

**TOWN OF LUDLOW, VT**

**SELECT BOARD**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2025**

**6:00 P.M.**

**HEALD AUDITORIUM**

**[Select Board Meeting – November 3, 2025 ZOOM LINK](#)**

Meeting ID: 963 5236 4337

Passcode: 411479

One tap mobile

+13126266799,96352364337#,,,,\*411479# US (Chicago)

+16469313860,96352364337#,,,,\*411479# US

**Dial by your location**

**<https://zoom.us/j/abJ1grh212>**

**SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brett Sanderson, Chair

Scott Baitz

Justin Hyjek (ZOOM)

Noah Schmidt

George Tucker, Jr.

**STAFF:**

Brendan McNamara

Officer Marissa Foote

Office George Hauser

Lisha Klaiber

Ulla Cook

Chief Jeff Warfle

Dispatcher Dave Petit

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Eric Alden

Matthew Bellantoni

Sabrina Bolduc

Terry Carter

Angela Horst

Ed Kelly

Heather Kelly

Abby Lechthaler

Andrea Lehtonen

Arthur Pearlman

Bruce Schmidt

Ryan Silvestri

**AGENDA**

1) Call to Order

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- A. Brett Sanderson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All members present. He led the Pledge of Allegiance. Brett Sanderson thanked Brendan McNamara for his service to the community and said that this will be Brendan McNamara's last regular meeting. He said that Penny Wu will be our new Municipal Manager and she will be starting on December 1, 2025

2) Consideration of any Changes, Additions or Removals to the Agenda

- A. Brendan McNamara said the following changes are needed:
- 1) Strike Item 7 – Tree Warden
  - 2) Strike Item 11 – Zoning Fees – to be discussed at the next meeting
  - 3) Add Select Board to Schedule Public Hearing for Stand-Alone Flood Regulations – insert this in place of Item #11.

3) Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings

- A. October 6, 2025
- 1) Justin Hyjek clarified that for Item 12 K – should read "...if Okemo is happy without structured mile markers and dates..."
  - 2) **MOTION by George Tucker, Jr. and seconded by Scott Baitz to approve the minutes from October 6, 2025, as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.**

4) Comments from Citizens

- A. There were none

5) Department Head Reports

- A. Building and Grounds
- 1) Justin Hyjek said that at their last meeting, he had suggested that the board consider forming a High School Building steering committee. He noted from the Buildings and Grounds October Report, the alarm issues and roof repairs at the High School. He asked how many hours Kevin MacPherson puts in at the high school each month
  - 2) Brendan McNamara said it varies and is not daily. He said if there is an issue, Mr. MacPherson takes care of it. He also – per state regulations- has to be there for water/wastewater testing.

6) Possible Approval of Requests/Licenses/Permits

- A. 199 Main Street Liquor & Tobacco Licenses

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- B. 143 Main Street Tobacco License
- i. Brendan McNamara advised these have been approved by the Police Chief
  - ii. **MOTION by Noah Schmidtand seconded by Scott Baitz to approve the Liquor and Tobacco licenses for 199 Main Street and the tobacco license for 143 Main Street. Motion passed unanimously.**
  - iii. Arthur Pearlman said that he represents 199 Main Street and verified that the tobacco license was also approved.
  - iv. Brett Sanderson said it was.

7) Tree Warden: Phil Carter Update – Strike from Agenda

8) Ludlow Police Department: Presentation by Chief Warfle

- A. Chief Warfle said that he would like to recognize some officers for their service to the department and community
- i. Longevity – Chief Warfle advised that our Night and afternoon dispatcher, David Petitt III started his career in New Jersey and worked there for 10 years before moving to Vermont. He joined the Ludlow Police Department on October 18, 2015 – 10 years ago. He congratulated Mr. Petitt III. He presented a plaque to Mr. Petitt III.
  - ii. Meritorious Activities – Chief Warfle recognized Officers Marissa Foote, George Hauser and Sergeant Reilly for their efforts in upgrading the lights, sirens, safety and cameras. We had received a quote of \$6,000 to install our equipment. The dedication of Officers Foote, Hauser and Sgt. Reilly in doing that installation, saved the taxpayers and the department that cost. He presented recognition to Officers Foote, Hauser and Sgt. Reilly.

