

Town of Norwich, Vermont
Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, June 24, 2026

Active Participants at Tracy Hall: Kimo Griggs (SB Chair), Brendan Classon (SB Vice Chair), Matt Swett (SB member), Mary Layton (SB member), Rob Gere (SB member), Brennan Duffy (Town Manager), John Carroll (Town resident), Cheryl Lindberg (Lister and Treasurer), Pam Smith (Trustee of Public Funds), Priscilla Vincent (Town resident), Christie James (Finance Committee)

Active Participants on Zoom: Lily Trajman (Town Clerk), Steven Hepburn (Finance Committee), 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: 28:15

1. Agenda
Timestamp: 29:18

Classon proposed moving up the approval of minutes to earlier in the agenda; Griggs expressed surprise as Classon did not request the change during the agenda setting process.

Classon stated that there were inconsistencies between the minutes and the agenda, as well as procedural oversights. Classon stated that item four was not warned in the agenda as an executive session but was classified as an executive session in the minutes.

Selectboard members expressed confusion at Classon raising the topic during this agenda item. Griggs, Layton, and Swett spoke in favor of the existing order of agenda items.

Griggs suggested removing the item on the Article 36 Task Force since there was no related material in the packet; Gere agreed to remove it from that night's agenda.

Classon stated that he had been unable to address the town expense and reimbursement policy and asked that it be tabled for that night.

I move to approve the agenda as amended to remove number five and number 13. – Swett moved (2nd Layton)
Vote: yes (unanimous)

2. Chair's Report
Timestamp: 34:26

The Chair shared that he had been traveling since the last meeting and would provide an update at the next meeting.

3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

Timestamp: 34:47

John Carroll pointed out that the agenda for the June 3rd meeting did not mention that item four would involve a possible executive session, which he believed therefore made it illegal to enter executive session. Carroll stated that failure to notify the public about a possible executive session meant that the decisions made during it were irrelevant and moot since they were illegally made. Carroll additionally noted the duration of the executive session for item three and stated that any directions given to the attorney about how the Selectboard wished to proceed in any regard would constitute an action.

Classon quoted the minutes from June 10th regarding Classon's doubts about the content of the executive sessions.

Lily Trajman highlighted that Article 36 was voted on seven years ago, that a lot had changed in the last seven years, and that the Selectboard might consider adding a local article to the ballot to determine whether there is still local buy-in for Article 36. Trajman shared that the deadline for alerting the Elections Office of local articles would be July 17th.

Lister Cheryl Lindberg shared that they had bound a copy of the 2026 grand list abstract and would file it the next day with the Town Clerk. Lindberg shared that 623 change-of-assessment letters would be sent, as well as 163 letters for land use allocation. Lindberg noted 14 new parcels, a few new veterans, three additional current use land owners, and highlighted that the abstract would be \$1,261,050,000 against a final grand list that was lodged at the end of the year with \$1,239,201,000. Lindberg shared that grievances would begin on July 10th and that people would have until July 9th to submit written grievances; she explained that these grievances are different from those that were part of the BCA decisions on the last round of lister reappraisals.

Classon asked Lindberg if she was happy with the new software. Lindberg shared that they were mostly happy but that there were still some matters to work out.

Classon asked how many properties would receive no notification due to no change in property value. Lindberg explained that if there was not a change in the assessment, the property would not get a letter. Lindberg added that anyone could grieve their property assessment any year at any time for any reason.

4. Committee Appointments

Timestamp: 48:54

Swett asked if people are required to show up in-person when requesting appointment.

Griggs shared that he thought it was just preferred.

Pam Smith stated that she believed the policy required new appointments to appear in person.

Selectboard members discussed Lamperti's previous tenure on the Energy Committee, the historical challenges with getting applicants to appear in-person, and whether to pursue changing the policy to not require in-person attendance for new appointments.

Priscilla Vincent spoke in favor of seeing new applicants in-person and putting the appointments on the agenda when suitable for position applicants.

Selectboard members and Duffy discussed the application language and visibility of the application requirements.

