

**Town of Norwich, Vermont
Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, April 8th, 2026**

Active Participants at Tracy Hall: Kimo Griggs (SB Chair), Brendan Classon (SB Vice Chair), Matt Swett (SB member), Mary Layton (SB member), Cheryl Lindberg (Treasurer and Lister), Jude Stull (Town member)

Rob Gere (SB member) was not in attendance.

Active Participants on Zoom: Brennan Duffy (Town Manager), Kris Clement (Town member), Linda Gray (Town member), Jaan Laaspere (Planning Commission)

Key: *Motions noted in italics.*
Public comment noted in blue.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kimo Griggs at 6:32 pm.

YouTube Timestamp: 3:40

1. Agenda

Timestamp: 3:55

Layton asked for a follow-up agenda item to address the concerns raised by John Carroll at the prior meeting.

Layton asked to submit drafts for two working groups – one to explore a date change for the annual meeting and one to create a process for entities to request removal from the tax base.

*I move to approve the agenda as presented. – Swett moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes
(Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)*

2. Chair's Report

Timestamp: 7:57

The Chair (1) met to set the agenda, (2) signed an off-cycle warrant for payroll and a Planning Department form, (3) met with the Town Manager about the departure of the Director of the Finance Department, (4) met with Classon about potential policy updates to increase board agility, (5) met with the Chair of the Planning Committee about the goal

setting process, and (6) planned to visit Montpelier the next day to observe legislators at work.

3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

Timestamp: 8:58

Cheryl Lindberg reiterated her hope for a new bulletin board outside Tracy Hall, as the current one is in disrepair.

Kris Clement asked that the Selectboard put on the agenda a public records request policy as soon as possible.

4. Update Regarding Open Positions on Boards/Commissions

Timestamp: 11:12

Duffy gave a reminder of the upcoming application deadline of April 15th for open positions. Duffy shared that applications would be reviewed by the Selectboard on the 22nd.

5. Article 36 Discussion

Timestamp: 12:20

Griggs noted the continued interest in Article 36, which he highlighted was approved in 2019.

Layton reflected that Article 36 was, to some extent, aspirational. Layton shared that it was still worthwhile, especially in the upcoming Tracy Hall renovation, but raised practicality questions around electric vehicle and mower suitability.

Griggs wondered what mechanisms could be used to make the changes happen.

Swett suggested that larger fleet vehicles could be more difficult to move to all-electric, but that Tracy Hall, the public works building, and the firehouse could have energy efficiency upgrades. Swett reflected that the Selectboard should have reached out to the Energy Committee ahead of this conversation.

Classon highlighted that Article 36 was fairly comprehensive and referenced the replacement timeline in Appendix B. Classon wondered if the listed items had been replaced as projected in the document.

Swett highlighted that the most recent fire engine was designed to not have a generator inside it, with the tools instead being electric, but pointed out limitations on good hybrid or all-electric versions of large trucks.

Layton shared that Norah Lake of Sweetland Farm had at least one electric tractor and could give input on how it works.

Selectboard members discussed the Article 36 report and improvements in technology over recent years.

Jude Stull shared that efforts at the municipal level to mitigate climate change would be noble but that it could have negative consequences on the cost of living in the area. Stull highlighted that some of these policies, when implemented and carried to an excess, could make things much more expensive.

Classon noted that Article 36 was advisory.

Lindberg asked if it was agreed upon that the task force would be published as an open group to which the Selectboard would appoint members, since new people might want to join. Lindberg suggested that updates could be made to the Transfer Station for the benefit of the employees, like the construction of a building with sanitation.

Linda Gray pointed out that the report from the taskforce was just four years old. Gray suggested that the Selectboard make further action a priority for the Town Manager and suggested making use of the shared Energy Coordinator.

Clement suggested that historical documentation would have been helpful in this sort of agenda item, and that the Town Manager could be tasked with compiling these materials, with that reflected in his goals.

Harry Falconer, Energy Coordinator at Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, shared that many of the opportunities in Article 36 still exist, even with it being a few years old. Falconer noted that heavy-duty trucks would be out of reach but that there was at least one EV police cruiser on the market. Falconer suggested adding tracking to the heavy-duty fleet vehicles to track fuel consumption and mileage and shared that the Hartford Parks Department had electric ride-on mowers. Falconer noted that there are not many significant grant opportunities to assist with funding these sorts of projects, but that there are some low-interest loan options.

Selectboard members discussed next steps for the pursuing greater energy efficiency, including putting together a list of actionable items, and reconvening the Article 36 group.

