

## Town of East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting Monday, March 23, 2026

**Present:** Seth Gardner, Carl Etnier, Tom Brazier, Joe Brooks

**Present via Zoom:** Scott Hess

**Also Present via Zoom:** Paul Cate, Becca Schrader, Jeff Cueto, Celina Barton, Hazen Stoufer, Solomon Gaynor

**Also Present:** Par Winzel, Nancy Cook, Thomas Parker, Troy Seckington, Carole Gaynor, Tucker Purchase, Richard Hall

The meeting was called to order by Chair Gardner at 5:31 PM.

**Additions to the Agenda:** Ash Tree Project and annual Sheriff Contract

### **Review of Minutes:**

**Motion:** To approve the March 2, 2026 Selectboard Meeting minutes. **Made:** Mr. Brazier. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. Mr. Etnier recommended striking the name “Becca Schrader” from the “Discuss Working Group” topic and striking the first sentence. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously and minutes were approved as amended.

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of March 2, 2026, Town Plan Hearing. **Made:** Mr. Hess. **Second:** Mr. Brazier. Mr. Brooks asked that his name be changed from “Jim” to Joe” in the attendance section. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously as amended.

The review of the Town Meeting Day minutes was tabled until a future meeting.

**Public Comment:** Becca Shrader noted that she is attending as the town correspondent for the Montpelier Bridge publication.

**Ash Tree Removal Project:** Mr. Cueto explained that 165 total trees were marked for removal; of which 10 were small. Most bids received were far above the \$30k that was approved. Two bids came in above \$70k. Pricing has increased due to diesel costs and costs of moving equipment. The goal is to get the most trees within the \$30k budget. Trees will be removed from the following roads: Green Road, Cherry Tree Hill Road, Vincent Flats Road, Putnam Road, Snow Hill Road, Hammett Hill Road, Markham, Chickering, Factory Street and Taylor Farm Road. The group will work with Mr. Ferno to create a plan.

### **Board Organization:**

**Motion:** To Nominate Seth Gardner as Chair. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second:** Mr. Brazier. **Results: 4-0-1,** with Mr. Gardner recusing himself.

**Motion:** To Nominate Mr. Hess as Vice Chair. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. **Results: 4-0-1,** with Mr. Hess recusing himself.

**Motion:** To adopt the 2026 SB rules of transaction. **Made:** Mr. Brazier. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously.

**Consideration of Selectboard Appointment Schedule:** The clerk confirmed that all participants were asked if they wished to continue. Those who did not were removed from the slate. **Motion:** To appoint the new and continuing appointees as presented. **Made:** Mr. Brazier. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. **Results: 5-0.** The appointment schedule will be attached to the minutes.

**Discuss Barking Dog Complaint:** Nancy Cook submitted her email to the Selectboard regarding her concerns with her neighbor's barking dogs. Ms. Gaynor read a statement that outlined the several things they have used to alleviate the issue, including privacy screen, fencing and use of a bark collar now that the mother dog was no longer pregnant. She admitted that there has been tension between the neighbors. Ms. Cook noted that dogs can see the house, which causes them to bark. Mr. Gardner suggested the use of bark collars. Mr. Brazier noted that dogs bark when people come around. The animal control enforcement for this issue is for the ACO to write a ticket. Mrs. Gaynor noted that they are continuing to find solutions to this problem, including finding a way to move the dogs to a different area if necessary. This issue will be referred to the ACO/Constable.

**Discuss East Montpelier Fire Department** – There was a request from the EMFD to use their Capital funds to replace old ambulance Lifepack monitors. These monitors are aging out, replacement parts are difficult to find, they don't provide the best patient care, and new equipment has the technology to send EKG results directly to the hospital en route. Total cost of the replacement including trade-in is \$94,600. They can finance with 0% interest utilizing ambulance revenue rather than taking capital funds. While EMFD does not require express permission to purchase equipment utilizing these funds, they requested approval from the Selectboard for fiscal transparency purposes. **Motion:** To approve the EMFD purchase of two ZOLL X series cardiac monitors using ambulance revenue instead of capital reserve. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second:** Mr. Hess. Mr. Brooks asked if there were any efforts to purchase through other providers. It was noted that changing equipment type would make our monitors incompatible with other district equipment, and a maintenance plan is included when purchasing direct from the manufacturer. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously.

