

Town of Hampstead  
Selectmen's  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 24, 2026

Members Present: Lewis Eaton, Joe Guthrie, Laurie Warnock, Steve Morse, and Maurie Worthen,

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

**Announcements:**

1. Check out the [www.hampsteadnh.us](http://www.hampsteadnh.us) website.
2. Please silence your cell phones.

**Public Comments:**

1. Laura Jones, Hampstead's representative to CART – Ms. Jones reviewed the transportation statistics that was provided to the Select Board. Select Board Vice Chair Warnock summarized the previous Select Board's meeting, whereas, CART was looking for an increase for its service from \$17,142 to \$45,006.

Discussion took place on ridership, trips vs persons using the service. The majority of the usage is for medical reasons, which in the last three (3) months, there were eight (8) repeat riders. Overall, the service was suggested as a need for certain demographics.

Select Board member Warnock also discussed the transportation sections of the recently issued report from the NH Commission on Aging. Based on the report, there was a lack of coordination from the state.

Select Board member Warnock also brought forward the significant cost increase and asked if CART had reached out for grants or asked any of the medical facilities to help offset the cost as they are benefiting from the users being at their facility.

Select Board member Guthrie specifically asked what the driving factor or factors were for more than doubling the costs. Ms. Jones indicated that cost has not changed in years, and most of their federal funding has stopped. Therefore, costs have been downshifted to MTA, which is passed on to CART participants.

Further discussion took place on how to fund the increase. Select Board member Morse indicated that the decision would need to go before the voters, via the budget or a warrant article. If the town continues at the current level of funding of \$17,142, then the service would be limited to 1.62 hours per day. This would potentially provide service for one trip.

Ms. Jones indicated that CART looked at a scheduled service, whereas on certain days, the service is available at specific days and times, and users would need to schedule around those days and times.

It was then discussed that CART could notify Hampstead users of the impact of the service based on current funding and needed current funding. Select Board Chairman Eaton mentioned that the town would not know who the users and this is something that CART can do.

**A motion was made by Select Board member Warnock to request CART to notify Hampstead residents that use the service of the possibility of interrupted service based on budgetary constraints after January 1<sup>st</sup>. The motion was seconded by Select Board member Morse. Motion passes 5-0.**

Select Board member Warnock asked what the cost is for the users. Ms. Jones replied that it was \$2.00. It was further discussed whether CART considered increasing this fee. Ms. Jones replied that even at \$4.00, it could be a financial burden on the users.

Discussion continued on the type of users and trying find a way to minimize the costs with varying options, including other transportation by family members and other logistics involved such as ADA compliancy. Select Board Chairman asked about the reduction in use from 2025 to 2026.

Conversations should take place with the town's senior coordinator and Veterans to see what kind of outreach is needed and the use of the service.

Select Board member Worthen mentioned that some health insurance providers will provide transportation if you call in advance. Select Board member Warnock mentioned that other organizations such as Community Caregivers may provide transportation.

The position of the senior coordinator was discussed as to her responsibilities. The senior coordinator has the ability to network with outreach.

Select Board member Warnock mentioned that she would work to reach certain groups in town to see about getting information out to the community as this service is impacted by the budget and reductions. Ms. Jones indicated that if she received any more information, she will forward it to the Board.

#### **Department Heads**

##### **1. Police Department – Chief Kelley**

a. Hiring/Replacement of Custodian. Chief Kelley advised the Select Board that the current custodian is not able to continue to work at the Police Station. It is a part-time position for up to nine (9) hours per week doing custodial duties around the station. He asked the Board for approval to hire a replacement, His name is Shawn Ranlett, pending a successful background check,

**A motion was made by Select Board member Morse to authorize Chief Kelley to hire Shawn Ranlett, pending a successful background check. The motion was seconded by Select Board member Warnock. Motion passed 5-0.**

b. Restructure of Department Personnel. Chief Kelley asked the Select Board to do a minor department restructure by reclassifying Sergeant Randall from Sergeant to Detective Sergeant, which is more of an administrative Sergeant. Also, Chief Kelley requested to promote Chris Rothwell to Sergeant for a patrol supervisor. Both of these will have an effective date of Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>.

**A motion was made by Select Board member Morse to authorize Chief Kelley to restructure the department as presented. The motion was seconded by Select Board member Warnock. Motion passed 5-0.**

c. Grant. Chief Kelley asked for approval to accept the NH Highway Safety grant in the amount of \$8,500.

Select Board member Guthrie asked Chief Kelley what the grant funds are used for. Chief Kelley responded that the funds are for 4-hour blocks of traffic enforcement that includes speeding, impairment, cell phone use, etc.

**A motion was made by Select Board member Warnock to accept the grant as presented by Chief Kelley in the amount of \$8,500, and to authorized Chairman Eaton to sign the grant. The motion was seconded by Select Board member Morse. Motion passed 5-0.**

The Chief further updated the Select Board on the MOU for Hampstead Hospital and the YDC. At this time, this is still in progress.