Griggs suggested decoupling the grants and tax incentives from the ability to get something done.

Swett asked Layton to put her suggestions into a memo for the next meeting, which could then be delegated to people to research.

Griggs highlighted the cost of housing referenced earlier and his understanding that Article 36 did not have any intention to make building homes more expensive.

Stull suggested that it could indirectly influence tax rates through increased municipal purchases.

Gray encouraged the Selectboard to highlight and prioritize the forthcoming list in collaboration with the Town Manager and Harry Falconer, as well as possibly a citizen group.

6. Citizen Assistance Fund Request

Timestamp: 54:55

Griggs explained that the request would go towards paying two months of rent for a Norwich resident.

I move to authorize the expenditure of \$1,200 from the Citizen Assistance Fund #33 for assistance to a Norwich resident. – Swett moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

7. Town Credit Card Payment Process

Timestamp: 56:10

Griggs highlighted letters from Finance Director Barrie Rosalinda and issues with credit card payments being paid late due to the timing of Selectboard meetings, which may then affect the Town Manager's credit score.

Duffy emphasized that it was a timing issue with receiving bills that needed to be approved by the Selectboard in a warrant, submitting paper checks through the mail to

Missouri, and ultimately paying bills late, which had resulted in late fees, shutdown of the card, and negative hits to Duffy's credit score.

Duffy shared that Rosalinda proposed making payments by electronic transfer when it is known that there would not be enough time to get a warrant approved and a check mailed to the credit card company. Duffy highlighted that the payments on the card had already occurred, and therefore the process would not make a change to the check and balance. Duffy shared that there was little risk associated with the proposed process, but that the Treasurer had expressed concern. Duffy gave an alternative option of using another account from which to make electronic payments, not the general fund, that would have less cash available.

Layton wondered whether the Town Manager was expected to be the person responsible for a town credit card, whether there was risk in establishing Elan Financial as an approved vendor at the bank, and why the Town Manager's credit had to be involved at all.

Duffy explained that the last credit card had been held by a previous Finance Director. Duffy noted that he had to give his social security number to get the current card approved.

Griggs asked why the matter couldn't be solved by having an off-cycle warrant.

Duffy explained that it was a recurrent timing issue and would create an additional warrant for the Finance Office to create.

Swett asked whether the electronic option would be the default method or be used as needed.

Duffy responded that they would want to have the ability to pay the bill electronically so that they could use that method when there was concern about missing a payment, which had happened a few times in the last few months. Duffy gave the options of taking the funds out of the general fund or using another established fund for paying the bills, which average \$3,000-\$4,000 per month.

Selectboard members discussed the approval flow of town expenses, the risk exposure from establishing Elan Financial as an approved vendor, and the scale of expenses.

Treasurer Lindberg explained that she had been the only remaining employee attached to the previous credit card and that she helped research new credit card options. Lindberg

shared that she was excluded from the process of establishing the new credit card and had no access to credit card information, and that Duffy signed his name on the application. Lindberg suggested using the bank's online portal to expedite the month-end process.

Lindberg shared that she called Bar Harbor Bank earlier in the week and the person she spoke with explained that there is no personal guarantee needed on the credit card and that the need for a person's name is for someone to serve as the point of contact. Lindberg suggested that the monthly payment information could likely be downloaded from an online portal without waiting for the physical statement. She noted that employees take the credit card to use it and return with immediate documentation on what was charged, which could then facilitate the creation of a check and an off-cycle payment.

Lindberg reminded the Selectboard of the financial matter in 2019-2020, which Lindberg stated was related to "pressure on the Treasurer to do something with a new employee that hadn't even been in the office a month." Lindberg emphasized that her goal was to protect the operating account and avoid giving out its banking information, but that she would be happy to work out an arrangement with a different account.

Griggs reflected that he was unsure the level of oversight the Treasurer had as an elected official over the decision making that the Selectboard was being asked to consider, and that he didn't know if the Selectboard could vote yay or nay without the approval of the Treasurer.

Griggs and Duffy discussed the billing cycle of the credit card. Duffy questioned the Lindberg's reluctance to proceed with the suggested process put forward by Duffy and the Finance Director and stated that he would likely remove himself from the credit card if an electronic payment would not be made the next day. Duffy shared that he wished option two would be considered if Lindberg "truly is concerned that the general fund would be at risk."

Lindberg reiterated that she would prefer using a different account and would be happy to work with that.

Duffy and Lindberg agreed to take the next steps for the payment the next morning.

