

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF MADISON
December 9, 2025
MINUTES**

Selectmen Present – Adam Price; Joy Gray; Jim Eldridge; Jake Boewe; Nicole Nordlund

Others Present – Town Administrator Linda Shackford; Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Fire Chief Michael Brooks; Videographer Evan Woss

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on December 16, 2024.

Meeting Called to Order – By Price at 4:30 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance - Price led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Boewe, seconded by Eldridge to approve the minutes of November 19, 2025 as written. The motion passed **5-0**.

Motion by Boewe, seconded by Eldridge to approve the minutes of November 25, 2025 as amended. The motion passed **5-0**.

APPROVAL OF MANIFESTS: Price read aloud the Manifest of December 8-15, 2025 in the amount of \$1,366,592.32 The manifest breakdown is as follows: \$46,557.14 for payroll; \$14,300.64 for payroll liabilities; \$129,655.543 for accounts payable; \$851,079.00 for Carrol County; and \$325,000 for Madison School District.

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Boewe to approve the manifest. The motion passed **5-0**.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none

DISCUSSION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS:

"Dodier Knoll" US Board of Geographic Names:

The Board reviewed a proposal from the US Board of Geographic Names to name a currently undesignated knoll off East Madison Road as "Dodier Knoll." The knoll is located on the left side of East Madison Road just before Goe Hill Road. The family that owns the property has requested to name the landmark after Raymond Ralph Dodier Sr.

Price noted that the Board was being asked to either object to the name, approve it, or express no opinion. He pointed out that the person being honored has not lived in Madison or had a significant impact on our community, though the family does own the property.

After discussion, the Board learned that the son of Mr. Dodier built a new house on the property, and the grandson making the application is an abutter. The Board members expressed varying

opinions on the matter, with some having no objection given that the family owns the property, and others questioning the connection to Madison.

Motion by Price, seconded by Eldridge, to mark the response as "no opinion" regarding the naming of Dodier Knoll. The motion passed **5-0**.

Policies per 11/19 Meeting:

The Board discussed the purchasing policy. Selectman Gray reported that the Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) had reviewed the policy and drafted revision. She indicated she had forwarded these to the CIC members for review at their next meeting, after which they would present any proposed changes to the Selectboard. The Board agreed to defer discussion of this item until after the CIP committee meeting.

Outfit Grant Truck with Plow:

Chairman Price presented three quotes for outfitting the grant truck with a plow and body: Viking, Allied, and HP Fairfield. He explained that while HP Fairfield's quote initially appeared to be the most expensive at \$156,999, they offered an Everest brand option at \$134,788, which was significantly cheaper than the other quotes. The DPW Director recommends the HP Fairfield option with the Everest brand equipment, noting that it was equivalent to the Swenson brand but less expensive.

There was discussion about the configuration of the truck, with Selectman Gray asking why a dump body was being added. Chairman Price and Selectman Boewe explained that the truck would have a spreader body, eliminating the need for a separate sander and making it a multi-purpose vehicle.

Selectman Gray raised a point about the Town's Purchasing Policy, which requires sealed bids for purchases over \$15,000. The Board clarified that while quotes were obtained, the intent of the policy, which is preventing bidders from seeing each other's quotes, had been met.

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Boewe, to sign the HP Fairfield sales quote for \$134,788 with the Everest option for outfitting the grant truck. The motion passed **5-0**.

Madison Energy Project Working Group Analysis:

The Board reviewed an analysis from the Madison Energy Project Working Group regarding the potential purchase of solar panels. The group recommended against purchasing the panels at the current offered price, suggesting instead to continue using them under the current arrangement and to reconsider purchase if the price decreases in the future.

The Board discussed concerns about eventual disposal of the panels, noting that they can be an environmental challenge to dispose of properly. They also noted that if they don't purchase the panels, the company would be contractually obligated to remove them at the end of the contract.

The Board was in agreement with the working group's recommendation not to purchase the panels at this time. Shackford will inform Blue Haven Solar of the decision.

Gray added that the Energy Project Working Group would like to see a Capital Reserve Fund set up to set aside funds for the Town's future energy needs.

Request for Relief of Interest and Penalties:

The Board discussed a request from a property owner on East Shore Drive seeking relief from interest and penalties on their tax bill. The current bill was \$8,118, which was 64% higher than their June tax bill of \$4,947. The property owner requested to pay the same amount as their June

bill by the December 31 due date, with the balance of \$3,171 to be paid by March 31, 2026, without penalties or interest.

A lengthy discussion ensued about the implications of granting such a request. Tax Collector Brooks pointed out that this would interfere with the lien process, which begins with notices in March. Board members expressed concerns that approving this request could lead to numerous similar requests, potentially affecting the Town's cash flow and ability to operate.

While some members were sympathetic to helping taxpayers, particularly given the significant increases some properties experienced due to revaluation, the majority felt that making an exception would set a problematic precedent.

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Boewe, to deny the request for relief of interest and penalties. The motion passed **5-0**.

The Board agreed to respond to the property owner to inform them of the decision and suggest they reach out to the Tax Collector for additional information on their options.

