

draft

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD'S MEETING
Wednesday September 16th 2026
Meriden Town Hall

Select Board members present:

- Amy Lappin
- Elise Angelillo
- Kent Webber

Others present:

- Stephen Halleran
- Eric Gutsfeld PC
- Brad Atwater FM
- Michael Miller-Z
- Bruce Elder FC
- Maria Guzman
- Lawrence Schissel
- Lesley Pearson
- Kevin McNamara
- Amy Beaupre-Z

The September 2nd minutes were approved as presented.

Public Comment: Larry Schissel, a Democrat candidate for District 7 representation, introducing himself to the board and public.

Maria Guzman expressed concerns about what she viewed as misuse of taxpayer funds to send a cease and desist letter to her, a citizen exercising their right to public oversight. She questioned the town's use of legal threats instead of open communication and requested the \$12,000 contract for hiring a new Town Administrator. She pointed out that under New Hampshire's right to know law, the town has five business days to respond. Maria went on to criticized the new town administrator job description and advertised compensation, arguing that an executive-level salary was being paid for what appeared to be clerical duties.

Flatiron Road Follow Up: Town Administrator Halleran updated the board on the Flatiron Road issue, reporting that the trucker has started to park his trailer at the Highway Department resolving the immediate neighborhood concern.

1 **Highway:** Richard provided updates on department activities, including cleaning
2 up a beaver dam in Hedgehog and ongoing road work, as winter preparation
3 continue.

4
5 Administrator Halleran and Road Agent Collins discussed a proposal to
6 implement hard packing on several town roads and again using an outside
7 contractor for grading on steeper roads. The funding source for this work would
8 be the Highway Transportation Fund the Select Board being agents to expend.
9 Hanover, Enfield and now Cornish are all trying with some success this strategy
10 of adding hardpack to problem gravel roads. Plainfield has discuss it for several
11 years and is now ready to try several roads as an experiment. The board
12 approved the plan, relying on the town's administrative team to not overspend
13 the budget.

14
15 **Human Services:** Stephanie Schell provided updates on community food
16 programs, reporting that the New Hampshire Food Bank initiatives and feeding
17 programs are progressing well with grants nearly depleted but sufficient reserves
18 available. She discussed challenges with new SNAP benefit guidelines affecting
19 eligible recipients, particularly those 65 and under, and mentioned that the
20 community budget has helped supplement affected families through food pantry
21 purchases. Town also highlighted the positive partnership with Mountain Valley
22 Treatment Center, noting that the staff and teenagers have been actively
23 volunteering at the food pantry and assisting with various community tasks.

24
25 **Emergency Management Updates Meeting:** Stephanie provided updates on
26 several emergency management initiatives and events. She announced plans for
27 a local emergency forum on emergency shelters next Tuesday at Lebanon's City
28 Hall. She also confirmed a free flu shot clinic scheduled for October 1st at the
29 Plainfield Gym from 4-6 PM.

30
31 **Plainfield Fire:** Chief Elder reported on fire department activities, including
32 conducting inspections at KUA and planning an all-school fire drill.

33
34 The Chief also noted that the department had responded to 7 calls in September,
35 bringing the year's total to 125.

36
37 Bruce indicated that the KUA Fire brigade has several new members and that
38 training for them is underway.

39
40 **Facilities:** Work has continued on the gravel pit annex building. The elevated
41 deck has been strengthened and all the windows in the building are now repaired.

42
43 The town hall IT upgrades are now fully underway.
44

1 Turning to the water system, an advertised and planned flushing of the system is
2 this weekend.

3
4
5 **Police Department:** Chief Gutsfeld reported 78 calls for service so far in
6 September. He updated the Board on speed control efforts around town. He
7 would like to see the town do a better job with speed limit sign postings.

8
9 The Plainfield Select Board thanked Erik for his 1.5 of service to the town. Erik
10 will complete his time as Police chief on Friday 10/2. He and his wife are moving
11 to North Carolina to be closer to family.

12
13 **Town Office:** Town Administrator reported that preparations for the 2026 tax rate
14 setting are underway. While not all numbers are in, Halleran feels that the rate
15 change will be as discussed at March town and school meetings.

16
17 At 7:50pm the Board voted unanimously on a roll call vote to enter nonpublic
18 session for the purpose of an exit interview Chief Gutsfeld.

19
20 At :8:16pm the board returned to public session and the meeting was adjourned.

21
22 Submitted,

23
24
25 Stephen Halleran/Chat GPT

26
27
28 Amy Lappin

29
30
31 Elise Angellilo

32
33
34 Kent Webber