Classon noted that there would likely be a rare instance of a missed payment and that the Selectboard needs to know if a person's credit card score is being impacted or not.

Duffy asked that the motion include language on directing the Treasurer to allow the transfer of funds.

Layton explained that the Selectboard cannot direct Lindberg, as she is an elected official, and that it is not needed in a motion.

Selectboard members discussed the language of the motion and appropriate amounts of money to hold in the account.

Clement thanked Lindberg for her work as Treasurer and for protecting the town. Clement stated that Lindberg's concerns were valid given that the town is about to begin the hiring process of another new Finance Director.

Lindberg emphasized that the withdrawals would likely be made before the Selectboard had approved it and clarified that statutes direct the Treasurer to sign checks upon the approval of the Selectboard.

I move to adopt option two as recommended by the Finance Director, Town Treasurer, and Town Manager to use an already established account subtitled EFT as needed for electronic credit card payments. – Classon moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

8. Tracy Hall Working Group Proposal

Timestamp: 1:35:14

Griggs highlighted his proposal in the packet to form a Tracy Hall working group. Griggs emphasized that he would not want to lead the project or discussion but to make the discussion happen.

Layton shared that she liked the concept but that she would like to know how big the group would be, who would be on it, and what the work products would be. Layton reflected that the public safety building committee had morphed into an imaginative group that mushroomed in vision.

Selectboard members discussed the order of operations for setting up a working group, how to successfully navigate open meeting law, and how to align on a vision for the group.

Duffy cautioned against meeting with a group and discussing town business without warning it in alignment with open meeting law.

Jaan Laaspere suggested separating generic best practices from the Tracy Hall example if the Tracy Hall example was too complicated to help work the process out. Laaspere suggested that the first charge of a group could be a refined working group vision to prevent getting stuck in an endless loop when setting up a working group.

Griggs shared that he would like permission to form the working group.

Selectboard members pondered ways of appropriately gathering people to form the working group, as well as the limited previous steps taken on Tracy Hall updates.

Laaspere clarified that a working group of the Selectboard does work that the Selectboard does not have time to complete in regular meetings and emphasized that it is a very iterative process that expands the Selectboard's meeting time.

Clement shared that she and Laaspere formed the Solar Siting Subcommittee of the Planning Commission and that they got pushback when trying to open it up to the public.

Laaspere highlighted the importance of a quorum, that a quorum is required to have a meeting, and that a meeting must follow open meeting laws.

Clement added that there was an issue with developing the charge of the Solar Subcommittee, encouraged Griggs to talk with Laaspere as Griggs develops a working group, and advocated for advertising the new working group.

I move to task Kimo Griggs with forming a working group of the Selectboard to study Tracy Hall. – Matt Swett moved (2nd Classon) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

Swett shared that he would like to eventually create a working group on website updates but that he would wait to see the progress on this group's initiation.

9. Discussion of Selectboard Goals

Timestamp: 2:09:40

Griggs reflected that there were no real metrics or need to meet Selectboard goals aside from desiring to be reelected and serve effectively, but that the Town Manager's goals were a different matter.

Layton encouraged the Selectboard to focus on policy.

Classon emphasized the broad and non-specific nature of the statute dictating Selectboard responsibilities.

Selectboard members discussed how to conceptualize Selectboard goals, the ideal level of granularity of goals, and the range of tasks requiring focus by the board.

10. Discussion of Goals for the Town Manager

Timestamp: 2:21:45

Griggs clarified that he was approaching the discussion from the perspective of a Town Manager in general.

Griggs recounted that he had asked Duffy to put together a list of Town Manager goals when they met a week and a half ago and noted that Duffy's contract calls on the Selectboard to work on it together with him. Griggs asked if Duffy could give his thoughts on the Town Manager goals and objectives.

Duffy shared that he had attended a Town Manager summit that day, including a session on evaluations. Duffy shared that he might be able to talk more in detail about what could be done better in the evaluation process after the summit concludes.

Duffy shared that after reviewing the packet, he thought there might be a misunderstanding in the role of a Town Manager versus a Town Administrator, with a Town Manager having some level of autonomy and a Town Administrator holding very little statutory authority.

Duffy suggested using the existing template created over the last two years for the upcoming evaluation. Duffy suggested amending the evaluation and replace "below expectations" with "needs improvement" and adding a last box stating "unsatisfactory" to reduce ambiguity.

Griggs highlighted that none of this was in the packet or related to goals and objectives, and that the public could not see what was being discussed.

Layton shared that she found the discussion interesting.

