

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2026

Present: Benjamin Brickner, John Peters, Steve Chamberlin, Emily Grube, Marge Wakefield

Public: Frank Rogers, Cynthia Hewitt, Eric Chase, Doug Tuthill, Jonathan Vass, Ellen DesMeules, Cyrus Benoit, John Moore, Patrick Potter, Sandra Filiault, "Michael"

1. **Call to Order** – Ben called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. **Agenda Review** – *None*.
3. **Public Comment** – *None*.
4. **Road Foreman Report** – Frank reported that all equipment is in good working order. The highway crew is transitioning from winter to spring operations, addressing potholes and managing mud season conditions. The crew grades and applies hard pack in the early morning hours while roads remain frozen. No further equipment updates were reported.
5. **Items for Discussion or Vote**
 - a. **Road Reclamation Engineering Services RFP** – Emily reported that she, Frank, and Allyn Ricker prepared the RFP, which was included in the meeting packet. The RFP contemplates issuance on March 18, with proposals due April 15, questions due April 1, and answers by April 8. The Selectboard will award at the May 6 meeting. The RFP covers three separately bid phases: detailed specification of treatment options; final design; and bid analysis assistance. Existing boring and core sample data will be included as an exhibit. The RFP will be posted to the town website, the Vermont construction bid registry, and the Local Roads listserv. John moved and Steve seconded approval of the RFP as presented. Unanimous.
 - b. **Road Reclamation Clerk of the Works** – Emily recommended Allyn Ricker to serve as Clerk of the Works, overseeing the road reclamation project on the town's behalf through bid review and construction. Mr. Ricker previously served in this role for the Cloudland Road bridge project. He has agreed to serve on an as-needed basis at \$90 per hour with no benefits. Total hours are unlikely to reach the 167-hour threshold requiring competitive procurement. Emily moved and Steve seconded approval of the engagement of Allyn Ricker as Clerk of the Works at \$90 per hour. Unanimous.
 - c. **Dust Control and Winter Liquids** – Frank reported that the town does not yet have a contract for the upcoming season. He has been in contact with two vendors: AllState (calcium chloride, current-year pricing expected in April) and Innovative Solutions (magnesium chloride, with a new spray system included under a three-year service contract). Frank will obtain formal written quotes from both vendors, with product and equipment costs itemized separately, for the April 15 meeting.
 - d. **Certification of Compliance Update (Codes and Standards)** – Following the Selectboard's execution of the Certificate at the March 4 meeting, VTrans notified the town that the standards had been updated and the form was not current. The new January 2026 Town Road and Bridge Standards include one substantive change: a new Section 5 requiring minimum 18-inch culverts, which Pomfret already follows. The optional sections are not adopted, consistent with prior years. Ben moved and John seconded adoption of the January 2026 standards and

certification of the town's compliance. Unanimous. The Selectboard signed the updated Certificate of Compliance. Ben will submit it to VTrans.

- e. **Appointment of Public Officers** – Cynthia reported that she had contacted all appointees whose terms are expiring and received responses from most. Emily moved and John seconded the appointments listed below. Unanimous. Ben noted for the record that his spouse appears on the list.

- i. *Library Trustee* – Jan Salstrom (until next annual town meeting)
- ii. *Library Trustee* – Katie Brickner (until next annual town meeting)
- iii. *Citizen Trustee of the LaBounty Fund* – Mike Doten (until March 31, 2027)
- iv. *E911 Coordinator* – Becky Fielder (until March 31, 2027)
- v. *ECFiber* –
 1. Alan Graham (*primary*) (until last Monday in April 2027)
 2. Betsy Rhodes (*1st alternate*) (until last Monday in April 2027)
 3. Eric Jahn (*2nd alternate*) (until last Monday in April 2027)
- vi. *Emergency Management Director* – Kevin Rice (until March 31, 2027)
- vii. *Planning Commission* –
 1. Cy Benoit (until March 31, 2029)
 2. Bill Emmons (until March 31, 2029)
- viii. *Town Service Officer* – Sheila Murray (until March 31, 2029)
- ix. *Tree Warden* –
 1. Cy Benoit (until March 31, 2027)
 2. Alan Graham (*deputy*) (until March 31, 2027)
- x. *TRORC Board of Directors* –
 1. Bill Emmons (*primary*) (until March 31, 2027)
 2. Tyler Wellington (*alternate*) (until March 31, 2027)
- xi. *Vermont Ethics Commission Liaison* – Becky Fielder (until March 31, 2027)
- xii. *Zoning Board of Adjustment* – Michael Schmell (until March 31, 2029)

The following positions remain vacant: Constable; three auditor positions; TRORC Transportation Advisory Committee member; and two Zoning Board of Adjustment positions.