### **New Business**

1. Open bids for heat and fuel – Chairman Eaton opens the bids for Palmer Gas and Oil. Their propane fixed price is \$1.899 per gallon. Outside bid price will be a variable rate of \$0.50 per gallon above their Atkinson-landed cost.

#2 Heating Oil price is a fixed cost of \$3.599 per gallon. Pricing outside of the bid is \$0.20 below their regular market price. Off-road Dyed Diesel is \$0.30 off of the regular daily market price.

Chairman Eaton open the bid for Hilton Oil. They did not bid on Propane. #2 Oil price is \$4.549 and Dyed Diesel is \$4.749

The bids were referred to School District CFO Goeff Dowd. CFO Dowd discussed the rates with the Select and mentioned that the proposed rates are higher than the current rates. CFO made a recommendation and asked the Select Board to award the bid to Palmer Gas based on their pricing being lower than Hilton Oil.

**A motion was made by Select Board member Morse to award the heat and fuel bid to Palmer Oil and Gas. The motion was seconded by Select Board Chairman Eaton. Motion passed 5-0.**

2. Discussion and information were provided about the open Board of Director position for the Vic Geary Center. Chairman Eaton announced if there were any Hampstead residents interested in the position to contact the Vic Geary center via email at [vicgeary@gmail.com](mailto:vicgeary@gmail.com).
3. The 2026/2027 Budget Schedule was discussed, including the first draft of the 2027 budget being presented on October 7, 2026 and moving the Select Board's October 12<sup>th</sup> regular meeting to October 14, 2026 because of Columbus Day holiday.

Select Board member Guthrie asked questions regarding the Health Insurance options and when they will be presented. TA Carrier advised the Select Board that the Health Insurance options will be presented to the Board in September.

The Board approved the budget schedule for the 2026/2027 budget process

### **Old Business**

There was no Old business

**TA Report/Information** – TA Carrier advised the Select Board that the Steeple work on the Meeting House and Town Office will begin mid-September. Select Board member Morse asked about grant funding and for TA Carrier to work with Historical Commission to look for grant funding.

TA Carrier informed the Board that the process for evaluating the town's financial software is beginning, with the first review on September 3, 2026 at 9:00 AM in the Select Board meeting room. It may need to be moved to the fire station, depending on attendance. TA Carrier will make the notification if the vendor evaluation is moved.

### **Liaison Reports**

*Selectman Guthrie*- The metal storage tank at the library is being removed soon.

*Selectwoman Warnock* – Had no updates beyond what Chief Kelley addressed with the Board during the meeting.

*Selectman Eaton* - The CIP committee met on 8/20, and Rob Morris and Historic Commission added some items to the CIP, which included replacing the furnace (\$26,800), 2<sup>nd</sup> story windows, and new chimney ductwork. The Historic Commission is working on a 20-year plan with the assistance of an expert with experience with historic buildings.

CIP Committee members voted on the priority of requests for 2026/2027 and will be presented to the Select Board during the Month of September.

The Historic Commission applied for a matching 50/50% grant, with the total grant in the amount of \$30,000.

Town elections will be held Tuesday, September 8, 2026 from 8:00am – 8:00pm. Two Select Board members need to be present at all times.

*Selectman Morse* – Mentioned that he has been working on some personnel issues, other than that he has no further update

*Selectman Worthen* – The town can save \$1,000 if the cab and chassis of the new ambulance is paid in advanced Of \$77,694 by the end of August.

A motion was made by Chairman Eaton to authorize the prepayment of \$77,694 for the ambulance cab and chassis, with funds coming from the Ambulance Revolving Fund as previous approved.

Staffing of Per Diem Firefighters and Per Diem Paramedics was discussed. Selectman Morse asked about personnel background checks, and it was further agreed that all Fire Department Per Diem members receive the appropriate background checks.

Selectman Worthen further mentioned that because of budgetary constraints and the non-competitive hourly rate of Per Diem Firefighters, staffing will be reduced from 5 on duty personnel to 4 on duty personnel. TA Carrier reiterated that funds are limited and are now having an impact on services. Selectman Morse added that as a result, half of the month of September will have reduced staffing.

#### Call for Candidates/Appointments

#### Consent Documents

**A motion was made by Selectwoman Warnock with a second by Selectman Worthen to accept the documents as noted on the Agenda.**

**Motion passed 5-0-0**

#### Correspondence/Information

1. Wetlands Permit application
2. County Fiscal Year Budget

#### Visitors Comments

Selectman Guthrie discussed a solar exemption.

#### Adjournment

**A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Selectman Warnock at 07:23 pm with a second by Selectman Morse.**

**Motion passed 5-0-0**

A True Record:

  
Michael Carrier, Town Administrator

Approved By:

Selectman Eaton: \_\_\_\_\_

Selectman Guthrie: \_\_\_\_\_

Selectman Morse: \_\_\_\_\_

Selectman Warnock: \_\_\_\_\_

Selectman Worthen: \_\_\_\_\_