**Discuss EMFD Request to Use EMFD Capital funds for SCBA replacements:** The purchase price to replace SCBA equipment is \$321,439. They want to take \$78k over the next two years from the current capital funds to purchase 18 replacement SCBA units. Grants availability is being researched. **Motion:** To authorize the EMFD to spend up to \$160,000 to purchase SCBA equipment over the next two fiscal years. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second:** Mr. Brazier. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously.

**Consideration of Coburn Rd. FEMA Buyout Approval-** Par Winzel and Karen were present to request signatures from the Board Chair for previously discussed plans for their home on Coburn Road that was damaged by flooding in 2023 and 2024.

**Discuss Grants Committee Resolution: Motion:** To accept the Resolution establishing the East Montpelier Grants committee with the following amendments: there will be 5 members; members will have a one-year term; the committee will be established for one year, Section 3 will be changed to include no grant application will be submitted without approval; and the Selectboard will be made aware of grants to be submitted within 2 weeks or timely manner. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second: Mr. Brooks.** **Results: 5-0** The motion with amendments passed unanimously.

**Discuss Community Wood Grant:** Ms. Barton flagged a grant opportunity to help townspeople move from fuel oil to more sustainable wood heat. She will get more information for the Selectboard and report out in April.

**Consideration of CDBG Grant- Municipal Policy and Codes (MP-1) Form:** Motion: To approve the Municipal Policy and Codes form. **Made:** Mr. Brazier. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously.

**Consideration of CDBG Grant- Resolution Form: Motion:** To Accept the Resolution Form. **Made:** Mr. Brooks. **Second:** Mr. Brazier. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously.

**Discuss Becoming an EV Charger Site Host:** The Board asked the Town Administrator to explore the possibility of adding to and upgrading the equipment and to complete the survey. **Motion:** To authorize the Town Administrator to complete the survey to become an EV charger site host. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. **Results: 5-0.**

**Discuss Town Garage Ribbon Cutting:** There was discussion regarding setting a date in the summer on a weekend when stakeholders are available.

### **Consideration of Liquor/Tobacco Permits**

Mekkelsen Wedding – Catering Permit

JR Biron 2nd Class Liquor

JR Biron Tobacco

JR Biron Tobacco Substitute

Fairmont Mercantile 2nd Class Liquor

Fairmont Mercantile Tobacco

Fairmont Mercantile Tobacco Substitute

**Motion:** To authorize the town clerk to approve the applications for permits as presented. **Made:** Mr. Etnier. **Second:** Mr. Brazier. Mr. Etnier noted that Tobacco kills, he wishes that stores didn't have to sell it but understands that the sales support small business. **Results: 5-0.** The motion passed unanimously.

**Washington County Sheriff Contract:** The board will table this contract until a future meeting. The Town Administrator will invite the Sheriff to attend.

**Treasurer Report-** January Monthly Financials were presented.

**Warrants** dated March 23, 2026 were signed.

### **Town Administrator Report:**

- Recruitment- The town is recruiting for Municipal Coordinator position for April/May/June to allow for training overlap for mid-June start.
- Grants in Aide- Results of Road Erosion Inventory Report (only 5 road sections received a score of “does not meet the current standards”) and submitted signed letter of intent for Grants in Aide 3/23/26. A meeting will be scheduled in April to discuss which roads to focus on.
- CDBG RFP Posted- Bid Submission Deadline is April 6, 2026, by 11:00am
- MPG RFP Posted -Bid Submission Deadline is April 20, 2026, by 11:00am

**Other Business:** Mr. Brazier talked about extending the apron in front of the town garage by roughly 12-15 feet. He plans to attend the construction meeting being held on Tuesday morning to discuss.

**Motion:** To adjourn. **Made:** Mr. Hess. **Second:** Mr. Brooks. **Results: 5-0.** The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosie Laquerre, Board Recorder