Town Council opinion about the Personnel Policy for Town of Madison Property:

The Board reviewed Attorney Johnston's opinion regarding the Town's Personnel Policy for Town of Madison Property, particularly concerning the liability of use of town equipment by employees.

Chairman Price proposed leaving the policy in place but implement a waiver to release the town of liability, noting every job comes with its perks and that we have a policy that allows them to borrow equipment from the town. Boewe seconded, indicating the waiver was a great idea.

Gray reported that she had spoken directly to Attorney Johnston regarding the legality of the personal use of town property, and according to her conversation with Attorney Johnston, based on New Hampshire constitution and case law, public funds cannot be used for private gain. She explained that Attorney Johnston had provided examples: incidental use, such as a code enforcement officer picking up milk on the way home from a job site, would be allowable; DPW drivers taking trucks home before a storm would be acceptable; but plowing one's own driveway with a Town truck after a storm would not be acceptable as it constitutes public use of funds for private benefit.

Chairman Price proposed taking vehicles out of the equation and that it was not use of public funds to borrow a hammer drill. Gray noted that is using something taxpayers paid for, public funds, to purchase a piece of equipment for public use and they did not pay for this to used privately, whether by an employee or resident of the town. Gray also noted that case law has required reimbursement to the town. Price asked who has complained. Gray responded that people has asked not to be named for fear of retribution. Nordlund concurred, noting she has asked people to email her, and they have responded "Absolutely not" because they fear retribution from people that work for the town. Price responded that he was not comfortable pursuing a complaint without the complainant being named. Nordlund noted that she thinks it's out job to look into it, and that she's heard that people in town should be fired, but if they can't put it in writing, she can't bring it to the board.

Gray also mentioned specific incidents, including the use of transfer station equipment to deliver crushed glass to a private residence and the use of a roll-off truck to deliver a container to an employee's property for construction debris.

Chairman Price indicated the delivery of crushed glass saved the town money, while Gray asked if that outweighed the benefit to the one.

Chairman Price expressed interest in receiving Cordell's opinion in writing before making any policy changes, saying there are certain perks to certain jobs, and that it's wild to him to treat our employees that way. Gray noted that you don't get perks when it's public funds.

He suggested that if the current policy violates the law, it would need to be changed, but he wanted to see the legality clearly established first and research the use of a waiver.

Boewe added that everything that's happened in the past has already happened, and we move forward.

The Board also discussed the current policy's requirement for written authorization from department heads and notification to the Board of Selectmen for equipment use, noting that Shackford had been asked to provide copies of these authorizations but did not have any on file.

Price noted he can attest to receiving notification by phone call, and that written authorization could be something you give to the employee to have on hand. Gray noted that for the most recent incident, she believed all five current members of the board of selectmen at the time, but she has not received any notifications.

The Board agreed to have Shackford reach out to Attorney Johnston for a written opinion before taking further action.

Request of Trustees of Trust Funds:

The Board reviewed five requests for withdrawals from various trust funds. It was recommended that in the future to have the balance of the ETF/CRF available with the requests.

Short Term Rental Legal Expense ETF:

Motion by Price, seconded by Eldridge to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Funds for \$7,210.24 from the Short-Term Rental Legal Expense Expendable Trust Fund to reimburse the general fund for the legal expenses incurred defending or enforcing the Zoning Ordinance in respect to Short-Term Rentals. The motion passed **5-0**.

Highway Heavy Equipment ETF:

Motion by Price, seconded by Eldridge to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Funds for \$7,757.15 from the Highway Heavy Equipment ETF to reimburse the general fund for expenses incurred for repairs to truck #14 by Hilton's Heavy Equipment. The motion passed **5-0**.

Assessing ETF:

Motion by Adam, seconded by Jim, to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Fund from the Assessing Expendable Trust Fund in the amount of \$18,121.00. This will reimburse the general fund for payments made related to the 2025 Revaluation Contact with Avitar Associates. The motion passed **5-0**.

Land Acquisition and Conservation Purposes CRF:

Motion by Price, seconded by Boewe to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Funds for \$1,121 from the Land Acquisition and Conservation Purposed CRF to reimburse the general fund for legal expenses incurred regarding the acquisition of the Chain of Pond Conservation Easement. The motion passed **4-0-1** with Gray abstained from this vote as she had a question about the legal expenses.

Ball Field ETF:

Motion by Price, seconded by Boewe to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Funds from the Ballfield ETF in the amount of \$11,232.27. This will reimburse the general fund for payment made for the purpose of rehabilitating Burke Field. It was noted that after this withdrawal, approximately \$29,000 would remain in the fund with Price listing some more improvements.

Rec Volunteer – Olds and Snyder

The Board reviewed volunteer applications from Christopher Olds and Gordon Snyder, who were looking to organize pickleball at the school under the Recreation Department umbrella. The Board discussed the need for background checks for these volunteers since they would be working with the public unsupervised. Price requested that Heather be reminded to inform the volunteers about completing the background checks.

Motion by Price, seconded by Gray to approve Christopher Olds and Gordon Snyder as recreation volunteers. The motion passed **5-0**.

