

Town of Canterbury, NH  
Board of Selectmen – Draft Minutes  
Date: 2025 January 20  
Location: Meeting House

Selectmen: Scott Doherty (Chair), Kent Ruesswick, Beth Blair

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

Department Heads: Sam Papps (Town Clerk/Tax Collector), Justin Crotty (Police), John O'Connor (Highway), Michael Gamache (Fire)

Others Present: Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE), Clifton Mathieu, Tom Franco, Cheryl Franco, Fred Portnoy, Beth McGuinn

1. Call to Order

a. The meeting was called to order at 4:59 p.m.

2. Department Heads

a. Sam Papps (Town Clerk-Tax Collector)

i. Sam distributed the All Unpaid Receivables Listed by Warrant 1/20/2025.

ii. The three people listed in the 2022L01 section are coming up for deeding this spring.

iii. The unpaid taxes for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024 bill are at an OK level. Many people misplace bills at the end of the year or wait to deal with paperwork until after the holidays.

iv. Both 2024 bills for Beulah Fellowship are unpaid. There has been no communication from them at all regarding the bill or their late Religious Tax Exemption paperwork (See Selectboard minutes 6/17/24 Section 3.b.)

v. The Selectboard decided that the 1<sup>st</sup> session of Town Meeting on March 11, 2025 will be held at the Old Town Hall.

vi. HB 1264 is requiring that an accessible voting station be at every election, not just state and federal. Currently the State is lending us the tablet, but at some point before the 2026 midterms, they will require us to buy it. This is the reasoning behind the proposed Voting Equipment Warrant Article.

vii. Also in HB 1264, the State is requiring that towns pay a \$600 fee per ballot to code the accessible voting tablet. This will start with the 2025 Town Meeting. The School District ballot is considered separate, so there is a question of who should pay the additional \$600 fee. The Selectboard decided the School District should pay the fee. Ken will contact them.

b. Justin Crotty (Police)

i. Chief Crotty distributed Canterbury Police Department Selectmen's Report 12/16/24 through 1/20/25.

ii. There have been 21 Incidents, 6 Arrests, 4 Accidents, 147 Citations, and 679 Calls for Service this month. The State Police assisted with 5 calls.

iii. The department members received 14 hours of training.

iv. The Dept wants to encumber funds this year for tasers and body cameras.

v. Body camera footage is stored in the camera company's cloud and they charge fees for storage. Footage of arrests is kept until manually deleted (essentially forever), basic calls for service is 30 days, and traffic stops are for 3 years (due to court delays).

vi. Tasers are certified by the company for only 5 years. The Dept's Tasers are now 5 years old, so they need to purchase new ones.

c. Michael Gamache (Fire)

i. Chief Gamache distributed Canterbury Fire Department Selectmen's Report 12/16/24 through 1/20/25 and a chart showing the 2024 calls by month.

- 49 ii. There were 386 calls in 2024. That is 13% more than 2023 and 28% more than 2022. The  
50 Dept is able to handle this volume with their current staffing.
- 51 iii. In 2024 there were 19 fires, 59 instances of mutual aid received, 19 instances of mutual aid  
52 given, and 196 trainings/inspections/etc.
- 53 iv. In the last month the Dept handled 2 chimney fires, a woman pregnant with twins on I93,  
54 and a dog rescue/body recovery when it fell through the ice on the Merrimack River.
- 55 v. They assisted with the fire in Boscawen and covered Franklin while their Dept dealt with a  
56 2 alarm fire.
- 57 vi. The storage unit business on Hall Road had 7 false alarms in 2024, 5 of which happened  
58 after the False Alarm Ordinance was passed. Chief Gamache sent them a letter reminding  
59 them of the ordinance. They are trying to get their alarms fixed, but more improvement is  
60 needed.
- 61 vii. The Dept will be participating in a training burn in Loudon.
- 62 viii. The Member Ceremony will be held on March 3 at 6:30 p.m. Chief Gamache invited the  
63 Selectboard to attend.
- 64 ix. Chief Gamache reviewed the breakdown of calls by month for 2024. There doesn't appear  
65 to be any rhyme or reason to the distribution.
- 66 d. John O'Connor (Highway)
- 67 i. There has been a lot of snow and ice this month. There are now 5 drivers for 5 routes. John  
68 is training the new snow plow drivers; it will take some time for them to learn the quirks of  
69 each route.
- 70 ii. The Transfer Station employees got sick, so the Highway Dept covered.
- 71 iii. John distributed the Road Inspection Report for December 2024.
- 72 1. This inspection occurs annually and is for all Class VI and Private Roads that have road  
73 waivers in place.
- 74 2. All roads examined were good or passable.
- 75 iv. The Selectboard signed a training agreement with the new Dept employee Robert Ralph.  
76 The Town is sending him to CDL classes so that he can drive the larger equipment.
- 77 v. A new application has come in for one of the Dept vacancies.
- 78 1. Ken and John have interviewed him. His background and reference checks look good.  
79 He doesn't have a CDL, so he would also need to be sent to classes, but he has  
80 mechanical experience. They would like permission to hire him.
- 81 2. He lives in Danbury, so he would have a long commute. Anyone at the Municipal  
82 Complex can stay overnight if they get stuck working late.
- 83 3. The Selectboard agreed to hire him. Ken will begin the onboarding process.
- 84 vi. There is still one more full-time vacancy in Highway and a part-time vacancy at the  
85 Transfer Station. Ken and John are working on filling those.
- 86 e. Rachel Baker (Library)
- 87 i. Rachel could not attend tonight's meeting.
- 88 3. Administration
- 89 a. The Selectboard signed:
- 90 i. Kent made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$108,154.81.  
91 Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 92 ii. Kent made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$51,972.42. Beth  
93 seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 94 iii. The Selectboard signed the 2024 Encumbrances in the amount of \$82,506.86.
- 95 1. These items were budgeted for and invoices were obtained in 2024, but the money  
96 didn't leave the Town's accounts by the end of the year.

