

TOWN OF PEACHAM
Wednesday, March 18, 2026
Selectboard Meeting
Hybrid meeting in the Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: Alfred Dedam, Selectboard Chair, Selectboard, William Kempton, Selectboard, Christian Snow, Selectboard, Andrea Otto, Selectboard, Christina Rumery, Selectboard, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Rebecca Washington, Town Clerk, Robert Starbuck, Nathan Colpitts, Wendy Morgan, Gretchen Boswell, Neil Monteith

Via Zoom: none

Minutes

1. Call to order by Alfred at 06:30pm, on Wednesday, March 18th, 2026
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. Peacham Farm Support Grant – Neil Monteith
 - i. Anonymous donor started the fund via Vermont Community Fund. Every year money gets awarded to Peacham to a committee who distributes it. There will be money available this year and applicants can go to the Town Clerk to pick up an application. Only requirement is that the applicant is involved in agriculture and trying to make money from the agriculture: sugaring, dairy, horses, alpaca, sheep, crops, etc.
 - b. Cemetery pricing – Wendy Morgan, member of Cemetery Committee
 - i. Committee does not feel they should be responsible for determining cemetery prices. Joe Mangan made suggestions for burial fees, which she brought to the board. The prices are consistent with all the other towns he works for. Some of the fees are different than what Ron charged. Money will now flow through town accounts. Wendy noted the different needs for natural burials. Wendy reviewed some upcoming cemetery discussions. Alfred asked about a plan for replanting since many of the large trees have come down recently.
 1. **William moved to adopt the pricing schedule that was presented, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
3. Highway Department Update with Jeremy Withers
 - a. Switched over to springtime work: trucking gravel, grading, raking, filling potholes, sweeping, thawing culverts, and plowing as needed.
 - b. Peacham-Groton Rd has a troublesome pavement spot. They have blocked it off for now. Monitoring it to make sure it doesn't spread. Will likely become an unplanned project for the summer.
 - c. Meeting on Gov Mattocks went well. If there is still oil in the one of the buildings, he can pump it out and use it at the garage if it's usable, but most importantly, it should get pulled out before the demolition.

- d. Paving contractor coming in to discuss shim and overlay. Hoping to get it done in May/June.
 - e. Met with Logan Perrin of VTrans to review budget for the financial plan. The Town Road and Bridge Standards has been updated. Asked Selectboard to review for changes.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer Update with Rebecca Washington
- a. Asked board to keep an eye out for e-sign documents from bank for Tax Anticipation Note.
5. Town Hall Renovation update – Rusty Barber
- a. Rusty provided a financial update on the renovation. First, he reviewed the money available which comes to approximately \$730,000. He reviewed each of the items in the budget. \$699,000 is marked for use so far. He reviewed the additional costs.
6. Peacham Fall Fondo dates – Gretchen Boswell
- a. Asked permission to go forward for plans for Saturday, Sept 19th. Same plan as previously and same space usage. Asked about access to the area next to the Town Hall due to renovation and updates. Alfred requested they participate in the discussion of crowd control during big events. They will submit a liquor license later in the year.
 - i. **William moved to grant the Peacham Fall Fondo permission to host their event on September 19th at 10:00am, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
7. Hazard Mitigation Plan Status Update & Draft – Robert Starbuck
- a. Provided a draft and executive summary for Selectboard leading up to public review. It will need to be endorsed by the Selectboard eventually. It is a State requirement, but it's not legally binding. Rather, it's a foundation for how to organize mitigation risk. Last was done in 2018. State has changed format since. Provides a reference book now, which includes a table ranking the risks in Peacham. It also includes a table of suggested town action steps over the next 5 years, which addresses the framework of what is needed according to the State. Grants may be available for steps that have costs. There is an annual update that is required now. Robert explained the next steps of the process. Having the plan in place is an important step for getting FEMA and State disaster support.
8. Rake Factory Road snowmobile usage – Nathan Colpitts
- a. Nathan plowed the Rake Factory Rd from Peacham line to Varnum road this year. The VAST trail also passed over the Rake Factory Rd this year. Nathan explained that the road would get groomed over after he'd plowed, which would drag snow back onto the road, so that Nathan would have to plow it again. He spoke to Ross Page to ask him to stop running the groomer once it'd been plowed, but Ross continued to groom it after he'd plowed. Nathan felt the road was still safe for snowmobiles after he'd plowed, as it was not down to gravel, so the grooming as not necessary. He noted that he doesn't mind the snowmobiles using the road, but just requests that the grooming doesn't happen after he plows. Nathan expressed his frustration, and asked if there was support from the town to prevent the grooming. Alfred commented that he agrees that

residential use should supersede recreational use, and that he had had a similar experience. He continued, suggesting options: do nothing, prohibit the use of Rake Factory Road, amend the policy to note that if a class 4 road is used and maintained by a resident, the groomer can't touch it, or amend the policy so that VAST trails cannot go over class 4 roads. Jeremy said it would be necessary to change the policy because there is a State statute that allows it, but that our policy could prohibit it.

