STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE – TOWN OF SURRY
SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES October 26, 2026

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. Jay Croteau, Ron Profaizer, and Steve Goldsmith were present.

School Board Chair Tim Peloquin reported on budget preparation and changes associated with House Bills 564 and 1300. He explained that separate SAU and district budgets and hearings would be required, with legal and bookkeeping costs shifted into the SAU budget. The School Board plans to complete its budget in December, subject to Keene tuition rates and enrollment information. He described concerns about applying spending caps to a tuition-based district with changing enrollment and uncertainty about open enrollment. An informational meeting on House Bill 1300 was scheduled for Wednesday, October 28, at 7:00 P.M. at the school. Mr. Peloquin will provide the notice for website distribution. The school energy audit had been completed, with the report pending.

Town Moderator Wayne Hartz recommended removing unattended political signs from the Town Common and limiting attended electioneering on November 3 to the teardrop-shaped Common to preserve voter access and parking. The Board agreed to publicize those arrangements. Mr. Hartz will provide Ron Profaizer with the wording and statutory information for the notice. Removal of signs to the Town Hall porch for retrieval was discussed. The accessible voting equipment had been tested successfully with the State update installed. Mr. Hartz will continue developing an election continuity plan with Nancy Callender and explore alternate locations with the school, Fire Department, church, and Library before returning to the Board.

Garrett Walsh asked about driveway and building permits. The Board explained that they are separate applications and that a driveway permit may be obtained first. He was advised to provide a sketch with the driveway location, dimensions, and property lines for review. Mr. Walsh reported that the recent ditching was working well and discussed directing drainage away from the proposed septic area through a swale. No permit was approved.

The Board reviewed the Planning Board's October 22 advisory response concerning SUR's proposed purchase and use of 416 Route 12A. The response addressed continuation and expansion of the nonconforming use, a possible special exception for building trades and services, and groundwater and wetlands concerns to be addressed through site-plan review. Ron Profaizer questioned whether the proposed use was sufficiently similar to the existing use and emphasized documentation and continuing compliance with groundwater protections. Members discussed containment, storage, and access through Route 12A rather than Pond Road. The Zoning Board was expected to consider the proposal in an advisory discussion that Wednesday; no special-exception application had been submitted. The Select Board made no permit or use determination.

The Board reviewed the manifest and payroll. An invoice for the rented mower was initially questioned and then accepted after members identified the charge as 38 hours of rental at $85 per hour. Return arrangements for the equipment were also discussed.

Steve Goldsmith moved to approve the October 19, 2026 meeting minutes. Jay Croteau seconded the motion. All in favor.

The Board discussed preparing meeting packets containing correspondence requiring review or decisions, with that responsibility eventually transferred to the Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper.

The manifest and payroll were completed and signed.

The Board reviewed funding for a 20-hour-per-week Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper. Members discussed available salary appropriations and possible use of a trust fund for eligible Town improvements, including the website and Town Hall lattice work, to free general funds for staffing. Estimated staffing costs through March were about $11,000, including payroll, with about $5,000 needed for the remainder of 2026. No specific trust-fund withdrawal or transfer was approved. The Board agreed to pursue the two interested candidates. Ron Profaizer will draft a concise job description for members' comments, send it to the candidates, request resumes, and seek interviews in the first or second week of November.

The Russo timber warrant had been signed and submitted for tax collection and State records.

The Board reviewed the Right-to-Know request for residential assessment appeal and abatement records. The requester had agreed to narrow the request to 2025 and asked for a cost before work proceeded. Bruce Smith reported that the one potential 2025 record involved a camper no longer on the property rather than a challenge to assessed value. Members also discussed two 2026 abatements. Ron Profaizer will advise the requester of the three records for 2025 and 2026 and a proposed $75 charge, with records and related minutes to be assembled if the requester agrees.

The Board reviewed Primex information showing unchanged property values, a payroll increase, a lower loss adjustment factor, and a $717 change in the contribution amount between the periods presented. The material was informational; no renewal action was required that evening. A question about the effect of reclassifying Fire Department volunteers was not resolved by the information provided.

Health Officer John Davis and Jay Croteau reported on their October 17 visit to the Village Road property. Neither reported a documented violation from that visit. Preventive recommendations addressed grain storage, rodents, manure, hay storage, standing water, and removing hoses from animal water to prevent backflow into the private water system. Jay Croteau reported that the owners said the advertised meals-to-go and car-detailing activities were not operating. He will circulate his written inspection report for Board review before filing it. John Davis had prepared a follow-up letter to the owners. Steve Goldsmith reported that he had inspected and signed off on the two buildings that Saturday.

The Board reviewed the Planning Board's advisory response concerning 24 Village Road. The Planning Board had not been presented with evidence establishing a commercial agricultural use, farm stand, prepared-food business, or other commercial activity beyond Facebook advertising. It identified Article III, Section A, the nuisance provision, as a possible enforcement matter for the Select Board to address.

