

NOTICE
Town of Lowell
SELECT BOARD MEETING
THE LOWELL SELECTBOARD WILL MEET ON
Tuesday, February 10, 2026, AT 5:30 P.M.
AT THE TOWN OFFICE BUILDING.

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AGENDA:

- **Additions & Deletions**
- **Review of Small truck replacement and decision**
- **Discussion of Charlebois**
- **Sign Orders**
- **Review Minutes from January 21, 2026 & January 27, 2026**
- **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 February 10, 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 Commissioner (In Training)

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

Meeting called to order at 5:32 p.m.

Guest:

- Brian Richardson-Resident
- Sonja Blodgett-Resident
- Arlon Warner -Auditor/Resident
- Ted Fleischer-Resident
- Matthew Wilson-The Chronicle
- Gordon Spencer-Auditor/JP/Zoning Administrator/Resident
- William Herrera-JP/Resident
- Dottie Spoerl- Auditor/Resident
- Brenda Wesolow-Zoning Member/Resident
- Katherine Pion-Resident/Library Trustee
- Doug Manning-Resident
- Deb Manning-Library Trustee/Resident

Additions and Deletions: See additions and deletions below.

- **Discussion of Charlebois:** was deleted as there was nothing more to discuss and the decision to purchase the truck had been passed in the previous meeting.
- A correction was made by Arlon Warner regarding a previous newspaper article that misstated concerns about auditor salaries instead of office staff salaries.

- Jenn discussed a concern regarding road maintenance and snow plowing for Sonja and Ken Blodgett. Ken Blodgett called Jenn and expressed dissatisfaction with the plowing of his road and the hard packed in snow left in his driveway from where the plow truck had been turning around, feeling his concerns were not taken seriously. Sonja was at this meeting and confirmed her husband's concerns. Levi, the road commissioner, explained the challenges of plowing narrow roads and the limitations of the equipment as we are down our small truck, which is used to plow the smaller roads, detailing efforts made to clear the area.

Truck Replacement and Financials:

- The meeting reviewed the financial implications of replacing two trucks. The insurance payout for the lost CV truck was \$175,878, and the 10-wheeler payout was also \$175,870.
- The payoff for the 10-wheeler lease was \$56,580, leaving a net of \$119,297. This was used to purchase a 2019 truck for \$100,552, resulting in a net gain of \$18,745.
- The payoff for the CV truck lease was \$53,793.65, leaving \$122,084 towards the purchase of another vehicle.
- A discussion ensued regarding using the remaining lease budgeted amount together with the insurance money and perhaps a small amount from the General Fund to purchase the 2nd vehicle outright, therefore avoiding any financing and interest payments.
- A significant point of contention was a clause in the lease for the remaining six-wheeler that resulted in a higher-than-expected yearly payment (\$36,302) due to an early payoff penalty, which was perceived as a way for the leasing company to recoup interest. Legal advice was sought on this.

Review of Small Truck Replacement and Decision:

- Darren presented a spec sheet for a new CV truck with a 10-foot wing and Everest plow for \$178,500.
- A discussion about extended warranties for the new truck took place, with a preference for an "emissions-type" warranty.
- A motion was made and seconded to purchase a new CV truck for \$178,500.
- The decision was made to purchase this new CV truck unanimously.
- Marie has requested permission to use money from the general fund until the insurance money comes in for the equipment purchases.
- Motion was made and seconded for Marie to use the fund, all were in agreement unanimously.

Building Reconstruction (Post-Fire):

- The discussion shifted to the reconstruction of the town garage after the fire. **(Key considerations included):**
- **Location:** Rebuilding the current site versus moving to the "Lower Village Pit." The current site offers established functions, while the pit has floodplain and permitting challenges.
- **Size:** Discussions around 4-bay versus 5 bay buildings, with a consensus for at least 4 bays.
- **Permitting:** The need for engineering and architectural plans, and the potential complexities of Act 250 permits for new locations.
- **Cost:** Quotes for steel buildings were presented, highlighting that the building itself is only one part of the overall project cost.
- **Sand Management:** A lengthy debate occurred about the logistics and cost-effectiveness of trucking sand from the pit versus keeping it at the current location, with arguments for both efficiency and convenience.
- **Town Meeting Input:** A proposal was made to provide a handout at town meeting with pros and cons of each site to gauge public opinion if time allows before the meeting comes.

Sign Orders:

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

Minutes from January 21, 2026 & January 27, 2026:

- Minutes from January 21, 2026 & January 27, 2026, were approved and signed by the Board unanimously.

Road Commissioner Updates (Darren Pion & Levi Booska):

- Levi reported that most roads have been winged back, with some smaller roads remaining.
- The grader needed new batteries, and the six-wheeler is showing signs of needing the same.
- The need for a generator to pump fuel without relying on others was discussed.
- The placement of additional security cameras was discussed to monitor the fuel tank.
- **Container Purchase/Rental:** The possibility of purchasing or renting a used 20x40 container from Moe's for storage was discussed.

Other Business:

- **Permits:** Two truck weight permits were approved and signed for the following: **JACK F. CORSE, INC & BOURNE'S ENERGY.**

- **Resignation:** Rebecca DiZazzo, the Assistant Clerk/Assistant Treasurer, resigned for non-work-related reasons, with her last day being town meeting day. A search for her replacement will begin in the coming weeks.
- **Solar Project Legal Counsel:** Jenn read an email from the attorney she is working with on the solar project. The attorney will function as a consultant, advising and reviewing materials, rather than formally appearing at the PUC. The Board were all in agreement with what the letter stated.
- **NVDA Commissioner:** The possibility of appointing an NVDA commissioner was discussed, with David Snedeker of NVDA offering assistance.
- **Donations:** A total donation of \$2,700 was received.
- **Mailbox Damage:** A discussion about damaged mailboxes due to plowing occurred. Our town policy has always been no replacement of mailboxes as it is the resident's job to keep the mailboxes cleared out.
- **Non-binding Meeting Schedule:** There will be a non-binding meeting held on Monday, February 16, 2026, to brainstorm the contents that were in the town garage to get the information to the insurance company.

**** Overall Conclusions: ****

****Truck Replacement is Moving Forward: **** The town has made a decision to replace both the lost CV truck and the 10-wheeler. The insurance payouts and available funds appear to cover the immediate purchases.

****Building Reconstruction is a Major Undertaking: **** The decision on rebuilding the town garage is complex, involving significant financial, logistical, and permitting considerations. The town is in the early stages of gathering information and exploring options, with a need for public input and expert advice.

****Road Maintenance Challenges Persist:**** The road commissioner highlighted ongoing challenges with narrow roads, equipment limitations, and the need for maintenance on essential vehicles.

****Legal Representation Secured for Solar Project:**** The town has engaged legal counsel to advise on the Northland Solar LLC petition, with a clear understanding of the scope of services and cost limitations.

****Staffing Changes:**** The resignation of the Assistant Clerk/Assistant Treasurer necessitates a search for a replacement.

****Public Input is Valued:**** There's a clear intention to involve the public in significant decisions, particularly regarding the rebuilding of the town garage, through meeting discussions and information sharing.

Board Warrants:

➤ General Order # 3	\$	11,352.03
➤ Payroll Order # 3	\$	<u>7,498.50</u>

Signed for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling - \$ 18,850.53

* **Note:** Full discussion details of the minutes are available in the Clerk's office. *

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Christy M. Pion

Next meeting date: February 24, 2026, at the Town Office Building.

Jennifer Blay – Chair

Christy M. Pion–Selectboard Clerk

Darren Pion-Select Person

Wayne Richardson-Select Person