I move to appoint Aaron Lamperti to a seat on the Energy Committee for a 3-year term expiring March 31, 2029. – Gere moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (unanimous)

Christie James shared that Nicholas Wood was continuing his service on the Finance Committee.

I move to appoint Nicholas Wood to a seat on the Finance Committee for a 3-year term expiring March 31, 2029. – Gere moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (unanimous)

Selectboard members agreed to table the appointment of Elena Kennedy to the Recreation Council until she can appear in-person.

5. Article 36 Task Force Recommendations (removed from the agenda)

6. Trustees of Public Funds Request
Timestamp: 57:54

Layton spoke in favor of making the change.

Swett highlighted the start-up effort as the only downside of the change.

Duffy highlighted Rosalinda's memo and that the success would be incumbent on the entities being cooperative and efficient in responding to the Finance Office to ensure timely compliance.

Griggs questioned whether the Selectboard had oversight over the bodies being discussed.

Treasurer Cheryl Lindberg stated that there were misunderstandings in the memo, emphasized that elected officials would be handling the funds, and that she as Treasurer would sign Cemetery Commission checks. Lindberg stated that there would be no change to how the current Cemetery Commission gets their appropriation, and that she did not think the matter was as complicated as the memo made it sound.

Layton asked about the timeline of the transition; Lindberg recommended starting as of July 1st for getting the balances from the bank statements and opening an entity up in the general ledger.

The Selectboard, Duffy, and Lindberg discussed the difference between the Trustee of Public Funds process and the Cemetery Commission process, as well as their respective timelines.

Duffy questioned the balance of the autonomy of the Cemetery Commission with the responsibility of the Finance Office; Lindberg responded that the Commission is not currently under general ledger control.

Trustee of Public Funds Pam Smith shared that she was taken aback by the statement by the Town Manager that elected officials might not be cooperative and explained that July 1st was not a drop-dead deadline.

I move to authorize the Town Manager and Director of the Finance Office to perform actions necessary to bring the Trustees of Public Funds Fund under general ledger control while maintaining these funds in the general ledger separately and implementing reconciliation procedures for all key accounts on a regular basis (following the recommendations of Sullivan, Powers & Company in the June 30, 2025 Audit Report). – Layton moved (2nd Swett) Vote: yes (unanimous)

7. Cemetery Commission Request

Timestamp: 1:19:45

I move to authorize the Town Manager and the Director of the Finance Office to perform actions necessary to bring the Cemetery Commission Fund under general ledger control while maintaining these funds in the general ledger separately and implementing reconciliation procedures for all key accounts on a regular basis (following the recommendations of Sullivan, Powers & Company in the June 30, 2025 Audit Report). – Swett moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (unanimous)

8. Finance Committee Update

Timestamp: 1:20:45

Griggs referenced the Finance Committee updates in the Selectboard packet.

Layton shared her appreciation for the topics raised but noted that it was somewhat exhausting reading the committee's suggestions. Layton highlighted the importance of the topic of surplus; Classon wondered how common surpluses were.

Griggs reflected that he was surprised to find that the Finance Committee was uniquely limited, whereas other committees had broad autonomy. Layton suggested that the Committee be set up so that it is smoother for them to work with the School Board and so that they can rejoin the Dresden Committee. Layton shared that she thought it was the "most emotional committee in the entire town" because it deals with people's money and the services available.

Gere stated that the Selectboard is responsible for setting the budget with information from the departments and therefore takes the brunt of the criticism for budgets, which has historically led to hesitation to take direction from outside entities, but that better communication and earlier movement on the budget process would help improve the relationship.

Duffy highlighted that Act 57 was passed last year, which gives municipalities greater flexibility with how to handle surplus funds. Duffy stated that a lot of time had been spent over the last year and a half on committee statements of purpose, which outlines what committees can work on

Brendan Classon advocated for receiving input from the Finance Committee.

John Carroll spoke in favor of the document and encouraged the study of similar high-income towns in Vermont. Carroll explained that the cost spent per mile on highway maintenance was more important than the total cost spent on highways by a town in general. Carroll stated that tension in public policy was normal and healthy and that the Selectboard needed to provide policy guidance in the budgeting process. He added that the Finance Committee was a “creature of the Selectboard” and should not directly speak with town employees.