- 97           2. This includes the Police Dept. encumbrances discussed above and burying rocks for the  
98           Conservation Commission.
- 99           iv. The Selectboard signed a Land Use Change Tax Warrant for Map 228 Lot 11-1 on Mudgett  
100           Hill Road in the amount of \$15,424.
- 101           v. The Selectboard signed a Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for Map 223 Lot 8, 26  
102           Briar Bush Road.
- 103           vi. The Selectboard signed a Land Use Change Tax Warrant for Map 212 Lot 9, 445 Shaker  
104           Road in the amount of \$14,304.
- 105           vii. The Selectmen signed an appointment slip for Kim Scammon to join the Solid Waste  
106           Committee.
- 107           viii. The Selectmen signed a letter of support for Comcast's application to the Broadband  
108           Equity, Access, and Deployment Program.
- 109           1. This is so that Comcast can get grant money to bring service to the remaining 6 or 7  
110           houses in town that weren't covered by the BMGI grant.
- 111           b. Previous Minutes Approval
- 112           i. Kent made a motion to approve the public minutes for the Selectboard meeting on January  
113           6, 2025. Beth seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 114           ii. Amendments were proposed for the January 7, 2025 minutes.
- 115           1. Line 118: change "this" to "removing food waste from our waste stream"
- 116           2. Line 198: change "that for this" to "the same no-interest loan to the Town"
- 117           3. Line 207: change "the 2 vacancies, not just the two who have already been hired" to "all  
118           four positions, including the two that are vacant, incase they get filled"
- 119           iii. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting  
120           on January 7, 2025. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 121           iv. Amendments were proposed for the January 13, 2025 minutes.
- 122           1. Line 16: change "a 2% increase at most" to "aiming for a 2% increase"
- 123           v. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Selectboard meeting  
124           on January 13, 2025. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 125           4. Canterbury Community Power Committee (CCPC) Municipal Solar Project
- 126           a. Tom Franco (CCPC Chair) presented. CCPC members Cheryl Franco, Fred Portnoy, and Beth  
127           McGuinn attended. Tom presented several slides explaining the proposal.
- 128           b. This is the same project that the CCPC brought to the Selectboard last July. See 7/30/24 and  
129           7/15/24 Section 4 for previous discussion. At the time, they were applying for a grant to do the  
130           project, now they would like to propose a warrant article that would fund the project through a  
131           bond. The bond would be paid using money already budgeted for electricity.
- 132           c. The project would place a 60kW solar array on the roof of the Municipal Complex and install  
133           battery backup. The panel layout was made in 2024 and could be adjusted to have fewer panels  
134           since the newest panels are more powerful.
- 135           d. Tom calculated that for a \$180K bond paid over 20 years at 4%, the Town will save \$375K over  
136           25 years. This is with an assumption of 3% annual increase in electricity rates.
- 137           e. Right now the Town is paying \$22K for electricity annually. Even with the bond payment, this  
138           project would decrease the amount spent on electricity by at least \$12K.
- 139           f. The vendors are saying that the solar array will last 40 years, but they are only guaranteed by  
140           the installer for 25 years. So Tom is using the conservative number for his calculations.
- 141           g. The current solar arrays that the Town has can't get serviced anymore. When this project goes  
142           out for bids, they will make sure to include 25 years of maintenance.
- 143           h. Tom did not calculate the breakeven point.
- 144           i. Clifton asked about the pitch of the roof and if using the open space in front of the Municipal  
145           Complex had been considered. The company that did the design last summer calculated the