9) Municipal Re-Appraisal Outlook: Ryan Silvestri

- A. Ryan Silvestri advised that he is the Town Assessor. He will be conducting a statistical reappraisal for the 2026 Grand List (GL), based on the last 3 years of market sales. He will not be knocking on all of the doors. A statistical reappraisal is a municipal property valuation method that updates property values for tax purposes using statistical analysis rather than physical inspections of every property. He said that Ludlow's current Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) is 66%. The State uses this to adjust local assessments to ensure equity across the state and determines the equalized education property tax rate. In Ludlow the education tax rate is now equalized by a plus 34% on the property tax. This benefits the higher value properties and punishes the lower value properties. He said that the CLA varies based on if a property sells for more (or less) than the assessed value. It reflects fair market value. He generally visits 200 - 250 properties each year and Ludlow's GL has grown over the past 5 years. When he drives to parcels, he flags any new construction and checks to see if it has been recorded on the property cards.
- B. Noah Schmidt asked when the last full reappraisal was done

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- C. Ryan Silvestri said 2021 and at that time, market values were based on the years 2018 to 2021. Ludlow's CLA is low. To hold in line with the State, we need to validate sales and concessions with sales. Hundreds of transactions are done each year in Ludlow.
- D. Justin Hyjek asked if the CLA of 66% is lower than 2024 to 2025, dropped 12 - 14%. He also asked if post COVID it was different. Does it self-correct.
- E. Ryan Silvestri said new State law required full reappraisal every 6 years. For this year, the Statistical reappraisal will satisfy the State. We will use all of the sales to set the value. Here it is plateaued. If the CLD is below 110% it goes up. If over 110%, the State reduces the Education values
- F. Justin Hyjek asked if there is anything the Select Board can do to stop the run-away CLA?
- G. Ryan Silvestri said that the requirement to reassess every 6 years will fix a lot and will help stabilize the Municipal tax rate He said if the assessment increases 100%, your taxes will not double. Noah Schmidt asked how far off we are?
- H. Ryan Silvestri said the Lakes and Mountain districts are off considerably while South Hill and East Hill are not as much. On the Mountain, we are looking at renovations over \$10,000, condo values and grievances. He said the next full data collection will be in 2031. He said there was a 15% increase in grievances this past year. He said the cost for a statistical appraisal is about \$180,000, less than half the cost of a full appraisal.

#### 10) Okemo Seasonal Update

- A. Bruce Schmidt advised that this is Okemo's 70th Season. He said that he has worked for Okemo for 47 years, 38 of which have been full time. We plan to kick off the season on November 22, 2025. He said the summer into fall has been vibrant - from August on. He said they have made some improvements over the summer:
- Snowmaking
  - Sweet Solitude snow pipe was moved to the south side
  - Replaced a couple of snowcats
  - Replaced some snow guns
  - Replace 600 nozzles

He added this was all to increase efficiency. He said that they have started Phase I of new visible signage - one at Sunburst 6 and one at Jackson Gore.

He said that they have been doing scenic trail rides, had some summit weddings. They have also been doing Summit Yoga that can accommodate 35 people. They have worked with the State on the new and improved fire tower, by putting in better stairs.

He said that Okemo worked with the Recreation department on the 4th of July fireworks and will expand the area in the future.

Okemo opened on January 31, 1956 with some trails from the summit off the red and blue chairs. We will be sponsoring events for families starting on the 31st and running continuously.

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Okemo has been working on an Environmental Management Program and received an award for waste recycling. We have a sorting station and worked with the town on Green Up Day on Route 100.

