

## Stowe Selectboard Liquor Commission & Water/Sewer Commission Meeting

Wednesday, June 11 2025

5:00pm

Akeley Memorial Building  
67 Main Street  
Stowe, Vermont



**Selectboard Members:** Paco Aumand, Ethan Carlson, Jo Sabel Courtney, Nick Donza, Beth Gadbois

**In-Person Attendees:** Town Manager Charles Safford, Assistant Town Manager Will Fricke, Public Works Director Harry Shepard, Finance Director Cindy Fuller, Scott Rank, Jennifer Gryckiewicz, Chip Dillon, M.E. Lawlor, Walter Frame, Barbara Puddicombe, Catherine Gott, Taylor Evans, Paul Sakash, Josi Kytte, Jeff Sauser, McKee Macdonald, Mila Lonetto (17)

**Zoom Attendees:** Lauren DiVenzano, Missy Merrell Burgess, Mark Ray, Stefan Grundmann, Alison Kaminer, Elizabeth Sherman, Tiffany Donza, Kathy Elkins, Terrie Wehse (9)

### Call to Order

Selectboard Chair Aumand called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

### Approval of the Agenda

The Selectboard agreed to move discussion of the Mayo Farm Pole Barn to business.

Ms. Sabel Courtney moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Carlson seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

### Executive Session

Ms. Sabel Courtney moved to enter executive session to discuss personnel. Mr. Donza seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

The Selectboard entered executive session at 5:02pm.

Ms. Gadbois left executive session at 5:24pm and re-entered at 5:34pm.

The Selectboard left executive session at 5:36pm.

### Consent Agenda (Items A-1 through A-3, A-5)

1. May 28, 2025 Selectboard Minutes
2. Lamoille County Sheriff Dispatching Contract
3. Special Event Application – July 4th Field Event and Moscow Parade
4. ~~Mayo Farm Pole Barn Capital Project Closeout (Moved to Business)~~
5. Liquor Items

Paul Sakash asked about language in the Lamoille County Sheriff Dispatching Contract pertaining to ownership of equipment purchases. Mr. Safford indicated that the equipment purchased under the Contract belongs to the Lamoille County Sheriff. The Town does own some of its own dispatch equipment that it pays for directly outside of the Contract.

Ms. Gadbois moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Mr. Carlson seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

### Housing Task Force / Consultant 80% Report (Item B-1)

Jeff Sauser reviewed progress on the housing needs assessment, with presenting updated metrics and a cost-benefit analysis of proposed strategies. It was noted that a final report would be delivered by July 9th.

Mr. Aumand stated that he would like to see benchmarks developed for the housing measures listed on slide 17, and also emphasized the need for data to inform any future decision-making around short-term rentals (STRs), to avoid arbitrary policy. Mr. Safford noted that the town will have a full year of registration data by May 2026. Mr. Donza asked if STRs are contributing to higher home values and whether that can be measured. Jeff Sauser replied that it is difficult to measure definitively.

McKee Macdonald raised the importance of capturing non-homestead residents in data sets and stressed the value of community participation beyond those able to afford high-value homes. Mr. Donza noted that a significant share of newly purchased homes are second homes and predicted that over time, more housing units will shift to STRs. Ms. Gadbois asked how many of the 27% of parcels that are homesteads have been owner-occupied for more than 15 years.

Paul Sakash asked how deed restrictions might function. Taylor Evans spoke in support of mixed-income neighborhoods and encouraged the Town to be more ambitious than the 100-unit affordable housing goal. McKee Macdonald explained that the 100-unit goal is intended as a practical target within a 10-year timeframe, while recognizing the greater need. Mila Lonetto said other resort communities should be used as examples. Josi Kytle emphasized the importance of tracking the goal annually, noting it can be adjusted and that even the 100-unit target will be a major challenge. Mr. Aumand said that capacity building and community involvement should be the first steps.

Mr. Donza inquired how a deed restriction for year-round residents would affect property taxes. Mr. Safford responded that additional clarity is needed on the structure and administration of deed restrictions.

Catherine Gott noted that any future housing construction should prioritize forest connectivity and wildlife corridors. Missy Merrell Burgess asked about the use of voter registration data. Mr. Safford replied that no single measure is perfect and that a mix of data sources must be used.

Jeff Sauser described the community survey and presented the cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Safford noted that municipal involvement in affordable housing is a new area, and while this is only a first step, it will require significant effort to implement.

Paul Sakash raised concerns about infrastructure capacity. Charles Safford responded that planning is underway but that the extent of development may depend on community tolerance. Taylor Evans stated that developers should be required to pay impact fees.

#### **Draft FY'26 Water & Wastewater Budgets (Item B-2)**

Mr. Safford presented the FY'26 Water & Wastewater Budgets, Capital Projects, and Rate Schedule. He noted it is essentially a status quo budget from an operational budget standpoint. A memo from Harry Shepard recognizes significant capital investments on the horizon.

Mr. Carlson moved to instruct staff to warn a public hearing for the FY'26 Water and Sewer Budgets and Rate Schedule for June 25, 2025. Ms. Gadbois seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

#### **Mayo Farm Pole Barn Capital Project Closeout (Item A-4)**

Mr. Donza expressed concern about the inconsistent use of the property and suboptimal, saying equipment should be more strategically placed. Ms. Gadbois said there is not enough storage and no plans to build elsewhere.

Mr. Donza referenced the storage facility recently constructed by Stowe Electric Department on Cady Hill as an example, and noted that this barn would likely not be sited there if it weren't replacing a previous structure.

Mr. Safford said \$75,000 remains from the insurance settlement. He noted the Town can close the project, do more analysis, and leave the foundation potentially for future use.

Paul Sakash asked about the original insurance settlement amount. Mr. Safford responded it was approximately \$150,000. Mr. Sakash asked why the project was not pursued after the second collapse. Mr. Safford explained that the

Selectboard at the time opted not to move forward with it. Mr. Carlson said he hopes to see a good alternative put forward in the future.

Mr. Carlson moved to instruct staff to put topsoil over the footings and once this is done then close out the Mayo Farm Pole Barn capital project and transfer the remaining insurance proceeds to the Capital Fund as unallocated funds. Ms. Sabel Courtney seconded. Motion carried (4-1). Mr. Aumand, Mr. Carlson, Ms. Sabel Courtney, and Mr. Donza voted in favor. Ms. Gadbois voted against.

### **Manager's Report (Item C-1)**

Mr. Safford noted he will be out of state the week of June 30. The Assistant Town Manager will be the Acting Town Manager for that week.

Mr. Safford provided year-to-date financial statements for May 2025 for the General, Water, and Wastewater funds, Act 250 notices, and minutes to the Selectboard.

### **Public to be Heard - Non-Binding (Item C-2)**

Catherine Gott raised concerns about the beaver management decision and asked about the installation date of the beaver deceivers. She expressed disappointment in authorizing the use of trapping.

Chair Aumand noted the matter would return as a warned item for future discussion.

Brett Loomis said from a recreation standpoint the Town needs to decide on its values and balance space for ballfields, the school, and other uses.

M.E. Lawlor echoed Catherine Gott's comments.

Mr. Aumand said he wants to follow a proper process; they would need to rescind the prior motion before going back to the drawing board. Mr. Donza noted that if the prior motion were rescinded, they would default to the 2023 policy which included trapping. Mr. Carlson expressed concern about reversing course, noting the area has changed over time due to beaver activity. He said they have to decide whether Memorial Park is for the kids or for the beavers, noted only one beaver deceiver was removed, and doubted the effectiveness of the beaver deceiver in the location it was removed from. He said the board has to choose priorities and can't cave to special interests. Ms. Sabel Courtney stated her priority is the school, but they need to exhaust non-lethal options, and she wants to see if they can wait on trapping. Ms. Gadbois questioned whether trapping is being considered solely to prevent school flooding and said all surrounding factors should be reviewed. Mr. Donza said it is not just about the school but about Memorial Park as a whole.

Ms. Gadbois said she had not had all the information she needed when the prior decision was made. Ms. Sabel Courtney agreed.

Taylor Evans emphasized the influence of climate change in Memorial Park flooding and the need to consider every solution before trapping.

Tiffany Donza agreed with Mr. Carlson and said that Memorial Park is for both community and school use. She said both beavers and culverts are a problem, but they did not have this issue when trapping beavers. She added that there are places in town where we can coexist with beavers, but Memorial Park is not one of them.

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Aumand moved to enter executive session to discuss personnel. Ms. Gadbois seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

### **Motions**

Ms. Sabel Courtney moved to appoint Chip Dillon as an alternative to the Development Review Board. Mr. Carlson seconded the motion. Motion carried (4-0). Ms. Gadbois abstained.

Mr. Carlson moved to appoint Scott Rank as an alternate to the Development Review Board, Jennifer Gryckiewicz to the Recreation Commission, and Lauren DiVenanzo to the Energy Committee. Ms. Gadbois seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

**Adjournment**

Chair Aumand adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.

**Notes**

Minutes submitted by Will Fricke.

The Selectboard of the Town of Stowe meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm.

A recording of this public meeting is available at: <https://www.stowevt.gov/Government/Selectboard>