

Stockton Springs Select Board Minutes

August 25, 2025 Meeting

Attendees:

Select Board Members Present	Betsy Bradley (BB) Elizabeth (Liz) Lenharr (LL) Marsha Shute (MS) - Chairperson Sadie Lloyd Mudge (SLM) – Town Manager
Select Board Members Absent	
Recording Secretary	Sarah Hardy
Community members	Approximately 9 community members were in attendance for some or all of the meeting. Speaker names were captured in the notes as best as possible. No attendance list was captured.

#	Agenda	Notes
1.	Roll Call: Call to Order	Marsha Shute called meeting to order at 6:03 pm roll call – see attendance above
2.	Adjustment to the agenda	none
3.	Approval of minutes from August 11, 2025	No changes made to the minutes. Motion to accept the minutes for August 11 th was made by Marsha Shute, seconded by Liz Lenharr, and approved unanimously.
4.	Open to the public	none
5.	Town Manager Report and Update	<p>Broadband update: correspondence indicates the 1A expansion phase is moving along, still planning for completion in the fall of 2026. There are prices online and people are encouraged to sign up in advance if they want to adopt Direct Communications. There is a low cost plan of \$34.95.</p> <p>Betsy Bradley - recalled that originally there was a really, really, affordable option (like \$9.99).</p> <p>SLM - suggested there may be some options for folks with financial need, it would need to be investigated.</p> <p>Bucks Café is open and folks are encouraged to support them.</p> <p>A dividend payment of \$4540 was received from the town’s Property and Casualty insurance company. This payment is something the town gets annually but it’s not usually this large. This revenue is included in the budget as an anticipated \$1900 for this year so it’s significantly higher than normal, which indicates the company faced fewer claim payouts and/or had lower expenses than expected.</p> <p>SLM met with the Safety Committee. There will be a training put on by Waldo County on emergency response, then there will be an emergency exercise designed by the county that our public safety teams will be participating in.</p> <p>In response to the donations provided by Stockton Springs, we received thank you notes from: Stockton Springs from Waldo County WMCA, LifeFlight, and Hospice Volunteers of Waldo County.</p>

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		<p>SLM recently met with the new superintendent of RSU 20, Dr. Laura Miller. Sadie found her very levelheaded on budget. She’s also very thoughtful about what a good school can be and is attuned to what a school can do for a community. She’s very positive. She is aware that there are many conversations about whether the district should even exist, she’s not dug in and is open to doing what’s best for the school and community.</p> <p>SLM also met with James Gillway from Searsport – they are hiring a code enforcement officer on a part time basis and James asked their candidate if they would consider also serving Stockton Springs. The person is open to it, if he worked both towns it would make it almost a full time job. SLM mentioned that our town would prefer having a flexible schedule where a shared employee could bounce back and forth rather than strictly working certain days. Mr. Gillway is ok with that. The person currently filling in as Code Enforcement Officer by working nights and weekends is content to do that through October so hopefully we can identify someone soon.</p>
6.	Select Board reports or updates	<p>Liz Lenharr – attended the first budget meeting with the Waldo County Commissioners. One big change being considered is an 18 month budget cycle vs a 12 month cycle. They are consulting with legal, to see how that would be done and what guidance the budget committee would need to consider. By going with 18 month budget, it would limit the financing that currently has to happen now to fund the county between budget cycles. It will save money for taxpayers.</p> <p>The County is also looking at how employee healthcare is managed going forward. They would like to discontinue self-insurance and transition to coverage with Cross insurance.</p>
7.	Sign Updated Payment Policy	<p>The payment policy language was approved at the last meeting.</p> <p>The board members signed the policy.</p>
8.	Public Works Laborer Hire	<p>The public works open position was offered to Vern Thompson. He was already supporting public works part time, it was an easy decision, he has all the skills.</p> <p>SLM – suggested that there is an opportunity for cross training of folks at the fire station that can drive big trucks, to do work for public works too.</p> <p>Next summer we will look at hiring a full time mowing person, and in winter there are already people lined up for plowing help if it’s needed.</p>
9.	Sign updated Personnel Policy	<p>The select board reviewed the Personnel Policy. Two changes were made: New language on page 7 pertaining to banking of sick time, which was drafted under John Bellino then approved at the town meeting has not been signed by the select board members yet. Also, on the first page a minor edit was made to change from a named person to a job title as it pertained to that role’s eligibility for sick and vacation time.</p> <p>BB - mentioned that the funds put in for the banked sick time aren’t sufficient to cover payouts were they to occur now.</p> <p>SLM - indicated we’d have at least 3 more years to fund that account and she’ll be doing the math to figure out how much must be raised each year. She also indicated if someone were to leave earlier before 3 years, the general fund could cover it.</p>