Steve Goldsmith moved to table the Village Road matter until the following week; that motion was seconded and later withdrawn without a vote. A motion to find no violations at that time and close the matter was also made and seconded, but no vote on it was recorded. The Board agreed that Ron Profaizer will write to the Town attorney for assistance before closing or moving forward with any action. Ron Profaizer will notify Dillion Simpkins that the Board will not accept any future testimony regarding this situation at this time.

Steve Goldsmith reported that he had spoken with Frank Lucius about Farm Road and runoff at the private crossover road. Members discussed possible drainage corrections but agreed to meet on site with Roger and Nancy Wilbur before selecting a plan or arranging further contractor work. The review will distinguish existing conditions from effects of the recent Town work and consider the value of further Farm Road improvements during budget preparation. No corrective project or expenditure was approved.

The Board will also review fire-apparatus access at Farm Road and Old Walpole Road during the site visit. Members discussed keeping brush and snowbanks clear of the turning area and advising the Highway Department about winter plowing. Any future improvements should accommodate larger mutual-aid apparatus and Surry's trucks.

Ron Profaizer reported that Buddy Punch access problems during training had been corrected and that 15-minute payroll rounding had been configured. The Board reviewed summary and detailed payroll reports and discussed a process for reviewing timecards, documenting corrections, obtaining Board approval, and issuing checks afterward. The Board has not yet adopted a written procedure for electronic approval by a majority of the Board, and it has not yet assigned responsibility for the initial detailed review.

Members discussed a final employee meeting before November 1 to explain rounding and the process. The Board reminded the part-time employee attending the meeting to record actual work times and unpaid breaks; that position will continue to use paper timecards. The Board reiterated that planned use of part-time help requires prior approval and discussed possible delegated authority during winter plowing and emergency situations.

The Board reviewed the Public Works task list, including rubbish removal and gravel at pavement edges. Members discussed using the Town's plate compactor for suitable small repairs and continuing maintenance of gravel roads.

The November 3 Personnel Policy and Building Inspector procedures workshop notice still needed to be posted. A separate Zoning Board notice was confirmed posted, and approval of earlier Zoning Board minutes was requested so they could be published.

The tax warrant associated with setting the tax rate had been signed. Jay Croteau reported that the corrected OPD Land Use Regulation Survey had been resubmitted.

The new telephone system porting is scheduled for October 27. Members planned to check the Fire Department installation after the meeting, and the Board agreed to obtain two additional handsets from Spectrum for the emergency operations area and second floor. The Town Clerk and Library should be advised of the conversion. Ron Profaizer confirmed that the new Fire Department voicemail included instructions to hang up and dial 911 in an emergency.

Ron Profaizer reported further website revisions and a revised launch date of November 5. He will arrange training with Jay Croteau and the website developer for Friday, October 30, between 11:00 A.M. and noon, subject to the developer's availability. The calendar and front-page notices need updating before launch.

Town Hall framing and lattice work was reported complete, with rubbish removal remaining for Public Works. Ron Profaizer will request the contractor's labor and any remaining materials invoice. Jay Croteau will contact David Brooks about keeping plowed snow away from the new lattice. The Board also noted damage to the cemetery fence and the need to trim around the gate.

The Board reviewed L. French's report of tax-map boundary and ownership errors involving Map 1, Lots 9A and 8A. John Davis, an affected property owner, will mark the proposed corrections on the map and return the information to the Board for review by the assessors. No map correction was approved.

The Board set aside the Avitar invoice for the following week. The Board also discussed a resident's request to opt out of an interior assessment inspection and to maintain a list of opt-outs. The request will be forwarded to Avitar to determine whether it can still be accommodated.

The Board agreed to request a $372.24 refund from Mitchell Material for a duplicate payment rather than leave the amount as a credit. A reply requesting the refund will be sent.

Nancy Callender's visit to discuss the Town audit was confirmed for November 16.

Jay Croteau reported that the incorrect 2025 start year on the Turner intent to cut had been corrected to 2026 and the records were now correct.

The Board received notice that MME's hourly rate for plowing and other Town work increased from $150 to $165, effective October 15, 2026. Members discussed the contractor's insurance arrangements.

The Board reviewed additional plans for the Mine Ledge Road garage application previously denied as incomplete. Steve Goldsmith indicated that the plans provided sufficient building detail and met setback requirements. Members discussed requiring use of the existing driveway and restoration of the stone wall at the unpermitted access prior to approving the building application. Jay Croteau will prepare, and the application will return to the following week's agenda. No final permit approval was recorded.

The Board signed correspondence prepared by Building Inspector Steve Goldsmith to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services concerning a septic-system failure. Steve Goldsmith will arrange delivery to the septic plan designer for transmission to the State.

The Board agreed to replace Town Hall locks and develop a policy identifying authorized keyholders, recording issued keys, and transferring keys when committee chairs change. Steve Goldsmith will obtain suitable locks and wait for authorization to install them after the town key policy is established. Members also agreed to separate obsolete keys in the Select Board's office from those currently in use.

The Board received information about microphones as a possible aid for people attending meetings. No equipment purchase was approved.

Ron Profaizer moved to adjourn. Steve Goldsmith seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting closed at 10:35 p.m.

Submitted R. Profaizer