

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ORWELL SELECT BOARD
December 8, 2025
Town Office**

NOT APPROVED

Select Board: Andrea Treadway, Chair
Rob Barnes
Mike Christian
Joe Pouliot
Les Wood, Vice Chair

Gary Murdock
Wayne Hall
Glen Cousineau

Richard O. Buxton, Jr.
Kitty Hall
Julia Beamish, Virtual

Walter Burrough
Kay Firth-Butterfield

Betty Walker, Clerk

The Regular Select Board Meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., by Andrea Treadway, Select Board, Chair.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pending or probable civil litigation or a prosecution, to which the public body is or may be a party.

Mike Christian moved to go into Executive Session at 7:01 PM. Joe Pouliot seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 Yes 0 No.

Came out of Executive Session at 7:02 PM.

Les Wood moved to approve settlement of the appeal by Outright Vermont on the terms discussed in Executive Session and to authorize Robert Fletcher, Esq. to execute the settlement agreement. Rob Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 Yes 0 No.

1. CITIZENS COMMENTS.

Gary Murdock wanted to discuss the Sheriff's Budget. He is aware that the Sheriff's rates have gone up and was hoping that the Sheriff's Budget wasn't going to get cut. A lot of people are pleased with the Sheriff being in town. Gary helped to establish this relationship. Things are a lot more peaceful now. Gary is hoping that the Sheriff's budget can at least be maintained. They handle a lot in town other than giving out tickets. Gary also mentioned that a "Reduce Speed" sign is still needed on North Orwell Road to be able to enforce the speed. Andrea mentioned that we have a trailer now for the speed limit sign to be able to move it around. Gary mentioned that a trooper was supposedly told, by a Select Board member, that they were not needed to respond to ATV calls, we have the Sheriff's Department now.

Rick Buxton asked if we were ever going to do Clean-Up Day again. Andrea stated that it is not in the foreseeable future. The cost is extremely high for the town.

2. HIGHWAY REPORT.

Road Foreman Report – Winter is here! Allen M. Alger, Road Foreman, reported that they have been busy plowing and sanding. We have gone through a lot of sand already and will have to cut back some. Discussion arose about the concern for Route 22A possibly not being plowed between the hours of 10 PM to 4 AM. Will send a letter to VTrans. Jim Crawford, Solar Sales, Green Earth Energy, wanted to put in the electrical from the Firehouse to the panels. The town's excavator won't fit in that space to be able to dig the ditch. They have somebody coming with smaller equipment tomorrow. Andrea mentioned that we are going to open an account at Harbor Freight for the Town Garage.

3. MINUTES.

Les Wood moved to accept the minutes of the Budget Meeting and the Select Board Meeting of November 24, 2025. Mike Christian seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 Yes 0 No.

4. SEWER REPORT.

Sewer Report "I am pleased to report that the Wastewater Treatment Facility continues to perform without incident. We are fortunate to have experienced a quiet and uneventful November. As is normal, all is well at the WWTF. Respectfully, Edward Tracey". Mike Christian mentioned that usage is up 100kW.

5. TOWN CLERK REPORT.

Town Officer petitions will be ready and available at the next Select Board Meeting of December 22nd. Town Officer petitions are due back by January 26th. Social Service and Line Item petitions are due by January 19th. The Town Office has a great new Assistant Clerk who will be running for Town Clerk.

6. TREASURERS REPORT.

The Select Board received their monthly Financial Report from the Town Treasurer.

7. OLD BUSINESS.

a. MERP – Andrea stated that there is a problem with Jason McNolty, All Points Construction Co., who is in charge of the MERP work/repairs at the Town Office/Town Garage/Firehouse. She cannot seem to get anything narrowed down. The Town Garage is supposed to get new doors. We need a schedule so we know when we can allow for Title Searchers or the Listers to be able to use the Town Office. The new standing seam room could not be installed last Wednesday as scheduled, the pans were unable to be made due to power issues. Jason spoke with Chris Dundon about the hot water heater and heat pumps. They are to meet at the Town Office on Thursday. The roofers are now planned for Thursday or Friday. The electrician changed out the lights in the vault. Andrea contacted ACRPC and Buildings and General Services about the issues we are having with getting any of this work done. This work needs to be completed by the end of 2026.