Social Services - Bruce Schmidt - said that they have a new Youth Skier program - 73,000 inclusive access. He said they have been working with OMS, Black River Good Neighbors, the Chester and the Springfield Family Centers and The Ludlow Rotary. They have 600 students per week skiing, and this year will expand the weeks from January 5, 2026 through March 19, 2026.

Bruce Schmidt said he wants to thank Patti Potter from the Transfer Station, Ulla Cook, Town Clerk and Treasurer, Nick Miele from the Recreation Department. Ron Tarbell from the Highway department, Stephanie Grover, Chief Warfle and Chief Whalen for the great job they do and the support they provide to Okemo. He also wants to thank the Chamber of Commerce.

He would like to extend a personal thank you to Brendan McNamara. Brendan McNamara has been a partner to him and he can speak to Brendan McNamara. He added that our jobs are intensive. Brendan McNamara always has the best interests of the Town and Village in mind. Bruce Schmidt said that he appreciates all that Brendan McNamara has done for him

- B. Justin Hyjek thanked Bruce Schmidt for all the things that Okemo does for the town and for extending the school snow program.

11) To Discuss and Possibly Approve Change to Zoning Fees – Struck from Agenda – Replace with Select Board to Schedule Public Hearing for Stand-Alone Flood Regulations

- A. Brendan McNamara suggested that they schedule the public hearing for the Stand-alone Flood Regulations on Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. – before their next regular meeting.
- B. Justin Hyjek said that Brendan McNamara still owes us one more meeting since he is not leaving until 12/5.
- C. Brett Sanderson said that Penny Woo will run that meeting
- D. **MOTION by George Tucker, Jr. and seconded by Noah Schmidt to hold the Public Hearing for the Stand-alone Flood Hazard Regulations on Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.**
- E. Terry Carter suggested that since no one showed up at the Planning Commission or Trustees' hearings, they may want to start the meeting at 5:45 p.m.
- F. Brendan McNamara said the hearing will be scheduled for 5:30 p.m.
- G. **Motion passed unanimously.**

12) Review and Approve FY26 Dorsey Park Press Box Bid

- A. Brendan McNamara said that we did not strike this from the agenda, as they had received bids. This was an investment option to restore the unit and fix the flooring. Based on the quotes

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received, this is not a financially feasible or responsible project. We are striking the project and will be sending out letters to the bidders.

- B. Noah Schmidt said there is something special about Dorsey Park and if we could cover the costs – it might be worth it for the future.

13) Review and Discuss 41 Depot Street (Town Hall) Proposed Parking Lot Lease

- A. Brendan McNamara advised that they had received a letter from Abby and Rogan Lechthaler regarding parking at 41 Depot Street. 41 Depot Street owns 10 parking spaces to the left and the town owns the parking spaces to the right. There was a parking agreement in 2023. He said that Abby and Rogan Lechthaler are requesting a lease agreement with the town for parking spaces. He said tonight is not for public negotiations and suggested that if the board would like, they can authorize him to negotiate for the town
- B. Brett Sanderson asked how many spaces the town owns.
- C. Brendan McNamara said 4.
- D. Brett Sanderson said that the handicapped access is on the Lechthaler’s side. He said that the town has plowed and maintained the area. He would like to authorize Brendan McNamara to negotiate.
- E. Brendan McNamara said he will come back to the board for their decision.
- F. Justin Hyjek asked about a ROW situation
- G. Brendan McNamara said there is no ROW on the left side, only on the right side.
- H. Justin Hyjek asked about the property line
- I. Brendan McNamara said the lot line covers their parking spaces - 10 spaces and the driveway on the left side.
- J. Noah Schmidt said we want to maintain a good relationship with our neighbors. He said that is a “funky” area there and a key part of the parking for town hall.
- K. Abby Lechthaler said they want to be super amiable. They had a handshake deal with Frank Heald and they will be happy to work with Brendan McNamara.
- L. Bruce Schmidt recommended that one of the Select Board members work with Brendan McNamara.
- M. Justin Hyjek agreed, saying that Brendan McNamara will be leaving soon
- N. General consensus for Brett Sanderson to work with Brendan McNamara and the Lechthalers.