Griggs stated that they should keep going if other people are comfortable with it.

Classon shared that the metrics around specific goals were much easier to assess than amorphous and broad goals.

Selectboard members discussed the importance of objectivity and communication in goal setting.

Duffy suggested maintaining the template and offered to list a couple tasks that he thought were achievable in the next four months. Duffy expressed confusion as to what was being requested of him that night.

Griggs reiterated that he had told Duffy about a week and a half ago that they would be talking about goals at the upcoming meeting and asked that he consider sharing his goals at a high level to begin developing a written document of expectations and associated discussion. Griggs shared that he “was hoping for a little more active engagement.”

Duffy responded that “the communication must have been lacking there.”

Classon asked about the origin of the current evaluation document; Duffy explained that it was created two years ago by Marcia Calloway with extensive Selectboard discussion.

Classon emphasized the lack of metrics and the subjectivity of goals in the evaluation document.

Swett asked Duffy to share any best practices for evaluations that he might learn in the remaining part of the summit.

Duffy shared that the discussion that day included reflection on the purpose of an evaluation of a Town Manager by the Selectboard, and that his takeaway was that if done effectively, the Town Manager would be guided by the Selectboard on ways to improve his performance. Duffy added that it should not be a mechanism to say that something was not done right without a mechanism to say how it could be done better.

Duffy asked if Griggs would like to hear his ideas for how to improve the evaluation form that night; Griggs asked that they be written so that they could be considered in a public setting.

Selectboard members discussed the timing of the Town Manager goals and evaluation with respect to the anniversary date and the Town Meeting.

Duffy clarified that the evaluation is tied to the anniversary date but that there was never a set date for goals to be established, so goals have been set around this time of year the

past few years, but that that timeline could and should change. Duffy suggested establishing goals moving forward in October, following the September evaluation.

Swett suggested agreeing on a goals model to use for adding new goals to avoid needing to debate a new format.

Classon expressed reluctance to “kick the can down the road for a third year.”

Griggs explained that they were not doing that, as they were going to have a fuller discussion at the next meeting.

Duffy emphasized that he wants to come to an understanding of what a Town Manager needs to do to be effective in his job and the attainable goals set with Selectboard support that can reasonably be achieved.

Lindberg highlighted emails sent to the Selectboard and Town Manager on suggested goals for the Town Manager and Selectboard in previous packets and asked if there would be outreach to get public input on goals.

Griggs responded that the topic was on the agenda and that people could appear in public or write in.

Clement reiterated her earlier suggestion that the Selectboard task the Town Manager with compiling information for various agenda items. Clement expressed disappointment that there were two Selectboard meetings in a row discussing Town Manager goals and the Town Manager was unprepared. Clement shared that the Town Manager report would be a good space to report on items tasked to the Town Manager, not just report on what had been reported by other town staff.

11. Approve Minutes

Timestamp: 2:59:50

Swett clarified that item 14 should include 2017 in the list of years included in the motion.

I move to approve the minutes for March 25th, 2026 as amended to include approval of the closing of the 2017 grand list. – Layton moved (2nd Swett) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

12. AP Warrants

Timestamp: 3:03:49

I move to approve AP Warrant #1468 in the amount of \$358,044.56 to be paid from the General Fund; AP Warrant #1469 in the amount of \$4,171.86 to be paid from the Police Cruiser Fund; AP Warrant #1470 in the amount of \$1,618.00 to be paid from the Tracy Hall Fund; AP Warrant #1471 in the amount of \$7,905.00 to be paid from the Fire Equipment Fund; AP Warrant #1472 in the amount of \$12.97 to be paid from the General Fund; and AP Warrant #1473 in the amount of \$26.50 from the General Fund. – Layton moved (2nd Swett) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

13. Receipt of Correspondence

Timestamp: 3:05:20

Griggs gave an overview of correspondence included in the Selectboard packet.

Layton requested an agenda item on navigating legal matters and associated communication with the public, as well as an agenda item on next steps relating to John Carroll's letter.

Selectboard members discussed Carroll's suggestions and how to navigate legally sensitive matters.

I move to receive all correspondence. – Layton moved (2nd Classon) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

14. Adjournment

Timestamp: 3:12:53

I move to adjourn the meeting. – Layton moved (2nd Swett) Vote: yes (Classon, Layton, Swett, Griggs)

Meeting adjourned at 9:41.

Minutes taken by Jenny Tolman.

Minutes approved on April 22, 2026

Kimo Griggs, Selectboard Chair