b. Salt Shed-Concrete Bids –No bids have been received as of this meeting. Supposed to get bids from Myron White Concrete in Poultney and Freeguard Concrete in Whiting. Bud Carpenter has given them each the specs. Joe Pouliot and Les Wood will reach out to them.

c. Review Draft ATV Changes from Lawyer – Andrea went over a few provisions that the Lawyer thought needed a little polishing from the proposed revisions. Some were redundant because they are in the State Statutes. **Section 4a. Operation of ATV's.** Do we want ATV's on legal trails? We have two legal trails. One from Route 22A to Savages on Old Stage Road and the other is from 3 Old Stage Road to the bridge. Andrea suggests removing "legal trails" at this time. **Section 4m.** Where to operate. ATV's may be operated on town highways except the ones listed below. VT Route 73 from VT Route 22A to the Sudbury Line, all of VT Route 22A, these are State Roads and Pearl Road TH#20 and the Sewer Plant Road (no TH#). Should we add to **Section 5 Permit**. We are not liable if we collect money, per the Lawyer. Possibly have the Town Clerk collect money for ATV permits, insurance, and registration. It will cost for the signs and more for the Sheriff. The signs will need to be put up by the Road Foreman. Mike Christian is concerned with burdening the Town Clerk with paperwork that will only effect law abiding citizens. Clubs do this, not towns. Rick Buxton suggested appointing somebody to do this job. Andrea will ask the Lawyer if we need the part about permit fees in there and can it be someone besides the Town Clerk.

d. Budget – Andrea Treadway and Mike Christian to meet at the Town Office on Tuesday morning at 9:00 AM to do evaluations. Andrea will send the Select Board updated Budget Sheets. Still waiting for the Listers Budget Sheets. Cheryl Tudhope suggested getting a consultant to help with reappraisals. The cost will be somewhere around \$20,000. Cheryl Tudhope will be retiring. Andrea stated that we are struggling to fill elected and appointed positions. We are not thinking of cutting the Sheriff's Department budget. As of July 1, 2026, the Sheriff's fees go up. Once we get year end figures, we can figure out taxes.

8. NEW BUSINESS.

a. Review Fuel Bid –Champlain Valley – We received a fuel bid from Champlain Valley at \$2.80 a gallon. Les stated that he thinks \$2.80 is fair.

Les Wood moved to accept the fuel bid from Champlain Valley at \$2.80 a gallon. Joe Pouliot seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 Yes 0 No.

b. Appoint Assistant Zoning Administrator – Thomas Purdy was supposed to go on vacation for three months, but is not going now. It was suggested that we have a back-up person. Our current Assistant Zoning Administrator is also planning on a vacation.

Les Wood moved to appoint Joe Pouliot as an Assistant Zoning Administrator. Mike Christian seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 Yes 0 No 1 Abstain (Joe Pouliot).

We are also going to reach out to Gary Murdock, who is versed in the PC/DRB Regulations, to see if he is interested.

9. OTHER BUSINESS.

The Recs and Parks Committee sent an email stating that they are not hosting a holiday event this year.

The Sheriff's Department Report/Invoice was received for the month of November with 43.75 Officer Hours, 285 Cruiser Miles, and 2 Traffic Hours.

A confirmation of an approved Wetland Permit was received for 618 Route 22A.

Glen Cousineau, SVUUSD, mentioned some of the discussions at the School Board Meeting he just left. \$11,000 per student. Less than 3% on expenditures. The Governor and the Legislature brought down the tax rate last year. Many towns are ramping up their spending because they know we are all going to be paying for it.

10. PAYMENT OF BILLS.

Les Wood moved to pay the General Fund Orders in the amount of \$44,506.14 and \$5,910.77, Sewer Orders in the amount of \$1,715.57 and the Town Payroll. Joe Pouliot seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 Yes 0 No.

11. ADJOURNMENT.

Joe Pouliot moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 PM. Mike Christian seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 Yes 0 No.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Walker,
Clerk of the Board

**Next Select Board Meeting
Monday, December 22, 2025,
Orwell Town Office
7:00 PM.**