Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2026

Present: Benjamin Brickner, John Peters, Eric Chase, Emily Grube, Kyle Hansen

Public: Mariel Luna (Town Administrator), Frank Rogers, Art Lewin, Allyn Ricker, Cynthia Hewitt, Jason Levin, Pamela Pickett, Rita Seto, Bob Crean, Michael Miller, Cierra Ford (VHB), Joshua Aldrich (VHB)

1. **Call to Order –** Ben called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. **Agenda Review –** None.
3. **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, with Frank and Art invited to join. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 7:00 pm.
   b. John moved and Eric seconded that the Selectboard exit executive session. Unanimous. The Selectboard exited executive session at 7:23 pm. No decisions were made in executive session.
4. **Public Comment –** None.
5. **Town Administrator Report –** Mariel reported that the ad for the truck and plow sale has been posted. She reported that she met with Munibit as well as with Jason Levin regarding the new Town website and the ADA requirements. Mariel reported that the cost for Munibit would be just over $1,600 annually and, should the Town decide to move on from Munibit, the Town would lose the structure that Munibit creates. If the Town decides to work with Jason, who has offered to build the new website pro bono, the only cost would be hosting at approximately $25 monthly. Mariel reported that she is reviewing compensation and benefits and the personnel policy and will have feedback on both at the November 4 Selectboard meeting. Mariel reported that there were no updates from the Treasurer, and that Becky will need help at the elections. Mariel discussed the cleanup that is currently happening in the Town office building and mentioned that Bill Emmons and John Moore took some time to help with that. The Historical Society has picture rail ready for the Town to install, and Ben suggested that it may be possible to find someone in town willing to do that work; Mariel noted that volunteers could sign waivers. She mentioned that additional electrical outlets are needed in the offices, as equipment is currently daisy-chained, and that the light fixtures and the conference table chairs need to be replaced for safety reasons. Lastly, Mariel requested help clearing out broken windows, screens, and other debris from the barn. The Selectboard agreed that pricing for the electrical work, light fixtures, and chairs can be submitted for review and consideration, and Frank will look at the barn and haul what he can to the Town garage dumpster.
6. **Recognition of Cynthia Hewitt –** The Selectboard thanked Cynthia for her seven and a half years of service as the Selectboard's administrative assistant.
7. **Road Foreman Report –** Frank reported that the road crew has been working on finishing roadside mowing, leaf blowing, and grading, and getting the equipment ready for winter. In the next week or two, the road crew will begin completing maintenance and cleaning that they were unable to focus on during the summer. Ben asked Frank about the beaver

dam on Stage Road. Frank stated that he met with someone from the State who recommended that the beavers be trapped and removed, and that he will obtain the State's list of trappers and present options to the Selectboard.