- i. William moved to change the policy to disallow the snowmobile trail on the Rake Factory Road, seconded by Christian. Result: 4 in favor, and 1 abstention – Andrea. So moved.**

9. Appointments

a. Development Review Board

- i. Alfred asked for Rusty's opinion. He explained there are 2 open positions.
- ii. Alfred moved to appoint Morgan Gold to the Development Review Board, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
- iii. Alfred amended the previous motion to include Morgan's term being to complete Anna Rubin's term ending in 2028, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
- iv. Alfred moved to appoint Nathan Colpitts to replace Adam Dobson's term ending in 2027. Discussion that Adam will be leaving in June, so the appointment was tabled.

b. Planning Commission

- i. Alfred moved to appoint Ross McDonald to assuming the remainder of Anna Rubin's term concluding in 2027, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**

10. Selectboard work plan discussion

- a. Tree Board – Emerald Ash Borer mitigation. Neil reported the tree inventory of Ashes in the right of way done a couple years ago counted 4000+ Ash trees. There was previous discussion of hiring a faller. Tree warden statutes state that trees on town land go to tree board, but trees on the road and right of way belong to the landowner, but are management by the town. In those cases, they have to be left to the landowner or taken away. Neil has some idea about salvaging the unwanted wood. Alfred asked to identify the next steps and/or timeline to get to action. Namely, his concern is identifying the most dangerous trees, and then identifying the system for removal, and identifying the most cost effective method. Rusty asked about when removal would happen, but there is no clear date set. Alfred would like the schedule and price by the end of the year, so it can be budgeted it for next year. Andrea asked if there is any State funding, but Neil said he didn't believe so. Alfred asked for an initial timeline by April 15th.
- b. Conservation Commission – Alfred requested a plan for use of town forest for timber management and recreation, and updating the infrastructure that exists.
- c. Road policy needs to be updated. Looking to eliminate some of the grey areas, using some other town policies for reference. Rebecca and Jeremy will work on it.

- d. Roadside mower. Jeremy has scheduled the rented mower for this year already, so we wouldn't miss out. William asked if we would have any other use for a tractor. Jeremy didn't think so. William will look into the options.

11. Public comment

- a. Rusty added more details to his report regarding the potential remaining funds. If there is enough money left, he'd liked to put the handicap access and parking to the gym. He needs to get a drawing and pricing. Rebecca commented that the insurance company hates the current ramp.

12. Approve minutes

- a. **William moved to approve minutes from Wednesday, March 4, 2026, seconded by Andrea, all in favor, so moved.**

13. Review and approve bills

- a. **Christian moved to approve bills as presented by the Town Treasurer, seconded Andrea, all in favor, so moved.**

14. Review correspondence

- a. Email from Greg Burt, local state rep, attaching a letter from Fairfield Selectboard, and requesting Peacham consider submitting a letter about Act 181 as well. Alfred noted that he feels he is apprehensive of making gestures as a body as he doesn't feel the Selectboard should speak on behalf of the town. Andrea agrees. Alfred referenced the Declaration of Inclusion, which was voted on at Town Meeting instead.
- b. Town Clerk forward concerns about obscene signs on mailboxes near Peacham Pond. Not the Selectboard jurisdiction. Post Office directing complaints to the State Police, as the mailbox owner is choosing to put the signs on their own box. Peacham has no sign ordinance.
- c. Hillhouse Estate LLC price schedule.
- d. Ethics training needed to be done by board members.
- e. Austin Winder – Peacham historical documentary opportunity for 250th anniversary.
- f. Adam Dobson – notice of resigning from DRB in June.
- g. Jarron Borg – email regarding special meeting.
- h. Alfred noted he will provide a summary of March 18th Special Meeting takeaways and send to those who were involved.

15. **William moves to adjourn at 8:40pm, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**

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