Griggs reflected that he thought the tension came when a committee was eager to get more information than they would have access to.

Swett shared that he had called Shelbourne last year to learn more about their Finance Committee and found that they work closely with the town’s Finance Department, whereas some other towns like Woodstock used their committee in a more ad hoc manner. Swett voiced appreciation for the town comparison project, as well as the Finance Committee’s menu of possible projects.

Selectboard members discussed possible next steps for the Finance Committee.

Swett asked Finance Committee Chair Steven Hepburn about the status of the committee with the School Board. Hepburn shared that the School Board would like to see an adjustment to the charge to reference the School Board and joint appointments, a revised MOU, and then follow-through on the method of joint appointments. Swett asked Hepburn to put together suggested wording for the adjusted charge.

Classon offered to liaise with Hepburn.

Classon asked what the town’s typical surplus was; Gere recalled that it was between 12-16% in 2022.

Swett pointed out that there had been challenging relationships between the Finance Committee and the Selectboard in past iterations, which led to the current structure.

9. Request for Additional Funds for Emerald Ash Borer Tree Removal **Timestamp: 1:55:05**

Swett shared positive feedback on the efficiency of Wilcox Tree Service’s work.

I move to approve the expenditure of \$4,000 from the EABR Fund #52 to add 14 additional Ash trees identified as hazardous to the Wilcox Tree Service Contract. – Gere moved (2nd Swett) Vote: yes (unanimous)

10. Citizen Assistance Fund Request

Timestamp: 1:56:36

Duffy offered to include the accompanying documentation in the next packet.

Swett shared that he spoke with Town Service Officer John Farrell about building awareness that the bottle collection at the transfer station goes to the assistance fund.

I move to approve the expenditure of \$1,200.00 to provide financial assistance to a citizen in need identified by the Town Service Officer. – Layton moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

11. NFD Spending Request: Refurbished AEDs from Fund #26

Timestamp: 2:00:02

I move to approve the expenditure of \$6,000.00 from fund #26 to purchase 10 newly refurbished AEDs for the FAST Squad. – Layton moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

12. NFD Request: VLCT-PACIF Grant Award Transfer

Timestamp: 2:00:35

Classon asked what PACIF stood for; Layton explained that it was the municipal insurance wing of the VLCT.

I move to approve moving a \$1,500 reimbursement for a PACIF grant for the purchase of personal protective gear from the general fund to Fund #26. – Layton moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

13. Town Expense and Reimbursement Policy (removed from the agenda)

14. Town Manager Report

Timestamp: 2:01:53

Duffy shared that (1) an offer had been made and accepted for the Finance Assistant role, (2) Rosalinda and DeLaBruere met with Sullivan and Powers and discussed the timing of the audit, (3) the village master plan was ongoing, (4) the pedestrian scoping survey had been submitted, (5) the Moore Lane Bridge project was completed, (6) street sweeping was completed and crosswalks repainted, (7) Route 132 culvert was scheduled to begin soon, (8) a new dry hydrant sourced from the Connecticut River was now operational, (9) Recreation Director Brie Swenson put together a popsicle handout for the last day of school, (10) credit card processing was now operational in the Town Clerk's office, (11) election preparation was underway for August 11th, (12) additional money was approved for Wilcox Tree Service, (13) there was a successful paper shred day, (14) he

and DPW Director Chris Kaufman met with residents on Main Street regarding an ongoing water issue, (15) he got feedback from the potential opioid fund recipients and considered them both qualified to accept the donation, (16) the rock used in town road work was the same as that used historically, despite recent complaints about road gravel stone changing, (17) just under \$800,000 in reimbursement had been received from FEMA, (18) he spoke with Harry Falconer and Ari Lattanzi about updates to the Article 36 Task Force, (19) Jenny Tolman would be stepping down from taking Selectboard minutes, (20) he confirmed that the Tracy Hall water spigot discussed at the last meeting had not worked in a long time.

Classon expressed thanks for the street sweeping and crosswalk striping.