2026 Preliminary Budget:

The Board received the preliminary 2026 budget but decided to wait until the next meeting for discussion to allow members more time to review it line by line.

Silver Lake Landing PILOT:

The Board was informed that Silver Lake Landing had agreed to the 7.5% Payment in Lieu of Taxes that the Town had suggested. A new agreement was being drafted by the Gibson Center's Smolen and would be presented to the Board in the near future.

Trash Container:

The Board discussed the potential purchase of a trash container to replace the current dumpster rental. Gray expressed concerns about spending \$6,000 on a new container without adequate documentation of need and justification.

Chairman Price explained that the current rental costs about \$3,000 per year, meaning the purchase would pay for itself in two years. He noted that the container would serve multiple purposes, including use at the Town Hall and as an auxiliary container for the Transfer Station when needed.

After discussion, the Board agreed to seek additional quotes for the container and to use the capital improvement proposal form to properly document the purchase request.

Meeting with School Board January 6th:

The Board confirmed a joint meeting with the School Board scheduled for January 6th at 6:00 PM at the Town Hall. This would follow the regular Select Board meeting and would allow for updates and discussion on matters of mutual interest.

SELECTMEN LISTS:

Selectman Nordlund reported that:

- The Conservation Commission would be requesting \$5,000 for their annual contribution to the CRF.
- She had attended CIP meetings and was interested in calculating the cost per mile for road maintenance to have better data for budgeting and potential comparison if services were ever contracted out.
- She had reached out to Senator and Executive Councilman Kenny regarding grants for an elevator to provide handicap access to the Town Hall's upstairs.
- She had been contacted by Bill Lord and others regarding the Silver Lake Dam, including a retired engineer willing to help with the project.

Selectman Gray reported that:

- The CIC had passed a motion recommending that the Road CIP continue to be used; and they were requesting a work plan for the proposed \$1.5 million bond.
- She had forwarded the PFAS POET's design specification and information to Brooks and Shackford.
- The committee was ranking projects by priority, with the Town Hall porches being designated as priority 1 to be addressed in 2026, vinyl siding as priority 2, and rehabilitation of the second floor also as priority 2 targeted for 2028.
- Shackford has reached out to obtained quotes for the porch repairs.
- Gray would like consideration made to the needs of the police department and MadTV related to space.

Selectman Eldridge had nothing to report.

Chairman Price reported on several items:

- Regarding chairs from the school, the school had purchased new plastic chairs and offered to give the town their metal chairs without cushions, primarily for Old Home Week use. The Board agreed to ask Josh if there was storage space available.
- The ballfield project was on hold until spring. The material had been screened, but snow prevented completion of the work.
- The property on East Shore Drive that had been considered for Town acquisition had received an offer from an abutter, so the Town would not be acquiring it at this time.
- The Planning Board was working on zoning updates to conform with state ADU requirements, with a public hearing scheduled for January 7th at 7:00 PM.

Selectman Boewe reported:

- The ABC committee did not meet because of the snowstorm on December 2nd.
- He made a plea for townspeople to continue to reach out with concerns without fear of repercussions, noting that the Board cannot address issues they don't know about. He emphasized that any retaliation from town employees would be handled appropriately.

Gray brought up feedback she received from the November 19th meeting, expressing concerns that a comment made by the public was advising caution about what attendees say, as it might be deemed insulting to an employee, was not well-received. Multiple attendees had expressed feeling as though there was an attempt to silence them. Gray emphasized that while maintaining civility is important, members of the public attending the meeting have the right to voice their opinions freely, as long as it doesn't disrupt the meeting. She noted that this incident contributed to a perception that people were being discouraged from speaking freely, which should have been addressed at the time.

ADMINISTRATOR LIST:

Shackford addressed the request from Selectman Gray for detailed employee information for reviews that included date of hire, title, wages at time of hire and current, and several YTD categories. Shackford would compile this data for the Board.

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S LISTS:

Tax Collector/Town Clerk/ Fire Chief Michael Brooks reported that tax collection was progressing well after 2.5 weeks, with about 18% of the most recent bill collected, representing almost 55% of the total 2025 commitment.

- He also mentioned that he would contact DES about the PFAS remediation project to see if they could move forward with the residential point-of-entry treatment systems while waiting for a month's worth of data from the Town's flow meter.
- Brooks noted that he had delivered the tank truck for pump improvements, which had been funded by encumbered money from last year's budget. He expected the work to be completed before December 31st.
- Finally, he reported that the Fire Department was already 10 calls ahead of last year's total.

SIGNATURE ITEMS:

Manifest

Payroll & Accounts Payable Checks

Current Use Application 247-034-00

Solar Exemption: Dame 256-010

Veteran Credit: Neal 229-026-001

Hill 204-007

Fisher 113-038

Land Use Change Tax: Dodier 247-004

2026 HealthTrust Benefit Renewal

COBRA/Retiree Rates and Plan Design

HRA Plan Adoption Agreement

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Gray to adjourn. The motion passed **5-0**.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50pm.

NEXT SELECTMEN'S MEETING – The next Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 23, 2025 commencing at 4:30 pm at Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator