

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Public Hearing

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2025
6:00 PM**

HEALD AUDITORIUM

Select Board - Zoom Link

<https://zoom.us/j/93976275682?pwd=a0tjNoOWu6GC8sDNJ3oBoM9gVn0Nt4.1>

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brett Sanderson, Chairman Noah Schmidt George Tucker, Jr.

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Scott Baitz Justin Hyjek

STAFF PRESENT:

Brendan McNamara Lisha Klaiber

OTHERS PRESENT:

George Abraham	Jay Lushinks	Alice Nitka
Judy Adams	Judy Lushinks	Ron Parry
Ron Bixby	Brian Martel	Shannon Stark
Sharon Bixby	John Martel	Jean Strong
Judy DeRosia	Nancy Martel	Kevin Winter
Victor DeRosia	Julie Nicoll	Lee Winter
Randy Ellison	Logan Nicoll	

Town and Village of Ludlow

Public Hearing Notice

Proposed Plan of Merger of the Town and Village of Ludlow, Vermont

**Wednesday September 17th, 2025, at 6:00pm
(Town of Ludlow)**

**Thursday September 18th, 2025, at 6:00pm
(Village of Ludlow)**

Hybrid Meetings - Heald Auditorium/Zoom

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §1484, notice is hereby given of a public hearing by The Town of Ludlow's Board of Selectman and Village Trustees to hear comments regarding a proposed plan of merger of the Town and Village of Ludlow, Vermont. Approval of the plan will result in charter changes in both the Town and Village.

The public hearings will take place on **Wednesday September 17th for the Town** of Ludlow and **Thursday September 18th for the Village** of Ludlow. **Meetings will begin at 6pm.** You may attend the Public Hearings in-person at the following address:

**Ludlow Town Hall
37 Depot Street
Ludlow, Vermont 05149**

or virtually on Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93976275682?pwd=a0tjNoOWu6GC8sDNJ3oBoM9gVn0Nt4.1>

Purpose of the Hearings: The purpose of each hearing is to take public comments regarding the proposed merger plan of the Town and Village of Ludlow. Written comments may also be submitted via email to Brendan McNamara, Ludlow's Town Manager at [Brendan McNamaranamara@ludlow.vt.us](mailto:Brendan.McNamaranamara@ludlow.vt.us)

Summary of the Plan of Merger for the Town and Village of Ludlow and Charter Changes: The Plan of Merger ("Plan") proposes that the Village of Ludlow merge into the Town of Ludlow, with the Town of Ludlow as the sole surviving municipal corporation. It establishes the name of the Town (Ludlow) and declares that all the former Village property, including that associated with the Electric Light Department and Sewer Plant, are transferred to the Town. The Town will assume all the former Village's debts and will perform all the former Village's duties and obligations owed to third parties. The Plan repeals the charters of both the Village and the Town and replaces them with the substance of the Plan as the charter for the Town. The Plan names the officers of the Town and their manner of election or appointment, the form of governance, the powers of the Selectboard, the establishment and organization of the Water and Sewer Board, the governance and operation of the Electric Department and authority of its Board, transitional provisions, and other matters related to the proposed merger and legal operation of the Town thereafter.

Material Available: The proposed plan of merger and resulting charter changes, and supporting documentation are available online at <https://www.ludlow.vt.us>. An official copy of the plan of merger and charter changes is on file for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office in the Ludlow Town Hall located at 37 Depot Street, Ludlow, VT 05149. Copies thereof will be made available to members of the public upon request.

