

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF MADISON
January 20, 2026
MINUTES**

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

Others Present – Town Administrator Linda Shackford; Admin Asst/Land Use Admin Kate Young; Chief Jim Hayford; Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Fire Chief Michael Brooks; DPW crew members Dylan Eldridge, Justin Chick, Dave Swift, Bill Cherry and John Arruda; Videographer Lauren Woss

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on December 16, 2025.

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 Eldridge seconded by Boewe to approve the non-public minutes made public of December 23, 2025 as written. The motion passed **5-0**.

Nordlund mentioned that there was an omission in the minutes of January 6, 2026 regarding an investigation for public/private use of public equipment that was brought up by Sharon Schilling and another person at the 30-minute mark of the January 6 meeting. There had been discussion about having an answer at the next meeting, which wasn't reflected in the minutes. The Board agreed to have Shackford review the video and add this information and to bring the approval of these minutes back to the next meeting.

Motion by Eldridge seconded by Boewe to approve both sets of non-public minutes made public of January 6, 2026 as written. The motion passed **5-0**.

APPROVAL OF MANIFESTS:

Price read aloud the Manifest totals of December 31, 2025 in the amount of \$80,633.78 for accounts payable.

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Boewe to approve the manifest. The motion passed **4-1**.

Price read aloud the Manifest totals of January 20-26, 2026 in the amount of \$442,535.20. The manifest breakdown is as follows: \$44,502.47 for payroll; \$13,133.22 for payroll liabilities; \$32,620.13 for accounts payable; \$27,279.38 for NHRS; and \$325,000 for Madison School District.

Motion by Boewe, seconded by Eldridge to approve the manifest. The motion passed **4-1**.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Jesse Shackford III identified himself as a third-generation Madison resident. He mentioned that Sharon Schilling and David Scarbough had previously asked about an investigation into personal use of town equipment and wanted an update on its status. He also expressed concerns about

deteriorating road work quality in town, noting that in the past the town had equipment and would hire his company to do betterment work.

Joe Dame from the Madison Advisory Budget Committee reported that he had proposed limiting budget increases to 2.8%, aligned with the COLA increase for seniors. He noted the current proposed budget increase of 6.6% was too high, especially considering that seniors on fixed incomes only receive a 2.8% COLA increase, which is further reduced by Medicare increases. He suggested aiming for a budget closer to 1.9% after accounting for these factors.

Sharon Schilling read a statement regarding personal use of town property. She strongly criticized the practice, citing municipal budget law, the NH constitution, and risk management principles. She specifically called out Price and Boewe for defending personal use of taxpayer property as a reasonable perk and requested they recuse themselves from the investigation.

Price responded that they are looking into having Primex, the town's insurance company, handle the investigation as a third-party objective organization.

Brian Taylor, a state representative, alerted the Board to pending House Bill 488 addressing conflicts of interest for appointed and elected officials. He expressed concern that it would create problems for small towns where officials sometimes hold multiple positions, such as Madison's elected official who also serves as Fire Chief. He left copies of the bill for the Board's review.

Dave Scarborough requested that the investigation into personal use of town property be added to the agenda for every meeting until it's resolved, and asked for more information about the investigating company. Price confirmed it would remain on the agenda as old business until resolved.

PILOT with David Smolen of Silver Lake Landing:

David Smolen discussed the payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement with the Town. He explained that Silver Lake Landing is run on a tight budget, and they appreciate the Town's support. The agreement had been modified from 10% to 7.5%. Smolen responded to Gray with assurance that there were no other wording changes made in the agreement.

Smolen shared that they are pursuing an AARP challenge grant of \$12,000-\$15,000 to fund engineering work that would explore converting existing space into two additional housing units, potentially increasing from 19 to 21 units. He mentioned they have a 50-person waiting list.

Motion by Gray, seconded by Eldridge to approve the PILOT agreement. The motion carried **5-0**.

Historical Society Request for Payment of Invoices from ETF:

Nancy Martin of the Historical Society explained the two invoices for which they sought reimbursement from the Expendable Trust Fund.

