

NOTICE
Town of Lowell
SELECT BOARD MEETING
THE LOWELL SELECTBOARD WILL MEET ON
Wednesday, December 17, 2025, AT 5:30 P.M.
AT THE TOWN OFFICE BUILDING.

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AGENDA:

- **Addition & Deletion**
- **More Budget Discussion**
- **Sign Orders**
- **Review Minutes of December 2, 2025**
- **Road Commissioner Updates**
- **Other Business**
- **Public Comment on any agenda line if hand is raised**

Selectboard:
Jennifer Blay-Chm
Darren Pion
Wayne Richardson

MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF LOWELL
Meeting held on December 17, 2025

Board members present:

Jennifer Blay-Chm, Darren Pion, Wayne Richardson
Christy M. Pion -Town Clerk/Selectboard Clerk/Ass't Treasurer
Marie A. Busch-Town Treasurer/Ass't Clerk

***Note: All meetings are recorded on a handheld recording device. ***

Meeting called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Guest:

- Dottie Spoerl (Resident/Auditor)
- Brenda Wesolow (Resident/Zoning Member)
- Sam Thurston (Zoning/Planning Board/Resident)
- Gordon Spencer (JP/Zoning Admin/Auditor/Resident)
- William Herrera (JP/Resident)
- Ashley Callahan (ACO/Resident)

Additions and Deletions: See additions and deletions below.

****Ambulance Service Agreement: ****

- A new one-year ambulance service agreement was approved, sticking with the grand list method for funding allocation among towns (Troy, Jay, Westfield, and Lowell).
- Lowell's costs are increasing due to recent property reassessments.
- There was discussion about alternative funding models (call volume, fixed amounts), but the grand list was deemed more stable.
- Jay pays the largest portion due to the grand list and Jay Peak.

****MHG Solar Project: ****

- MHG Solar sent a letter outlining project modifications and community benefits they are offering (setbacks, trail access, community garden, sledding, sugaring, sheep grazing, land transfer).
- Public comments raised concerns about ensuring these agreements are binding if the project is sold and whether accepting these benefits implies endorsement of the project.
- Discussion about the project's impact, tax implications (agricultural land assessment), and the accuracy of MHG Solar's claims.
- The Select Board is consulting with legal counsel and Annette Smith “Executive Director, Vermonters for clean Environment” for advice.
- The board is considering asking for more time to review the project.

****Zoning Bylaw Changes (Solar Panels): ****

- The Planning Commission proposed changes to zoning bylaws regarding solar panels.
- Residential solar systems under 15 kilowatts would be a permitted use (no Planning Commission review).
- Systems between 16 and 100 kilowatts would require a conditional use permit (neighbor notification).
- The industrial mines area would be permitted to go up to 499 kilowatts.
- The Select Board wants the Planning Commission to provide the proposed changes in writing.
- The Select Board wants to ensure that the zoning bylaws prevent solar installations over 100 kilowatts in non-industrial areas.

More Budget Discussions:

****Budget Discussion: ****

- The Select Board reviewed the budget, focusing on fund balances, retained earnings, and potential budget adjustments.
- The town has healthy fund balances and retained earnings.
- Discussion about the road equipment fund, truck leases (lease-to-own), and future truck purchases.
- The board discussed the need to budget for future truck replacements and the possibility of allocating money towards equipment purchases.
- The board discussed whether the overtime was necessary and it was deemed so.
- The board discussed if the tire event needed a line item in the budget and decided it currently does not.

Sign Orders:

- Financials for the Treasurer were approved and signed by the Board.

Minutes from December 2, 2025:

- Minutes from December 2, 2025, were approved and signed by the Board unanimously.

Road Commissioner Updates (Darren Pion):

****Roads: ****

- The Road Point Person reported on road conditions, snow removal efforts, equipment maintenance and the fact that the CV was still down.
- Discussion about the need to brush trees along roads and the need to close the road for safety.
- Discussion about a complaint from a resident about snow removal.

Other Business:

****Animal Control: ****

- The Animal Control Officer reported on a found hound (seeking a home), dead pigs (no state law violation), and a dumped puppy (rehomed).

**** Overall Conclusions: ****

The meeting covered a wide range of topics, including the approval of the ambulance service agreement, discussion of the MHG Solar project, proposed zoning bylaw changes, animal control issues, and budget review. The Select Board is actively engaged in addressing community concerns, planning for future needs, and managing town finances. The board is

seeking legal counsel and expert advice on the solar project and is working to ensure that the town's zoning bylaws are clear and effective.

Board Warrants:

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|----------------------|----|------------------|
| ➤ General Order # 26 | \$ | 27,716.36 |
| ➤ Payroll Order # 26 | \$ | <u>10,097.81</u> |

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| Signed for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling - | \$ | 37,814.17 |
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* Note: Full discussion details of the minutes are available in the Clerk’s office. *

Meeting adjourned at 7:02p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Christy M. Pion

Next meeting date: December 30, 2025, at the Town Office Building.

Jennifer Blay – Chair

Christy M. Pion–Selectboard Clerk

Darren Pion-Select Person

Wayne Richardson-Select Person