

04-20-2026 Selectboard Meeting

Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2026, 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Call to Order

Aimee Cochran called the meeting of the Grand Isle Select Board to order at 6:00 PM on April 20, 2026. Board members present included Ron Bushway, Aimee Cochran, and Ellen Howrigan. Board member Jennifer Morway participated via Zoom. Community members present were Colleen Bushway Scott Molyneaux, and Sara Santor. Community members via Zoom included Sue Lawrence, Lynda Morgan-Gardiner, Esther Blow, Kaitlyn Carney, and Emily Clarke.

Amend Agenda for Matters NOT Listed

Aimee asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Ellen indicated she wanted to add discussion about the safety team to the agenda under old business.

Public Comment

Jennifer thanked everyone who came to the library groundbreaking and specifically thanked Sara Santor for all of her help getting everything organized, expressing that they really appreciated it.

Review and Approve Minutes

Aimee called for review and approval of the minutes from April 6, 2026.

Motion: Ellen Howrigan moved to approve the minutes from April 6, 2026 with corrections. Ron Bushway seconded the motion. After discussion, all voted in favor.

Guests

Scott Molyneaux, Farm to Fork Fondo Cycling Events – July 12 event

Scott Molyneaux introduced himself, explaining that he was from Farm to Fork Fondo Events and they were looking to host a cycling event on July 12 at the Snow Farm Vineyard. He noted they had operated this event last year as well and were planning to have around 150 riders this year, which was fewer than the approximately 200 riders they had last year.

Scott emphasized that this was not a race but a casual ride, with the point being to support and visit local farms in the areas where they have rides. It was an at-your-own-pace ride where everyone was supposed to get a safety brief before riding, following rules of the road and traffic laws, stopping at intersections and stop signs.

He detailed the multiple layers of safety involved for the event, including safety briefings, color-coded route marking according to group and distance chosen, route marshals on bikes during the rides, and coordination with Sheriff Ray Allen for traffic control on West Shore and Route 314, which Allen had identified as the area of concern affecting all riders at the beginning of the ride.

The route would start in South Hero, go as far up as Isle La Motte to visit St. Anne's Shrine, then back down, crossing Route 2 a couple times with short sections on Route 2, then off on East Shore, West Shore, South

Shore, and making their way back to South Hero, ending at Allenholm Farm and then the last few miles back to Snow Farm.

Scott mentioned that everyone would have a number bib on their chest and back so people could differentiate between event participants and casual riders, since they knew the area was great for cycling. If anyone was seen violating traffic rules like running through stop signs or intersections while wearing a number, he hoped someone would report it back to them or the sheriff. He noted they had zero incidents last year with everyone complying and participating well.

When asked about how many years they had done this, Scott explained that the company had been in existence for 12 years, he had been working with the previous owner for the last 5 years, and they had been in South Hero for probably the last 4 years. Ellen noted that the first year had a lot more people which created issues, but last year with 200 people spread out was fine and not a massive crowd. Scott agreed, mentioning he had worked an event with 800 riders which was outrageous.

Aimee asked if they needed anything from the town besides approval, and whether insurance was required. Scott indicated he had insurance if the town needed to see a copy of it, which was sometimes required by some venues but not others. He noted they didn't require it last year but could certainly provide it, and that it was an insurance-covered event required for every person participating.

Jennifer also asked if they put out event warnings a couple days before. Scott explained they had signs saying "caution cycling event today" that they put up usually along different crossings of Route 2 to alert drivers, but they were only up the day before the event, maybe two days before.

Ellen suggested it would be good to get the final route maps so they could post them so people would know, perhaps on the town website, so people would know what the route was if they were hauling something. Scott agreed this was a good idea. Ellen noted that while it was on a Sunday so there wouldn't be as much traffic, hopefully it would go fine.

Motion: Ron made a motion that on July 12, they allow the Farm to Fork Fondo cycling event. Ellen seconded the motion. After discussion where Ellen noted she wasn't sure they even needed a motion but they had one anyway, all voted in favor.

Review and Sign Warrants

Motion: Ellen Howrigan made a motion to approve the warrants and payroll. Ron Bushway seconded. During discussion, Ellen revised the motion to be just the warrants because she had already done payroll and the others had not seen it. Jennifer Morway noted she was abstaining from the warrant vote. All in favor voted aye, with Jennifer abstaining.

Financials

Melissa Boutin mentioned regarding financials that the CDs that matured were rolled over into a midterm CD, and the one that was matured was cashed out for reappraisal in the form of a check. The check was received today and it had been deposited into the account but was earmarked for reappraisal.

Highway Department Update

Ron provided the highway department update based on information from Steve. He noted they had cleaned up most of the lawns at all town properties from snowplow damage. The plows were painted on trucks number 1 and 2. They had been hauling gravel to their own stockpile. There had been a lot of work at the transfer station cutting trees, moving jersey barriers, and moving compost.

They had trimmed trees at the library across the road and graveled the parking area. The excavator had a problem with the diesel exhaust fluid, which Steve estimated would cost about \$3,000, though they hadn't received the bill yet. They were working on the trailer to haul the excavator.

Ron mentioned that a Viking salesman had come in - Viking being the manufacturer for their plows for dump trucks. He clarified this wasn't Viking stoves when there was some confusion. If they were planning on buying a truck and wanted to put a Viking plow on it, it would be 2 to 3 years out to get the plow on a new truck, though it would take about 2 years to get a new truck anyway. They had a contract available to sign to get on the list, which was non-binding, meaning if they didn't buy a truck, they wouldn't need the plow. Aimee asked if it locked them into a better price, and Ron said no, but noted it was something to discuss in the future about buying a truck.

Ron mentioned that on May 23rd they would have a free metal dump day event, though he hadn't posted it on Front Porch Forum yet.

Buildings Facilities Manager Update

Ron reported they had an issue with the library furnace burners, which were shot. Howard DeMars was working on an estimate to replace the burners. Ron asked Jennifer if there was any grant money available, wondering if MERP would cover it.

Jennifer responded they could ask because there might be a little extra money, but MERP would want it converted to something very high efficiency, so she would need to present those options to them. She noted that MERP didn't want any more propane unless it was a hybrid system, so they would be more apt to put money into heat pumps or similar systems, as they were supposed to be stepping away from propane. She mentioned it might be a tough sale unless it was a hybrid furnace, which would cost a lot of money as they had seen.

Ron noted the furnace wasn't very new and had been in there for quite a while, probably from when Colleen was still librarian, so it was probably several years old and should be upgraded rather than putting a lot of money into the old one.

For buildings, Ron was waiting for one estimate from MEI Electric for LED lights in the old library. Once he received that, he could hand over all the grant paperwork to Jennifer.

Library Update

Soffit change

Jennifer reported that the ice shield was on the roof, with the contractor returning later to put on the real roof. Bernie Gage had started his work on Friday and returned on Monday. MEI would be doing their conduits that had to go under the floor, and they were waiting on Island Excavating to dig down a little more to get everything where it needed to be. Everyone was still in good shape with no concerns about delays, as this was already built into the timelines.

Jennifer noted they were currently on budget or appeared to be well under budget with a good amount of leftover money, which was very good news.

Ron brought up the soffit change issue. Jennifer explained this was an upgrade from the standard soffit that was automatically quoted to a wood-looking fir soffit that Jeff was proposing. The upgrade would cost an additional \$3,890. She explained it would give the building more visual appeal since they hadn't done anything to spruce up the building, and it would mimic what the fire station had next door, except theirs was real wood while this would be maintenance-free plastic that looked like wood.

Ellen expressed strong support for the upgrade, noting that since they originally started the plan with a very different-looking library that had two wings and was L-shaped, which made it more visually appealing, and since they had to cut an entire wing, she thought they should do this upgrade to help the visual appeal and make it aesthetically more pleasing.

Jennifer agreed, noting that when the bids came in, they were trying to make everything as cost-effective as possible without bells and whistles to ensure they could do it timely and under budget. She anticipated more of these types of upgrade options coming up for board consideration. She thought it would make a big difference and noted they had the money since they were significantly under budget.

Ron said he thought it would look nice since Jeff had sent a picture, and it looked like wood and would add to the beauty of the building, so he was in favor.

Motion: Ellen made a motion to approve the soffit change for a cost of \$3,890. Ron Bushway seconded. After discussion, all voted in favor.

Amended MERP agreement

Jennifer explained that MERP was particular about what materials were used. They had originally approved R-3 for insulation, but the project used R-5 or R-6, which was fine because it was a higher R-factor. However, MERP needed to amend the agreement to reflect what was actually used in order to pay for it.

Motion: Ellen made a motion to approve the amended MERP agreement as explained by Jennifer. Ron Bushway seconded. After discussion, all voted in favor.

IT Update

Aimee reported they were still waiting for the web developers to finish the actual designing of their website. She noted she had emailed asking what was going on, and they said they would let them know when they had something. She mentioned they had paid for part of the work and expected completion around June. She noted their existing WordPress site was disorganized, making the developers' current work challenging.

New Business

Recommendation to SB from Plan Com for new Plan Com member Kristen Stewart

Emily Clarke from the Planning Commission participated via Zoom to present their recommendation. She reported they were recommending Kristen Stewart to fill a role on the planning commission that was vacated by Carrie San Angelo when she moved out of town. This was a 2-year appointment, and they supported her candidacy unanimously, recommending the selectboard do the same.

Motion: Ellen Howrigan moved to approve the appointment of Kristen Stewart to the Planning Commission. Ron Bushway seconded. After discussion, all voted in favor.

Grand Isle Consolidated Water District – job trailer placement

Ron explained they had received an email about this, noting it was normal for them to let contractors park their equipment at town property. The waterline work would be on Route 2 and down East Shore North.

Motion: Ron Bushway made a motion to let the Water District park the trailer. Ellen Howrigan seconded, asking for clarification that it would be in the parking lot. Ron confirmed he would talk with Steve to find the most appropriate place. After discussion, all voted in favor.

Green Up Day (Saturday, 5/2)

Aimee announced that Green Up Day was on May 2nd. Melissa noted the bags were at the Office. Ron explained that the highway department would pick up bags left beside the road, though people could also bring them to the transfer station if they preferred. The transfer station would be open that Saturday from 8 AM to 2 PM.

Old Business

Lister clerk position

Jennifer indicated they had sent an email looking for approval of the appointment.

Motion: Ellen Howrigan made a motion to approve the appointment of Kaitlyn Carney to start as soon as approved at \$20 per hour for 7 to 10 hours per week for the lister clerk position until no longer needed. Ron Bushway seconded. After discussion, all voted in favor.

Ellen mentioned an additional item about the Safety Team. She explained she had spoken about this in public comment previously and it had finally circulated back around. They were able to come on June 23rd for a women's safety class, and she thought the fire station was available to host it. She had attended a meeting where they did their demonstration and found it interesting, though the statistics they presented were terrible. She thought it would be nice to have one locally and noted it would run from 6:30 to 8:30 in the evening.

There was discussion about whether there would be costs involved. Jennifer suggested they might be able to use opioid settlement money if there were costs, since it seemed like community outreach and safety programming might qualify. Ellen agreed to find out if there was a cost, hold the date at the fire station, and circle back if there were costs to explore the opioid funding option.

Executive Session

At 6:32 PM Ellen read the motion to enter executive session to discuss contracts pending, citing 1 V.S.A. state statute 313(a)(2) that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage.

Motion: The board voted to enter executive session. All community members and Zoom participants left the meeting.

The board returned from executive session at 6:55 PM and 20 seconds.

Motion: Aimee Cochran moved that they leave executive session with no decision made. Ellen seconded. After discussion, all voted in favor.

Adjournment

Motion: Ellen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 PM. Jennifer Morway seconded. After discussion, all voted in favor.