

Dorset Select Board Meeting Minutes

May 19, 2026

Members Present: Megan Thorn, Henry Chandler, Frank Parent, Jim Salsgiver, Alison Clarke

Others Present: Rob Gaiotti, Dara Zink (BCRC), GNAT-TV, Jamie Coleman, Ben Weiss, Laurie Adler

Megan Thorn called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

April Meeting Minutes:

It was noted that Salsgiver was spelled wrong in the Liquor License portion of the April Minutes. Frank Parent moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to approve the minutes with this amendment, motion passed 4-0.

Public Comment:

None

Hazard Mitigation Plan Kick Off Meeting:

Dara Zink from BCRC was present to give an update about the Hazard Mitigation Plan re-write for Dorset. HMP are renewed every five years. Jim Salsgiver asked if the requirements had changed. Dara Zink answered that some items were streamlined and more public outreach is now required as well. She explained the HMP process will take around 12 months and there would need to be a planning team that would participate. In the past it was 2 Select Board members, the Town Manager and the Road Foreman. Frank Parent and Jim Salsgiver agreed to serve on the planning team from the Select Board.

Raptor Lane Housing Update:

Rob Gaiotti presented a memo about the status of the wells for Raptor Lane, the final housing market study, and the updated "concept" work by Vermont Integrated Architecture. Discussion ensued about the results of the study, the impacts on the overall approach and goals for the Town. Discussion also ensued about a possible survey relative to housing at Raptor Lane. The public engagement process will continue on 5/20 with a presentation of the final market study. Additionally, there was discussion about the timing of a community survey, whether the survey would be online or paper, as well as possible review of "concepts" and visits to the site during the summer.

Local Emergency Management Plan:

It was noted that the name and contact information for Dorset School will be changing soon and it should be reflected in the document. Frank Parent moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to approve the LEMP for 2026, motion passed 4-0.

Liquor Licenses:

Frank Parent moved and Alison Clarke seconded to recess the Select Board meeting and convene as the Liquor Control Board, motion passed 4-0.

Frank Parent moved and Alison Clarke seconded to approve liquor licenses as presented, motion passed 4-0.

Old Business/New Business:

East Dorset Traffic Calming/ Village Speeding:

We expect to have additional feedback from VTrans on the Route 7 “concept” soon. Unfortunately, it seems like there isn’t much funding or State appetite to support the idea.

On 5/13 the Town received Traffic Committee approval on both of our requests: extending the No Parking area south of the Quarry and also lower the speed limit down to 30 mph by extending the 30 mph zone south of HN Williams. This will be a good change.

East Dorset Flooding:

FEMA is not accepting HMGP applications at the moment, which will limit any ability to pursue this item. Also – since the trestle work we have not had many flooding events...

Upper Hollow Lot:

Engineering Ventures has been working on driveway preliminary slope plans and we have a meeting for an update this week. I expect that we will have the design and engineer’s opinion soon, and the Board can discuss next steps.

Short Term Rentals:

We have registered 59 STR units in Dorset. Number holding steady but a few STRs did not renew.

East Dorset Green:

The weather has been good for some early grass growth and we should be mowing the new Green area soon. There will be a village meeting about options for pavilions soon.

BCA:

The Town appraiser has defined an appraised value for the appealing property and now the Town will work with the attorney to try and negotiate a new value. The appraisal came in a bit lower than the GL value.

Habitat Concept:

Awaiting feedback on the site plan and summary of feasibility from the engineer. Early indication is that at least 1 home could likely be sited in the area. Test pits are next step.

Finance Report:

Delinquent Taxes:

\$195,571 as of 5/14/26 last year \$339,054

FY26: 92% through FY26 and we sit at 98% expended. Some winter highway items were over budget and we now expect expenses to come in 1-3% over estimates.

Sinking Fund Balances:

ARPA: \$582,000 (\$148,449 available for use – does not factor in VIA or EK)

- Town Office Solar: \$80,000 (adjusted to accommodate East Dorset shed changes)
- Mad Tom Rd Site: \$175,000 (\$72,937 spent so far)
- Raptor Lane Feasibility Study: \$40,000
- White & Burke Raptor Lane Study: \$77,777 (includes RFP phase)
- VHB Natural Resource Study RL: \$28,450
- Housing Market Study: \$38,000 (\$16,315 spent so far)
- VIA Concept Work: \$12,510
- EK Water/Septic Work: \$100,000 to \$140,000

Reappraisal: \$98,583

Equipment: \$54,587

Highway Paving: \$100,000

Land Records: \$42,110

Town Buildings: \$11,383

Highway Bridges: \$11,641

Debt: Equipment Loan: \$0 2021 Town Office Bond: \$3,600,000 (bond rate: 4.01%)

Assets: 10 acres Upper Hollow Road / 308 acres Raptor Lane

Town Manager's Report:

- Winter costs and highway items have tracked higher and will put pressure on overall budget expense
 - Welcome Jesse Merrow to the Highway Department!
 - Vehicle maintenance
 - Prepping and building road to well sites at Raptor Lane
 - Prepping for paving of Raptor Lane and DMR
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- DFD Annual meeting on 5/11, good turnout and DFD is in a good position to potentially have the moratorium lifted soon. Casella work is moving along quickly and might be under budget. DFD is packaging up the last of the service line work in hopes of finishing that this year and next.
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- Housing public meeting preparation and work.
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- Attended the 5/12 Southern Vermont Economic Summit to present about project pre-development and our work at Raptor Lane. Also on the panel was the Commissioner of ACCD and Director of the CHIP program, it was a good networking opportunity.
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- Coordinating with VIA and EK on next steps/ options
 - VLCT PACIF Budget/Personnel meetings.

Other Business:

Frank Parent inquired about cyber security coverage for the Town. Rob Gaiotti noted that PACIF offered a limited amount of insurance up to \$250,000, and also offers trainings for communities.

Executive Session: White & Burke Contract

Jim Salsgiver moved and Frank Parent seconded to enter into executive session at 8:15pm to discuss the agreement with White & Burke. The Board exited executive session at 8:25pm. Frank Parent moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to approve the updated agreement with White & Burke, motion passed 4-0.

Jim Salsgiver moved and Alison Clark seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:26pm, motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Gaiotti Town Manager