The first involved electrical work that expanded when the electrician discovered old knob-and-tube wiring that needed upgrading to code. The second involved chimney work - they repaired one chimney for a Glenwood stove in the kitchen, and while inspecting the roof, discovered a second unused chimney was falling apart and needed to be removed down to roof level, with the roof insulated and patched.

The Board agreed to process the paperwork for the next meeting to approve reimbursement of approximately \$6,350 from the Historical Society Building Improvement ETF, which currently has about \$15,000 in it. Shackford will be given proof of payment of the invoices by the Historical Society to meet the reimbursement criteria.

Appoint Jessica Marquis as a Rec Volunteer:

The Board reviewed a volunteer appointment for Jessica Marquis to serve as a volunteer with the recreation department. It was clarified that Rec Director O'Donnell was looking for help during vacation fun days and had approved this volunteer's appointment.

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Nordlund to approve the volunteer appointment pending background check. Motion carried 4-0-1 Price abstained as Marquis is his girlfriend.

Support for Albany regarding NH Route 16 and 113 Intersection

The Board discussed signing another letter of support for the Town of Albany regarding safety improvements to the Route 16 and 113 intersection. This was similar to a letter previously sent, but specifically focusing on this particular intersection. The Board agreed to sign the letter after minor grammatical corrections were made.

Motion by Gray, seconded by Eldridge to sign the letter of support with amendments to correct plural references. The motion passed **5-0**.

Motion by Eldridge, seconded by Boewe to sign the letter out of session after edits are made. The motion passed **5-0**.

Discussion of Personnel Policy: Town of Madison Property:

The Board reviewed a proposed update to the personnel policy regarding town property. Suggested new language from Town Counsel was read aloud by Price:

Personal use of Town of Madison property is prohibited, except for incidental use. "Incidental use" means brief, occasional personal use during the course of authorized official use that does not detract from the employee's work obligations or result in additional expense to the Town, such as checking personal email from a Town-owned computer while on a permitted break or stopping to perform a personal errand while driving to or from work in a Town-owned vehicle. It does not include any use outside of working or commuting hours unless specifically authorized by the Department Head. Under no circumstances may Town property be removed from the Town's premises solely for personal use.

Nordlund did not love or hate the suggested wording. Gray suggested two amendments: (1) changing authorization from "department head" to "Board of Selectmen" and (2) removing the word "solely" from the final sentence as it seemed contradictory. The Board agreed to these changes and will vote on the updated policy at the next meeting.

Discussion of DRAFT Purchasing Policy Changes:

Gray reported she had started making the edits to the purchasing policy made at the last meeting but needed more time due to the complexity of tracking changes. She will present the revised policy at the next meeting.

2026 DRAFT Budget:

The Board conducted a line-by-line review of the draft budget, which showed a 6.5% increase. They made several reductions:

DPW Administration:

Transfer Station Attendant John Arruda spoke to the need for additional help at the Transfer Station. The addition of 16 hours per week for 4 hours per day would allow for better monitoring and collection of tipping fees. Arruda hopes the Board will give some consideration to hiring another person to fill the third position that was never filled from when a part-timer left in 2024. Arruda noted that when he was hired it was for manning the guard shack and the prerequisite for the job of lifting 75lbs is a fallacy.

Arruda stated that \$92,493 in revenue was generated at the Transfer Station in 2025 adding that it may be time to look into charging for facility stickers.

Eldridge fears that no one would be interested in a 16 hours/week position with Nordlund not agreeing with that assumption.

Nordlund suggested that cameras could assist in catching license plates of people who skip out on tipping fees.

Michael Veilleux feels that mandatory recycling could be a potential revenue source.

The Board agreed to reduce the part-time line by \$20,000 as the Board felt they could not support adding a part-time position at the Transfer Station as other DPW personnel could cover.

Signs: Reduced from \$3,000 to \$2,500.

Vehicle repairs: Reduced by \$10,000, maintaining at \$50,000 instead of increasing to \$60,000 noting there are funds in the Highway Heavy Equipment ETF.

Parks & Rec:

General Maintenance: Reduced from \$650 to \$500

Lake Monitoring: Reduced from \$700 to \$1 – SLAM does water testing.

