

NOTICE
Town of Lowell
SELECT BOARD MEETING
THE LOWELL SELECTBOARD WILL MEET ON
Monday, March 9, 2026, AT 5:30 P.M.
AT THE TOWN OFFICE BUILDING.

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AGENDA:

- **Additions & Deletions**
- **Sign Orders**
- **Review Minutes from February 10, 2026**
- **Review Minutes of Reorganizational Meeting**
- **Possible raise for the Road Point Person**
- **Road Commissioner updates**
- **Other Business**
- **Public comment (Hand Raised)**

Selectboard:
Jennifer Blay-Chm
Darren Pion
Wayne Richardson

MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF LOWELL
Meeting held on March 9, 2026

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
Levi Booska-Road Foreman (Commissioner)

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

Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m.

Guest:

- **Sonja Blodgett-Resident**
- **Gordon Spencer-Auditor/JP/Zoning Administrator/Resident**
- **William Herrera-JP/Resident**
- **Dottie Spoerl- Auditor/Resident**
- **Brenda Wesolow-Zoning Member/Resident**
- **Doug Warner-Recycling Attendant/Resident**
- **Joanne Warner-Resident**
- **Annie Reicki-Resident**
- **Chris Collard-Resident**

Additions and Deletions: See additions and deletions below.

Brenda Wesolow joined the meeting to discuss some topics from her last Zoning Board meeting. Below are the following topics she updated the Selectboard on to keep them in the loop.

*** **Zoning Bylaw Changes:**** The zoning board is reviewing revised solar bylaw changes and the hearing process. They recognize that hearings are costly and aim to consolidate changes to be addressed in one go.

*** **Airbnb Regulations:**** A proposal is being considered to require Airbnb's to have a local agent for easier contact and issue resolution.

* **Junkyard Regulations:** The Zoning Board is looking into junkyard regulations, especially in light of potential state actions. There's a discussion about the difficulty of enforcement and the effectiveness of fines.

The Treasurer, the Selectboard, the Road Commissioner, the Clerk, and the Recycle Attendant all had new items of discussion for the meeting. The discussions are as follows.

* **Lease Payment & Insurance:** A revised lease payment of \$36,000 is discussed, as Marie has an email into the Lease company to find out the breakdown of this high cost. There's an ongoing discussion about a prepayment penalty and the possibility of insurance covering losses due to a lease clause.

* **Kimball Midwest Dealer:** Kimball Midwest is coming Wednesday to help the Treasurer with a price list for lost tools, parts, and equipment due to the Town Garage Fire for insurance purposes. This involves a detailed spreadsheet of contents, portable equipment, computers, and extra expenses.

* **Container Delivery:** A container is scheduled for delivery on Wednesday.

* **Generator Status:** The status of a generator for the Road crew to have to run the fuel pump for the equipment is discussed. The Road crew is waiting for the storage container before going ahead with a purchase of one. The use of Darren's generator will suffice until this can happen.

* **Porta Potty Request:** A request is made to place a porta potty at the recycling center, since there is no restroom access since the fire at the Town Garage.

* **Solar Update:** A deadline of Friday at 4 p.m. is set for solar-related submissions. An extension is requested by the Department of Public Service due to their aesthetics expert's availability.

* **Stipend for Work:** A discussion arises about providing a stipend to an individual for the significant amount of work they are doing. There's a suggestion to use donation money or reserve funds, but the person in question would like to take a little time to think about it as she feels that it's not necessary to be paid for what she is doing.

* **Assistant Position:** Four applications have been received for the assistant position, with a fifth applicant expected. The Clerk wants to wait for more applications before proceeding with interviews. There's a discussion about the hours and responsibilities of the role, and the preference for a local resident.

More Garage Discussion

* **Cleanup & Debris Removal:** Samples have been sent for analysis for cleanup and debris removal. The insurance company will be involved in the process of taking away the burnt trucks. The process for bids for the removal of the debris and rebuilding is in the beginning stages of discussion.

* **Garage Location Discussion:** A significant portion of the meeting is dedicated to discussing the location of a new town garage. Options include the current location (requiring significant rebuilding and permitting) or the pit location.