Chair of the Planning Commission Jaan Laaspere noted that the interim ordinance for short term rentals was still active and not completed yet, and that the next step would be for the Selectboard to hold a second public hearing and then vote on it. Laaspere highlighted that they had added the Fire Chief's recommended changes and provided greater clarity about how pre-existing owner-occupied and non-owner-occupied rentals would be handled. Laaspere requested the topic be added to one of the subsequent meeting agendas.

Lindberg reminded the Selectboard that the Women's Club offered to provide funding to fix the Tracy Hall spigot.

15. Department Reports

Timestamp: 2:20:43

Selectboard members discussed the dry hydrant.

16. Communications

Timestamp: 2:23:00

Griggs wondered whether it would be possible to see a real-time version of correspondence, specifically to facilitate the creation of the agenda and shortened response times for public engagement.

Layton wondered if people would be impulsive in responding to items if visible immediately.

Swett shared that the existing procedure was laid out clearly at this point and that senders receive a response email stating that the email had been received and would be included in the upcoming packet. Swett shared that he appreciated getting a topic as soon as possible but also wondered what administrative challenges an open folder might pose.

Gere shared concern about an individual board member viewing and responding to something that should be viewed by the Selectboard at large; Griggs responded that it was a danger already.

Classon highlighted that he had received email submissions that did not copy the whole board. Swett responded that that was an appropriate form of citizen engagement.

Selectboard members and Duffy discussed the logistics of setting up a real-time view of correspondence.

Griggs asked if the rest of the Selectboard would be interested in putting up signage and a contact list in Tracy Hall to assist citizens when town staff are not available or visible.

Selectboard members and Duffy discussed the existing signage in the entrance to Tracy Hall, as well as what Tracy Hall's ideal signage would include. Selectboard members agreed to have Griggs draft a proposal for signage.

17. Town Manager Goals

Timestamp: 2:41:06

Griggs reflected that there seemed to be resistance to just setting goals without also discussing the evaluation form. Layton asked Griggs for examples of goals; Griggs gave the example of developing a critical understanding of town infrastructure.

Swett shared that he liked what Griggs had included in his most recent document on goals for the Town Manager but that he thought the next step would be to evaluate whether the stated goals were achieved, which would require greater specificity. Griggs explained that he did not expect goal setting to be very difficult or take very long and that the next step would be to determine how to evaluate.

Swett asked how SMART goals would be incorporated into Griggs' model. Griggs clarified that the goals were more like aspirations. Selectboard members how to measure job performance and goals and the ability to have goals without associated evaluation.

Gere wondered how to identify which goals would be aspirational and which would be evaluated. Gere encouraged having Selectboard goals for moving the town in a certain direction, followed by figuring out how to involve the Town Manager in accomplishing those goals.

Duffy explained that he viewed goals and performance objectives as the same thing and thanked Swett for reformatting Duffy's updated version of his goals. Duffy encouraged moving forward with Swett's proposal. Swett explained that he got the goals for his document from Griggs' sheet. Selectboard members discussed the formation of Swett's document and the process for developing Town Manager goals.

Layton suggested moving forward with the adoption of the draft document that Swett had compiled. Layton highlighted that new goals would need to be set in September, so the framework being discussed could be put in place until then.

Duffy expressed concern about performance objective 3A and that it would not be ready until mid-October. Griggs clarified that Duffy could still be considered as meeting expectations as long as Duffy is productively working on it. Swett added that there are a range of worthwhile goals that cannot be accomplished in one year.

Griggs offered to draft a proposal for the next meeting.

18. Liquor License Renewals

Timestamp: 3:12:44

I move to recess the meeting of the Selectboard at 9:17 o'clock for the purpose of executing the duties of the local liquor control commissioners under the authority of 7 VSA §167 et seq. – Classon moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (unanimous)

I move to approve the application #78381 by L'Elephant Vert, LLC for a First-Class Restaurant/Bar License, application #78380 by L'Elephant Vert, LLC for an Outside Consumption Permit and application #78382 by L'Elephant Vert, LLC for a Third-Class Restaurant/Bar License. – Swett moved (2nd Layton) Vote: yes (unanimous)

I move to close the Norwich Liquor Commission session at 9:19 o'clock and reconvene the Selectboard meeting. – Layton moved (2nd Swett) Vote: yes (unanimous)

19. Approve Minutes

Timestamp: 3:15:16

Classon referenced John Carroll's earlier comments regarding the unwarned executive session in the June 3rd meeting and wondered how to deal with it. Griggs offered to write a description of what was done and include it in the next packet.