- f. **Homestead Declaration Filing Penalty** – Ben introduced this item as a discussion of whether to adopt the state-authorized penalty for late filing of Homestead Declarations (HS-122 forms). Ellen provided background on the billing process and noted that 17 to 23 taxpayers per year have filed late in recent years. The Selectboard discussed concerns about the all-or-nothing nature of the 3% minimum penalty and the difficulty of distinguishing deliberate non-filers from taxpayers relying on accountants who filed extensions. Ellen noted that the state has recently hired personnel to monitor homestead declaration compliance. The Selectboard agreed to take a wait-and-see approach for the current year and revisit the question in 2027.
- g. **Town Administrator Job Description** – A draft job description was circulated in the meeting packet. The Selectboard discussed several areas for revision: the position should be designated as in-person; the hours should be increased toward full-time; the description should more clearly reflect an administrative rather than managerial role; and the salary range should be adjusted accordingly. The Selectboard agreed to review the draft individually and submit written revisions to Ben within the week. Cynthia will prepare a revised draft for discussion at the April 1 meeting.

- h. **Permit to Hold Road Event (Runamuck 50k)** – Jonathan Vass appeared to present his application for the Runamuck 50k on April 11, 2026, starting and finishing at Saskadena Six. The course traverses various Pomfret roads. Jonathan expects up to 100 entrants and will provide course marshals, adequate signage, and medical support. His annual insurance certificate from USA Track and Field is pending and will be sent to the Town Clerk upon receipt. Emily moved and John seconded approval of the road event permit, conditioned on receipt of the insurance certificate prior to the event. Unanimous.
- i. **Large Event Permit (Runamuck 50k)** – John moved and Emily seconded approval of the Large Event Permit for the Runamuck 50k at Saskadena Six, conditioned on receipt of the insurance certificate prior to the event. Unanimous. Ben will send the approved permit documents to Mr. Vass.
- j. **Liquor License Renewals (Abracadabra Coffee Company)** – The Selectboard considered three renewals: first class, third class, and outdoor consumption licenses. John noted for the record that his daughter is an employee (not an owner) of Abracadabra and that he does not believe this constitutes a conflict of interest. The Selectboard briefly discussed the outdoor consumption license and noted that Abracadabra’s use of that license remains subject to their zoning approvals. Ben will again ask the Department of Liquor and Lottery to annotate the license accordingly, and will ask Zoning Administrator Preston Bristow to remind the company of the parameters of their outdoor consumption license. Steve moved and Marge seconded approval of all three renewals. Unanimous.
- k. **Liquor and Tobacco License Renewals (Teago General Store)** – Emily moved and Marge seconded approval of renewals of the second-class and tobacco licenses for the Pomfret Road General Store (Teago General Store). Unanimous.
- l. **Town Plan Update Process and Timeline** – Ben introduced this item to discuss how to proceed with the town plan. The Planning Commission has approved a draft; TRORC declined to approve it and provided written comments. The Selectboard must hold a hearing and approve a plan by August or the process restarts. Doug Tuthill, John Moore, and others commented on the TRORC comments and the broader context of Act 181. Mr. Moore noted a provision of 24 V.S.A. § 4302 allowing a planning body to identify specific state goals as not relevant or attainable, provided it describes the situation in the plan. He also noted that he had contacted Brandy Saxton of Place Sense in Windsor – a consultant who previously assisted Pomfret – to inquire about her availability to help address TRORC’s technical comments. Emily moved and John seconded authorization for the Planning Commission to engage Brandy Saxton to address TRORC’s technical comments, and to proceed toward a Selectboard hearing once those corrections are made. Unanimous.
- m. **Warrants** – John moved and Emily seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

26086	14,296.66	Payroll
26087	91,031.92	A/P
26088	9.53	Tax Refund

 Unanimous.
- n. **Approval of March 4, 2026 Minutes** – John moved and Emily seconded approval of the minutes of the March 4, 2026 regular Selectboard meeting as presented. Unanimous.

6. **Meeting Wrap Up**

- a. **Correspondence** – Ben reported receiving an inquiry regarding driveway access upon a legal trail and will research the matter.
- b. **Review of Assignments** – Cynthia to post the RFP to the Local Roads network; invite Mike Rebentisch and Casey Carmichael to the April 1 meeting. Ben to post the RFP to the town website and the VTrans bid registry; send permit documents to Jonathan Vass; submit the Certificate of Compliance to VTrans; contact Preston Bristow and the Department of Liquor and Lottery regarding the Abracadabra outdoor consumption license; compile Selectboard revisions to the Town Administrator job description; post remaining officer vacancies on the listserv. All members to send written revisions to the Town Administrator job description to Ben within the week. Frank to obtain itemized written quotes from AllState and Innovative Solutions for the April 15 meeting.
- c. **Agenda for Next Meeting** – Town highway grant applications; Town Administrator job description; constable discussion (Mike Rebentisch); ZBA appointment (Casey Carmichael).

7. **Executive Session**

- a. Ben moved and John 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 9:19 pm.
- b. Marge moved and Steve seconded that the Selectboard exit executive session. Unanimous. The Selectboard exited executive session at 10:12 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.

8. **Adjournment** – John moved and Marge seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 pm.