* **Pit Location Concerns:** Flood zone status, Act 250 permitting, and potential neighbor complaints are major concerns for the pit location.

* **Current Location Advantages:** It's established, and there's less permitting hassle.

* **Current Location Disadvantages:** Requires a new foundation, and the need to adhere to new building codes.

* **Pit Location Advantages:** Potential cost savings over 50 years

* **Flood Zone Uncertainty:** The exact flood zone status of the pit location is a key piece of information needed.

* **Building Design:** The need for a blueprint and understanding the size requirements for the building is emphasized.

Sign Orders:

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

Minutes from February 10, 2026:

- Minutes from February 10, 2026, were approved and signed by the Board unanimously.

Review Minutes of Reorganizational Meeting:

- The Minutes from the Reorganizational meeting were approved and signed by the Board unanimously.

Possible Raise for Road Point Person :

- The role of the Road Point Person and a potential raise are discussed and tabled. The current point person for road issues is Darren. There was a question about whether to keep Mike and AJ part-time or hire another full-time person. The Board voted to keep Mike and AJ on as part-time through the summer so as to not have to hire any other help.

Road Commissioner Updates (Darren Pion & Levi Booska):

- **Bridge Safety:** A concern is raised about the guardrails on the Blodgett Road bridge, and a proposal to add guardrails is discussed and approved to have it put in.
- **Road Maintenance:** Updates on road maintenance include shoulder work, pothole filling, and ongoing monitoring.
- **Equipment Maintenance:** Updates on truck and plow maintenance are provided, including broken chains, blown power steering lines, and the need for replacement parts.
- **Eric Kennison's Assistance And use of the Westfield Town Garage:** Gratitude is expressed for Eric Kennison's significant help with parts and equipment and use of Westfield Town Garage, and a thank you in the paper and a card are suggested.
- **Sand Pile Management:** The management of sand piles and the use of salt, is discussed.

Other Business:

- **Permits:** Two truck weight permits were approved and signed for the following: **City Feed & Lumber Company, Inc. dba Sticks & Stuff, Weston Pulpwood Sale, Inc., & G.W. Tatro Construction, Inc.**

**** Overall Conclusions: ****

- * ****Need for Information Gathering:**** The board needs to gather more information on several key issues, particularly the flood zone status of the pit location and the specifics of Act 250 permitting.
- * ****Cost-Benefit Analysis Needed:**** A thorough cost-benefit analysis is required for the garage location decision, considering upfront costs, long-term savings, permitting, and potential environmental regulations.
- * ****Prioritization of Tasks:**** The board needs to prioritize tasks, such as obtaining blueprints for the garage and confirming flood zone information, before making definitive decisions.
- * ****Enforcement Challenges:**** The effectiveness of current enforcement mechanisms for zoning bylaws, particularly regarding junkyards, is a concern.
- * ****Staffing Needs:**** The need for adequate staffing for road maintenance and administrative tasks is evident, with a discussion on how to best utilize existing resources and potentially hire new personnel.
- * ****Community Support is Valued:**** The assistance provided by individuals and neighboring towns (like Eric Kennison and the Town of Westfield) is crucial and should be acknowledged.
- * ****Financial Planning is Ongoing:**** The meeting touches on various financial matters, including lease payments, insurance, potential stipends, and the cost of building projects.
- * ****Decision-Making Process:**** The board is actively working through complex decisions, with a focus on gathering input and weighing various factors. The garage location remains a significant undecided issue.

Board Warrants:

➤ General Order # 4	\$	14,926.02
➤ Payroll Order # 4	\$	<u>7,233.78</u>

Signed for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling - \$ **22,159.80**

➤ General Order # 5	\$	189,644.36
➤ Payroll Order # 5	\$	<u>8,226.48</u>

Signed for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling - \$ **197,870.84**

* **Note:** Full discussion details of the minutes are available in the Clerk's office. *
 Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.
 Respectfully submitted by: **Christy M. Pion**
 Next meeting date: **March 23, 2026, at the Town Office Building.**

Jennifer Blay – Chair

Christy M. Pion–Selectboard Clerk

Darren Pion-Select Person

Wayne Richardson-Select Person