I. Call to Order

1. Brett Sanderson opened the public hearing at 6:00 p.m. He led the Pledge of Allegiance

II. CONSIDERATIONS OF ANY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR REMOVAL TO THE AGENDA

1. Brett Sanderson noted that no changes are needed

III. DISCUSSION

1. Brendan McNamara said this is the first of 4 public hearings, 2 for the Town and 2 for the Village. October 1, 2025 will be the second for the Town. He said that last year the Town Select Board and Village Trustees put together the Proposed Plan of Merger of the Town and Village of Ludlow, Vermont. He said they formed a committee comprised of members from the Select Board, the Trustees, members of the public and Town Counsel. On May 13th, they held the first joint public meeting to receive questions, comments and input from the public. This document was created and copies are available online and hard copies are here tonight. Parts of document are guided by statute. Tonight's hearing is to gather information and answer questions. Tonight, is not for debates and no decisions will be made. All comments will be referred back to the committee and any changes will be added for the next public hearing.
2. Randy Ellison asked what the benefits would be if the Town and Village do merge. He said he is not against going forward, but what are the benefits. Will this save the Town money and will it be equal.
3. George Tucker, Jr. said yes, it will save money. One example would be internal administrative costs and double paperwork, money moving between the Town and Village. This also adds to time for staff. He said another example is the Class 2 paving last year of the Access Road. He said the ¼ at the bottom of the road is in the Village, while the top part is in the Town. The Town received a grant for paving because the Town had higher priority for grants. The Village was lower in priority and did not get funding. The Village also did not receive funding with this year's funding cycle. The Village used ARPA funds to pave their portion of the Access Road. He added that FEMA also treats the Town and Village differently.
4. Brendan McNamara said that when this is done, financially it will be a wash. The Village's budget will be incorporated into the Town's budget. It may increase the Town by 1¢, but when the Grand List increases, that will go away. People will not really notice any difference. There is now administrative redundancy, and this will streamline the process. He said that FEMA deals with the Town and Village separately and does not correlate them together. There will be no financial burden or hindrance, and this is in the best interest of the Town.
5. Randy Ellison agreed. He asked if there is any tax advantage and does the Town pay more.
6. Brendan McNamara said there are different tax rates and this will level the playing field. He said the Village budget is small. He said that people who are not on the Wastewater system don't pay for it. Only people on the system pay for it.
7. Randy Ellison asked who would benefit more. He also asked about the reference to the Town taking over the debt of the Village.
8. Brendan McNamara said he spoke to Ulla Cook and she said that verbiage had to be included per state statute. He added that the Village has no debt.
9. Alice Nitka said that she is concerned. She said that we need more people involved in Town government and there would be fewer people making major decisions. She said she is concerned about the Electric Department and Water/Wastewater. She said that Ludlow Electric has the lowest rates in the State and she would hate to rock that boat. She said that people in the Village can hook onto the sewer and people in the Town can't. She asked if the plant has the capacity to hook on more houses. She asked if people in the Lakes District would be able to hook onto the sewer. What is the capacity. She is concerned that there will be too much power for one board.
10. Logan Nicoll said that he was on the committee and for a long time – has been in favor of this merger. It is currently operationally inefficient and extra paperwork. He said that the Electric

Department is a separate entity, and rates are dependent on its costs as well as how much it pays for power. The merger will have little or no effect on the Electric department. He said that the Electric Department board has asked to increase the number of board members from 3 to 5 and also to have representatives from Cavendish, and Plymouth. They receive service but have no representation. This increase would not be possible unless the merger happens. He said that the Wastewater and Water are also separate, and people only pay for services they receive. He said that there are people in the Village who are not hooked onto the sewer but are on water. OR, not on water, but on the sewer. Some on both and some on neither. He added that people in the Village pay for Village taxes as well as Town taxes. He said the Electric Department covers all of the Village, but not all of the Town, but it also covers part of Cavendish, Plymouth and Mount Holly. He said that at Town meeting this year, only about 30 people attended to vote and for the Village meeting only about 5 people attended. People don't exercise their rights to vote. He said that he, as a Village resident, will not losing anything if the Town and Village do merge.

11. Noah Schmidt asked what the next steps are.
12. Brendan McNamara said tomorrow night, the Village will hold its first public hearing. The next Select Board public hearing will be on October 1st and we will revisit this with any comments received tonight. On October 2nd, the Village will hold its second public hearing. If both boards decide to move forward, we will have a Town/Village vote on October 21, 2025. He added that residents of the Village will vote once for the Town and again for the Village. He said if people have any questions or comments to call or email him and those comments will be entered into the record.

IV. ADJOURN

1. **MOTION by George Tucker, Jr. and seconded by Noah Schmidt to close this public hearing. Motion passed unanimously.**
2. Public hearing closed at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Brett Sanderson, Chairman

Noah Schmidt

Scott Baitz

George Tucker, Jr.

Justin Hyjek