8. **Items for Discussion or Vote**
   a. **VHB Paving Reclamation Presentation –** Cierra Ford and Joshua Aldrich presented their findings from the evaluation of Pomfret Road from the Woodstock town line to Allen Hill Road. They discussed the recommended treatments for each of the segments studied, along with drainage, slope, culvert, and signage improvements. Questions from the Selectboard and the public addressed alternative treatments, curbing near Teago, project phasing and financing, and culverts. VHB will provide a revised recommendation report, and the Selectboard will schedule a follow-up meeting with VHB to discuss costs and phasing.
   b. **New Town Website – ADA Compliance –** Jason Levin discussed the work that he is completing to help update the Town website. He gave a brief summary of the ADA requirements as well as what will need to be revised for the existing documents already on the website. Jason also discussed the current website's vulnerability to a security flaw that was recently discovered, and recommended backing up the site and moving promptly to a new WordPress site. The Selectboard reached a consensus to allow Jason to continue his work on the Town website and to be granted access to the backend, with the Selectboard to review the new site before it goes live.
   c. **FY 2028 Budget Discussion –** The Selectboard began its first review of the Town budget worksheet line by line, entering preliminary figures. Mariel will work with Becky, Ellen, Neil, and Norm to determine specific projected costs for each of their departments, and will invite Greg Hartford to the November 4 Selectboard meeting to present the Fire Department's budget projections.
   d. **Review Winter Plowing Bids –** Mariel provided the Selectboard with a summary of all submissions. Emily asked Frank if he would need the additional contractor now that he has a full crew. Frank said there is not an urgent need to take the RFP any further at this time. Eric shared concerns regarding training time to prepare the new hire for winter work. Frank shared that the existing crew is a strong one and he feels confident that they will be able to train the new hire in time for winter. The Selectboard came to a consensus to reject all bids. Mariel will make calls to the bidders to inform them. Frank will inform any remaining candidates that the vacancy has been filled.
   e. **Better Roads Grant (FY 2027) –** This item was taken up ahead of Item 8C. Rita Seto (Two Rivers) joined via Zoom and discussed the Town's possible Category D application for the Johnson Road culvert, explaining that completing work on both culverts prior to repaving could save money in the long run. Emily shared her concerns regarding the remaining amount of funds that the Town would have to secure to cover the full cost of the project, and recommended that the Town wait for another structures grant. Rita and the Selectboard discussed applying under Category B instead, which would cover drainage and cross culvert work on smaller projects around town. Eric moved and Kyle seconded that Frank and Mariel prepare a Category B application, with Frank to identify the culverts, and that Mariel or the Selectboard Chair be authorized to sign it. Unanimous.
   f. **Structures Grant Agreement (BC2501) –** The Selectboard reviewed the structures grant agreement for the lower Pomfret Road culvert (Culvert #59), which provides

$200,000 with a 10% local share. Eric moved and Emily seconded approval of the agreement and authorized the Selectboard Chair to sign. Unanimous.

g. **2027 Transportation Alternatives Program –** Discussed under Item 8E. The Selectboard reached a consensus that applying for the Transportation Alternatives Program or other federally funded programs would not be conducive to the Town's needs at this time, given their administrative requirements.

h. **Culvert #59 Replacement RFP –** The Selectboard took the RFP that Mariel prepared under advisement. Emily recommended adding a mandatory pre-bid site visit and extending the completion date to September 30, 2027. Frank shared that there is no urgency to approve the RFP since the work would not begin until spring. The Selectboard noted that the existing plans from East Engineering are design plans rather than construction plans, and Ben will contact East Engineering about the next phase. The Selectboard will review the updated RFP at a future meeting.

i. **Warrants –** John moved and Emily seconded approval of the following warrants for payment:

27031	$	10,609.21	Payroll
27034		57,251.39	A/P

Unanimous. The Selectboard also reached a consensus that Ellen roll over the maturing $192,000 certificate of deposit for a five-month term.

j. **Approval of October 7, 2026 Minutes –** John moved and Emily seconded to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2026 meeting as presented. Unanimous.

9. **Meeting Wrap Up**

a. **Correspondence –** Ben and Mariel received a patrol services agreement from the Vermont State Police. The Selectboard came to a consensus that a decision on how to move forward will be made after the elections and a meeting with the Sheriff-elect.

b. **Review of Assignments –** Ben will contact East Engineering regarding the Culvert #59 plans, sign and return the structures grant agreement, and coordinate scheduling with VHB. Frank will identify culverts for the Better Roads Grant application, inform the remaining road crew candidates that the vacancy has been filled, look at the barn, and obtain the State's list of trappers. Mariel will contact the winter plowing bidders, work with Frank to complete the Better Roads Grant application, continue to work with Jason on the new Town website, follow up with the Treasurer, Clerk, Listers, and Fire Department on budget projections, inform Becky that Jason was granted access to the website, update the Culvert #59 RFP, let Ellen know about the CD rollover, and check with Becky about an overweight permit for Barnard Excavating.

c. **Agenda for Next Meeting –** FY 2028 budget, F550 sale bids, personnel policy updates, follow-up on executive session matter, Culvert #59 Replacement RFP, and a statement of support for the Veterans Memorial dedication.

10. **Adjournment –** John moved and Eric seconded adjournment. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 pm.