- 146 various roof pitches. Using the field would actually be more expensive because they would  
147 need to run electric lines from the building to the panels.
- 148 j. At the last Town Meeting the CCPC had talked about the extra funds that would be created  
149 through Community Power for this type of project. Several CCPC members were mistaken with  
150 their understanding of how those funds are created. Since then, they have learned that those  
151 funds are generated by putting an adder on the Community Power rates. This adder was put into  
152 place last August, so the fund is at about \$4K now.
- 153 k. CCPC will be bringing another warrant article to Town Meeting 2025 to create a Capital  
154 Reserve Fund where the money from that adder can be deposited.
- 155 l. Because rates fluctuate, the amount that the adder would bring in couldn't be counted on to pay  
156 the bond. (See Selectboard minutes 12/16/24 Section 6)
- 157 m. About \$140K would be used on the panels, the remaining amount would be used on batteries  
158 that could counteract the demand charges and lead to further savings.
- 159 n. There was discussion about where the batteries could go and what the fire risks might be.
- 160 o. Tom will speak to this warrant article at Town Meeting.
- 161 p. The net metering issue is still an ongoing battle between the energy companies and PUC. Looks  
162 like the statehouse is going to get involved.
- 163 q. They discussed the timeline for the project. The bond could be purchased in July 2025 or  
164 January 2026. Payments would start immediately, but savings wouldn't start until installation is  
165 finished. Timing would need to be considered to make sure it really doesn't have a tax impact.
- 166 r. If the solar tax credits are still in place when the project is done, the Town could also get a \$50K  
167 rebate.
- 168 5. Land Use Application Procedure
- 169 a. Ken sent a draft out to the land use boards on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Only the Land Use Administrator  
170 replied with feedback. He then sent it along to the Selectboard to review.
- 171 b. This procedure details the process for how an application to a land use board is handled.
- 172 c. The Selectboard signed the Land Use Application Procedure.
- 173 6. Escrow for Planning Board Legal Costs
- 174 a. The Planning Board would like to be able to escrow money from private contractors to cover  
175 legal expenses relating to specific projects.
- 176 b. Ken contacted other towns to see how they do this. He and the Land Use Administrator will  
177 review the policies and figure out how it could be implemented in Canterbury.
- 178 7. 2025 Budget and Warrant Articles
- 179 a. Ken reviewed the draft of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Warrant Articles. The numbering will be changed to  
180 accommodate articles from the 1<sup>st</sup> Session.
- 181 b. A work session was scheduled for tomorrow in case they aren't able to finish this discussion  
182 tonight. The notice of the February 3<sup>rd</sup> Public Hearing must go to the Concord Monitor on  
183 Wednesday to meet the deadline.
- 184 c. Operating Budget Warrant Article
- 185 i. The final proposed operating budget for 2025 is \$3,475,908, an increase of 4.6%.
- 186 ii. Once the Selectboard approve this, the numbers can't be changed until the public hearing.
- 187 iii. Ken and Rachel met last week. The Library reduced their budget by \$1,500.
- 188 iv. The Selectboard agreed that this is a responsible budget. There are still some nice to haves,  
189 like the donation to CASA. It started at a 7% increase and had dropped to 4.6%.
- 190 v. The big increases were wages. These were a response to the market. We found out with the  
191 Highway Dept what happens when we can't retain people.
- 192 vi. The revenue offset is \$103,263.
- 193 d. Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) Deposits Warrant Article

