Cemetery Association lands, which had been presented at the January 21 meeting. Emily Grube and John Peters recused themselves from discussion and voting. Ben moved and Steve seconded approval of the language of the Warranty Deed of the Moore Family Partnership, LLC and the Warranty Deed of the North Pomfret Cemetery Association as presented to the Selectboard on January 21, 2026, and to accept said deeds upon every listed signatory of the Grantors on said deeds applying their signature before a notary and presenting the fully executed deeds to the Clerk for recording with the associated Property Transfer Tax Returns in the Town Land Records. Unanimous (Emily and John recused and not voting).

John Peters noted that an outbuilding (a chicken coop) may be encroaching slightly on the to-be-acquired land. John Moore indicated that the survey shows the property line and agreed to examine the issue further when he returns to Pomfret to sign the deed. No immediate action is needed pending receipt of the fully executed deeds and potential legal review of any encroachment concerns.

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

26072	\$	12,432.42	Payroll
26073		33,780.84	A/P (incl. Dec. 2025 and Jan. 2026 debit card)
26074		293.00	A/P (Tax Refund)

Unanimous.

- f. **Approval of January 21 and January 29, 2026 Minutes** – Emily moved and Meg seconded approval of the January 21 and January 29, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.

6. **Meeting Wrap Up**

- a. **Correspondence** – Marge Wakefield reported on the Thomas Ware paintings on loan to the Woodstock History Center. Ben reported receiving an email from a political consultant in Woodstock regarding a pending bill that would allow municipalities to opt into mobile voting (electronic voting by personal device). After discussion, the Selectboard declined to sign a letter of support for this proposal. Ben noted that a listserv message about warning articles for the upcoming town meeting will be sent to the community.
- b. **Review of Assignments** – Ben will notify Marie Cross of her appointment to the Vermont 250th Anniversary Committee. Meg will continue efforts to locate the CVPS power line contract in the land records.
- c. **Agenda for Next Meeting** – Covered Bridge Half Marathon permit application, Truck #3 body supplier, and paving engineering RFP.

7. **Executive Session**

- a. Ben moved and Steve seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3) to discuss the employment of public employees. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:32 pm.
- b. John moved and Emily seconded that the Selectboard exit executive session. Unanimous. The Selectboard exited executive session at 8:54 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.

8. **Adjournment** – John moved and Steve seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.