Fire Department:

Citing consistent amounts being returned at the end of each year, Gray suggested a \$50,000 cut in the 2026 proposed budget. Receiving little support Gray suggested \$30,000 which was amended to \$15,000 by Boewe with enough support to ask Chief Brooks to amend lines in his budget to reflect this reduction.

General Government Buildings:

Fuel: Reduced from \$80,000 to \$76,000

Heat: Reduced from \$18,000 to \$15,000

Town Projects: Reduced from \$25,000 to \$20,000

Library: Jarell is looking into a \$250 cut in the maintenance line with the approval of the Trustees.

Zoning Board: Suggested a reduction from \$30,000 to \$25,000 for legal expenses which Schilling will present to the ZBA at tomorrow night's meeting.

After significant discussion, the Board agreed to implement a 3% wage pool for employee raises rather than across-the-board increases, with department heads to make recommendations to the Board for increases based on performance reviews. Shackford will gather the base wage numbers for the Board's review.

The Board noted that even with the 6.6% increase in the operating budget, when including all warrant articles, the overall budget increase was only 1.39%, which would be further reduced by the cuts made during this meeting.

2026 DRAFT Warrant:

The Board reviewed the draft warrant articles. They discussed an article for the police department software acquisition and implementation, ultimately deciding to handle this through the operating

budget rather than creating a separate ETF, as Chief Hayford explained it was a 5-year payment plan with no financing charges.

Letter to Employees for PFAS Blood Tests:

The Board reviewed a letter offering PFAS blood tests to employees. Town Counsel has reviewed and approved the letter.

Motion by Gray, seconded by Boewe to send the letter to employees. The motion carried **5-0**.

SELECTMEN'S LISTS:

Selectman Nordlund had no items.

Selectman Gray asked Shackford if the quarterly report for the Granite State Clean Fleet Grant was submitted. Shackford stated it had and she will place a copy in their correspondence box. Gray also mentioned the filing period for Town Officers would open the next day through January 30th, with Town Hall open 3-5 PM on Friday the 30th to accept Declarations of Candidacy forms.

Selectman Eldridge mentioned an upcoming Master Plan meeting scheduled for March 28th from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the school, where North Country Council would hold a community workshop to gather input.

Selectman Price had no items.

Selectman Boewe reminded all that the ABC will hold a meeting next Tuesday night at 6:00pm.

Administrator Shackford has requested department heads to submit their reports by January 29th with Price offering to work with Shackford on the Selectmen's report. Gray offered support to Young by supporting the need for Land Use Board chairmen to do their reports, not her.

Admin Asst/Land Use Administrator Young had no items.

Acting DPW Director Dylan Elridge had two questions addressed by the Board:

1. The Board confirmed employees may park personal vehicles inside the garage temporarily while plowing is being done.
2. They discussed a policy for offering ditching materials to residents near work sites, agreeing that providing material to nearby residents when it saves trucking time and expenses makes sense, especially when the alternative is bringing it back to the garage where it might just sit unused. Eldridge will offer the materials through the published two-week work plan on a first come, first served basis; the plan will begin on February 17th.
3. The Board confirmed that the Transfer Station Attendants are not to use a machine to assist patrons to empty their trailers.

Justin Chick mentioned the UNH T2 road presentation scheduled for the following day at 5:00 PM in the Chick Room.

Price allowed a second public comment from Donna Veilleux, who thanked the Board for their diligent budget work. Veilleux also asked the Board to encourage people to come in from the hall during meetings and requested they consider using an old format in the Town Report that would show employee positions with all associated costs, including health insurance benefits.

Supervisor of the Checklist Cheryl Brooks announced they are present to accept application for those would like to register to vote.

7:23 Motion by Price, seconded by Eldridge to enter into **Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3II (c)** Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

Gray - aye, Nordlund - aye, Eldridge – aye, Boewe- aye; Price – aye

7:34 PM Motion by Boewe, seconded by Eldridge to return to public session and seal the minutes under **Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3II (c)** Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

Gray - aye, Nordlund - aye, Eldridge – aye, Boewe- aye; Price – aye

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm.

NEXT SELECTMEN’S MEETING – The next Selectmen’s meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 3, 2026 commencing at 4:30 pm at Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator