

TOWN OF PEACHAM
Wednesday, December 17, 2025
Selectboard Meeting
Hybrid meeting in the Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: Alfred Dedam, Selectboard Chair, Peter Craig, Selectboard, William Kempton, Selectboard, Christian Snow, Selectboard, Andrea Otto, Selectboard, Ron Craig, Scott Beck

Via Zoom: Janie Carle, Amber Lowell, Karen Lewis

Minutes

1. Call to order by Alfred at 06:34pm, on Wednesday, December 17, 2025.
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. Transfer Station
 - i. Christian explained that Amber requested using a portion of the remainder of the budget for some small work gear items for the transfer station and requested that the road crew fill a barrel with sand so she can spread it as necessary. Discussion about how to most efficiently use the funds. Agreement that she should purchase the gear discussed.
 - ii. Amber advised that the furnace is not working quite right. It has been serviced, but gets frozen. She will call to get it serviced again.
 - iii. She noted that the new pad is working great, and Casella thanked the Selectboard for getting it done.
 - iv. Amber asked about someone covering for a vacation day she will take in January. Board OK with it.
 - b. Selectboard Report
 - i. Alfred asked if there was anything to include in the Selectboard report. Peter noted that the renovation has finally begun. Alfred noted including resolving of deferred maintenance. William noted the importance of touching on Governor Mattocks and Mill Trace.
3. Highway Department Update
 - a. Jeremy spoke to Alfred about burning some of the wood material at the dump when they have a slow moment. Need to be sensitive to air quality. Chief Jeff Berwick is in communication with Jeremy about it. Permit is advisable.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer Update - email from Rebecca Washington
 - a. Asked if we would like to take over peacham.net to avoid confusion. It would be \$20 a year. Board agrees.
 - b. Attached the draft budget with a 5.91% decrease in town tax rate, but it still needs work. Asked for a special budget meeting. Discussion of scheduling. Alfred noted that he spent some time reviewing the budget for fixed versus flexible

spending items. Alfred explained that their goal is to keep the overall tax bill increase no more than the cost of living increase, which means taking into consideration the state education tax rate. Therefore, there is a specific amount he is trying to cut from the budget to achieve that. Andrea explained that we were awarded a recreational facilities grant from the state for approximately \$17,300 for the fire safety upgrades. William noted that there still need to be discussion about the Cemetery endowment fund usage.

- c. Asked board to fill out bonuses chart for town employees Peter suggested doing the same as last year.

- i. **William moved to award the same bonus as last year to town employees, seconded by Peter, all in favor, so moved.**

- ii. **William moved to include a bonus of the Selectboard clerk, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**

5. Town Hall Renovation line of credit

- a. Alfred explained that since we have not used this line of credit yet, and the first payment would be due next year, Rebecca would like to renew the line of credit so the first payment would come due in 2027 to help offset some of the construction costs. We need to wait to renew it in 2026, so that the first payment will get pushed out to 2027, so they will revisit.

6. Cemetery Finances – Karen Lewis

- a. Alfred asked for advice about the Cemetery endowment fund that has been sitting untouched and accruing interest significantly. Rebecca found a policy for the fund that was recorded as being adopted by the Selectboard on August 17th, 2005, but there are no minutes or other records. She suggested it as starting point to get it finalized. Karen doesn't know any details, but suggested speaking to Annette Lorraine and maybe Cheryl Stevenson. Alfred explained that Rebecca found records that the balance of about \$80,000 in 2011/2012, and has since earned approximately \$100,000 of interest, with about \$20,000 last year alone. This amount would cover the line of mowing for the cemetery. Alfred would like to formalize the policy after tweaking it. Ron gave some background of the fund. Karen felt the interest should be used for the tree work and other cemetery improvements as needed. She suggested using part of the endowment to replace the trees that are coming down. Peter reminded Karen that the cemetery bylaws don't allow for new tree planting, but bushes or other small plants are permitted. Alfred requested a meeting with the Cemetery Committee and auditors and Town Clerk to work on adopting the endowment fund. Alfred asked about the cemetery's Kabota tractor. He was concerned it was being use privately, not for town purposes. Ron and Peter explained the town use versus private use to clarify.

7. Budget Discussion

- a. Discussed during Town Clerk update

8. Town Hall Renovation – Rusty Barber not present
9. Public comment – none
10. Approve minutes
 - a. Peter noted a correction on the December 3rd minutes.
 - b. **Peter moved to approve minutes from Wednesday, November 19, 2025, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**
 - c. **William moved to approve minutes from Wednesday, December 3, 2025 with the correction, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
 - d. **William moved to approve special meeting minutes from Monday, December 8, 2025, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
11. Review and approve bills
 - a. **Peter moved to approve bills as presented by Town Treasurer, seconded William, all in favor, so moved.**
12. Review correspondence
 - a. Letter from 8th grader, Ivy, from Richmond, VT. Studying the civil war in Social Studies, so sent a letter suggesting that a statue of abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens should be memorialized by the Peacham Academy, thus suggesting that Vermont is against enslavement and that everyone deserves the same rights, and nobody deserves less. Ivy suggests that a memorial could communicate that people should keep fighting for the rights of others and themselves.
 - b. Alfred emailed Terry Miller about the website because it was down.
 - c. William worked on appropriations and has been communicating with the necessary people.
 - d. Email from Jeff Lane with update about ice rink.
13. Executive Session for personnel
 - a. **William moved to enter executive session, seconded by Christian.**
 - b. **Peter moved to exit executive session with no action taken at 7:49pm, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
14. Christian moved to adjourn at 7:49pm, seconded by Peter, all in favor, so moved.

Documents provided to the Selectboard and discussed at this meeting are available by request to the Town Office.