14) Review and Possibly Approve Moving a Voted Article to a Budgetary Item for FY27 – The MOOVER (Formerly the Current)

- A. Brendan McNamara said that this is really an administrative item. This has always been a stand-alone appropriation and should be included with the other voted items
- B. **MOTION by George Tucker, Jr. and seconded by Noah Schmidt to move the MOOVER to a voted article. Motion passed unanimously.**

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15) Discuss and Possibly Approve Holiday Party

- A. Brendan McNamara said this is for the annual Staff party. It was well received and well attended. Last year we set a budget of \$5,000 and it is a great time for staff to get together. If the board approves this, we will get bids and bring them back to the board for approval
- B. **MOTION by Scott Baitz and seconded by Noah Schmidt to move forward with getting bids for the Holiday Party. Motion passed unanimously.**

16) Municipal Manager Updates

- A. Budget Workshop Meeting
  - i. Brendan McNamara suggested scheduling this meeting for Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. He said he will send out drafts this week and let board members know which department heads will be present.
- B. Upper Crosshill Paving
  - i. Upper Crosshill Road will be paved tomorrow
- C. Last Regular Board Meeting
  - i. Brendan McNamara said that this is his last regular board meeting and it has been an interesting 3-month processing. He wants to thank the Town for this tremendous experience. He said this decision is all on him. He is making a life change. He said he can't say enough about this board - it has been a pleasure to work with them and they have been very supportive. They listen and kept him abreast of what's going on. He thanked each and every member. He also thanked the department heads and said that staff is top notch. He said he can't say enough about Diane Knight and Ulla Cook and everything they do. He thanked them. He said that people pick up the phone when he calls. He also thanked Bruce Schmidt, Chief Billings and Frank Heald for their help and support.

17) Other Business

- A. Letter to TRSU Union Negotiating Team
  - i. Noah Schmidt proposed that the board authorize Brendan McNamara to send a letter to TRSU Union Negotiating team regarding the teachers' contracts.

Letter to Two Rivers Supervisory Union Negotiating Team

As leaders of the Town of Ludlow, we as Select Board members want to express our concerns about the length of the Teacher Contract negotiations, as well as the lack of understanding of each other's side and thus the lack of progress that is happening.

We understand that this contract involves the Teacher agreements for Ludlow Elementary School, Mt. Holly Elementary School, Cavendish Town Elementary School, Chester-Andover Elementary School, and Green Mountain Union High School. With that said, it is also important to note that each community most likely have their own concerns and needs for this negotiation.

While the Ludlow Select Board is not taking sides in the matter, we want to emphasize the importance of there being an agreement and this may mean that both sides may have to compromise to make this happen.

With the challenges our schools are facing, as well as the uncertainty of our State leadership regarding the potential for new school configurations, our teachers and administrators are working in a stressful time.

As Town leaders, we want to encourage both sides to help lessen the stress and to come to an agreement for the benefit of our students, parents, and especially our teachers and administrators.

- ii. There was board consensus to send a letter

B. Eric Alden Comments

- i. Asked the board to think about a steering committee to consider the process for this building. IT has problem, - there is no parking and ADA access is poor. The town also needs new facilities for the Police, Fire and Ambulance departments. You need to start planning now.
- ii. On a personal note, he expressed his thanks to Brendan McNamara. Mr. Alden said that anytime he called Brendan McNamara, his door was always open. Brendan McNamara is the epitome of what a public servant should be.

18) Possible Items for Next Meeting: December 1, 2025

- A. No comments

19) Sign Warrant Orders

- A. Brendan McNamara said they have been signed

20) Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts/Legal Issues

- A. Brendan McNamara said an Executive Session is not needed.

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21) Adjourn

- A. **MOTION by Scott Baitz and seconded by George Tucker, Jr. to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Lisha Klaiber

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Brett Sanderson, Chairman

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Noah Schmidt

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Scott Baitz

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George Tucker, Jr.

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Justin Hyjek