Carroll suggested adding a note to the minutes with regard to item four, as approval would show that the Selectboard conducted a properly noticed executive session. Carroll added that if the Selectboard directed Counsel to do anything with regard to item four, that decision would have no legal standing anymore. Carroll asked if any agreements were made during the item four executive session.

Duffy stated that the approval of minutes was to be a factual written accounting of how the meeting proceeded, which Duffy understood to be different from Carroll potentially making an open meeting law violation claim.

Classon questioned a quotation of Gere's statements in the June 3rd minutes as Classon did not agree with the statements made regarding the validity of straw polls in executive session. Griggs responded that "the minutes aren't inaccurate and this is what we said, so in that sense, the minutes are accurate."

Classon raised a hypothetical trip to Sweden via Germany or the United Kingdom using a set allocation of funds. Classon stated that agreeing to spend money was an intentional decision.

Swett redirected the conversation to approving minutes and reflected that minutes are a representation of what happened even if what happened was not the proper way of doing something. Swett wondered how to navigate a cure for the meeting substance that was not admissible.

Classon emphasized the need for “clear, legally mandated instruction as to how to communicate the outcome” of an executive session.

Carroll stated that the draft minutes appeared to be an accurate representation of what was said and done and that the looming question was how to navigate the possibility that some decisions were actually made in the executive session. Carroll pointed out that this would be a comportment problem, not a minutes problem. Carroll explained that it was acceptable to reach consensus in executive session but that the action that might follow could not be done in executive session. Carroll encouraged the Selectboard to do some “navel gazing” as to whether they handled the matter properly.

Duffy quoted the statute on open meeting law violation and stated that Carroll should follow the formal state law process if he believed a violation of open meeting law occurred.

Swett voiced appreciation for the format of the ongoing discussion since it was a challenging topic and stated that a formal open meeting law complaint was not necessary.

Layton stated that she did not think Griggs should write anything to cure something that was not publicly called out in writing as a violation.

I move to approve the minutes for June 3rd and June 10th, 2026 as presented. – Layton moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

20. AP Warrants

Timestamp: 3:37:43

I move to approve AP Warrant #1493 in the amount of \$245,614.61 to be paid from the General Fund; AP Warrant #1494 in the amount of \$18,303.41 to be paid from the Tracy Hall Fund #13, AP Warrant #1495 in the amount of \$61,217.00 to be paid from the Emerald Ash Borer Fund #52, and AP Warrant #1496 in the amount of \$1,287.01 to be paid from the General Fund. – Swett moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

21. Receipt of Correspondence

Timestamp: 3:39:19

Griggs read through a list of correspondence included in the packet.

Griggs wondered if it would be worth having a future discussion about the quality of roads in town. Layton responded that she did not think it would help. Swett shared that he thought it would be helpful for people to better understand the complicated process for maintaining dirt roads, especially amid changing weather patterns. Classon advocated for discussing the topic.

I move to receive all correspondence. – Layton moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

22. Discussion of July 8, 2026 Selectboard Agenda

Timestamp: 3:45:04

Selectboard members requested items on opioid fund distribution, short term rentals public hearing, fuel tracking, Article 36 suggestions, and the Tracy Hall spigot. Duffy highlighted that the public hearing would require a public notice period.

Classon wondered whether a water pipe could be put under the road between Tracy Hall and the Women's Club triangle garden to enable an easy-access spigot.

Selectboard members agreed to all see the invoices from the legal expenditures with Stitzel, Page & Fletcher.

23. Adjournment

Timestamp: 3:50:36

I move to adjourn the meeting. – Swett moved (2nd Gere) Vote: yes (unanimous)

Meeting adjourned at 9:55. Minutes taken by Jenny Tolman.

Minutes approved on July 8, 2026

Kimo Griggs, Selectboard Chair