- 194 i. The deposits are to Highway Equipment, Highway Truck, Rescue Truck, Landfill Closure,  
195 Maintenance & Repair of Town Buildings, and Highway Loader. The total is \$88K.  
196 ii. The grader was taken out this year, since we just bought a new one.  
197 iii. There was going to be a deposit to the Transfer Station Upgrade fund, but the Solid Waste  
198 Committee seems to be backing off that idea.
- 199 e. Old Town Hall Windows  
200 i. Kent brought up replacing the sashes in the Town Hall.  
201 ii. The Maintenance & Repair of Town Buildings CRF is for emergencies like replacing the  
202 Town Hall floors after the pipes leaked last year.  
203 iii. When the Town Hall floor was sanded/sealed a few years ago, that was a warrant article.  
204 iv. If the windows are done a couple at a time over several years, it could also be worked into  
205 the regular Town Hall maintenance line.  
206 v. Kent will get estimates for fixing the windows and the labor to extract and reinstall.
- 207 f. Gold Star Bond Warrant Article  
208 i. This is the last year of paying off this bond.
- 209 g. Voting Machine Warrant Article  
210 i. Two years ago this was in the operating budget. Because of supply issues, it couldn't be  
211 purchased. This year they decided to put it in a warrant article instead.  
212 ii. The Town Clerk, Moderator, and Supervisors of the Checklist will all be at Town Meeting to  
213 answer any questions.
- 214 h. Sam Lake House Garage  
215 i. It will cost \$80K to do this project, but because of the CRF, there will be no tax impact.  
216 ii. Since the CFR won't have enough money for the entire project until this summer, the DRA  
217 may require rewording the article to say it has about an \$8K impact. If so, that will need to  
218 be explained at Town Meeting.
- 219 i. Weatherization of Elkins Public Library Warrant Article  
220 i. Tom will present this at Town Meeting. His calculations show a savings of \$50K-\$70K over  
221 20-25 years. This money would be raised through taxation, not a bond.  
222 ii. He expects the \$20K cost to actually be lower, but he is waiting to find out how much Unutil  
223 will be contributing. He should have that at Town Meeting, so he could amend the warrant  
224 article from the floor.
- 225 j. Petition Warrant Article for Electric Compactor  
226 i. We have to use the exact wording from the petition.  
227 ii. This is not recommended by the Selectboard. It requires 3-phase power that isn't available  
228 at that site, it is questionable if the concrete pad could be installed, and it would require  
229 transporting the compacted material with a vehicle we don't have.
- 230 k. Voting Equipment CRF Warrant Article  
231 i. See above conversation with Sam Papps (Section 2.a.vi.)
- 232 l. Renewable Energy CRF Warrant Article  
233 i. See above conversation with Tom Franco (Section 4.k.)  
234 ii. This would be an account where money generated through the Community Power adder  
235 could be deposited.  
236 iii. Currently CPCNH holds this money. There are no concerns about CPCNH having it, but  
237 keeping that money in the Town's accounts is better.  
238 iv. The proposed \$2K initial funding would be through taxation, money from the adder would  
239 be deposited later.  
240 v. Since that amount is just to establish the fund, the Selectboard decided to lower it to \$1K.
- 241 m. Municipal Complex Solar Project Warrant Article  
242 i. See above conversation with Tom Franco (Section 4)

- 243 ii. This draft shows \$250K, but it will be corrected to \$180K to match Tom’s new estimate.  
244 n. Accept Sam Lake House Trust Warrant Article  
245 i. The DRA is making us do this every year now. If we don’t accept the interest, it will be lost  
246 to taxes.  
247 o. Hazardous Waste Day Warrant Article  
248 i. This was originally proposed to be in the Operating Budget, but it makes more sense as a  
249 warrant article.  
250 ii. Rich Marcous (SWC Chair) will speak to this at Town Meeting.  
251 p. Waste Oil Burner  
252 i. This is no longer in the list of proposed warrant articles. It needs a little more research and  
253 planning, so will try it next year.  
254 ii. At the Budget Committee meeting, Tom suggested getting a burner that generates heat and  
255 electricity (1/7/25 Section 2.k.v.), but has since found that there are no commercial options  
256 available for that.  
257 iii. They got a proposal from a place in Littleton.  
258 iv. John worked out a way to transport the oil from the Transfer Station to the Municipal  
259 Complex with limited spill risk. They could place one of the plastic containers with a cage  
260 in the bed of a truck and pump the oil in and out of it. That way there is no lifting.  
261 v. Not sure if one of the containers they already have would work or if they would need a  
262 double-walled container.  
263 q. Solid Waste Committee (SWC) Update  
264 i. The SWC had a meeting today at 3:30 p.m. Kent reported that the SWC would like to use  
265 the \$6K in the current Transfer Station CRF to conduct an engineering study to determine if  
266 the Transfer Station needs to be moved.  
267 ii. The CRF in question was changed two years ago to be “Transfer Station Upgrade”, so the  
268 funds may be able to be used for this without a warrant article. Ken will check with the  
269 attorney.  
270 iii. The SWC still hasn’t found out what an engineering study would cost. Beth and Scott would  
271 like to know that before proceeding.  
272 8. Executive Session  
273 a. Scott made a motion at 7:03 p.m. to enter into Non-Public session as per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to  
274 discuss a matter that would likely affect adversely the reputation of several persons. Beth  
275 seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.  
276 b. Scott made a motion at 7:16 p.m. to exit the Non-Public session. Beth seconded. All in favor by  
277 roll call, motion carried.  
278 c. Scott made a motion to seal the minutes. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion  
279 carried.  
280 9. Non-public minutes for boards/committees  
281 a. After exiting non-public session, the Selectboard asked if the other boards and committees have  
282 the same checklist for how to go about the motions legally.  
283 b. Kal explained that they sent out custom checklists to all of the boards/committees last year. Ken  
284 will send out a reminder email to board chairs.  
285 c. Kal volunteered to conduct the Right To Know training this year in April.  
286 10. Adjournment  
287 a. Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll  
288 call, motion carried.  
289

290 Next Meeting: 2025 February 3, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

291 Minutes submitted by Kathleen (Kal) McKay, Administrative Assistant