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		<p>The board considered the changes.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to accept the updated language, seconded by Liz Lenharr. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>The board signed the policy paperwork.</p> <p>SLM indicated she will be looking at fleshing out the policy more, though she's not a fan of overly strict policies. Will bring it forward when it's ready.</p>
10.	Tax Commitment timeline	<p>SLM - Because the second school budget was rejected and we still don't know the impact to our tax obligations, the tax bills can't go out as normal. If they were to set the tax commitment now and if the final budget is lower than our assumption then the tax funds overpaid would be paid to the school in advance for next year (it would not be returned to our town or taxpayers). If we wait then the real school budget can be factored into each person's bill.</p> <p>Amber Poulin – if we commit now it would be 100,000 more than last year because it will have to be based on the last submitted school budget. That's about \$40 per \$100,000 assessed property value. If we wait and the budget is decreased as expected, then it would only be \$7 per \$100,000.</p> <p>BB– weren't they going to just use last year's numbers, since the budget failed?</p> <p>Amber Poulin – sort of, there is actually an increase based on valuation differences between Stockton and Searsport which would mean higher payments for Stockton Springs this year than last year.</p> <p>SLM – recommends delaying the commitment and sending the bills out later so that taxpayers aren't paying extra that's not needed now. However, in order to change the due date of taxes it has to go to a special town meeting. She's talked to town attorney about a compromise so we don't need a town meeting. As soon as the school budget is approved on September 23rd (by the school board and voting residents at the meeting but before the Town vote in November), we can calculate tax commitment based on that number. Since September 23rd would only be 2 weeks before taxes are due, the town would make a one-time dispensation to avoid charging interest as long as payment is made within a month of the due date. None of this is committed yet, this is just proposed, they are awaiting approval from town attorney. If the attorney says no, they will have to go to the town meeting and move the date to November and there will not be a break on charging interest.</p> <p>BB – will we be able to survive if we don't get revenue on the normal schedule?</p> <p>Amber Poullin – yes they've confirmed that the town can cover bills till the later date.</p> <p>SLM emphasized that this is a one-time thing relating to the extension of interest payments. Amber indicated it will be clearly communicated on the website and in tax bills.</p>

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		SLM – reiterated, we will either schedule a special town meeting or will use the 9/23 budget amount.
11.	Trails grant application	George Russell is getting the cost estimates for the trail work for the application and hopes to have that in a week. SLM will present the grant application to the board for approval at the next meeting as it will have to be submitted on 9/26/25.
12.	September meeting schedule	<p>SLM is on vacation next week (9/1-9/5) so will not have time to put together much for the next meeting. She proposes keeping the meeting scheduled as is – there is a local realtor who wants to sell the town’s tax acquired properties, so the agenda would be that and the grant application in the next meeting. If the board wants more content in the next meeting, it will have to be delayed by a week.</p> <p>The select board agreed with this proposal.</p> <p>By Thursday of this week, SLM will have a rough packet and an agenda prepared. At next meeting will also include meeting calendar review.</p> <p>BB – what about Monday holidays in October?</p> <p>SLM – maybe we just have one meeting that month unless there is important work to be done.</p>
13.	Discussion of use of Town Office basement	<p>SLM – a few things have come up that raises this topic. She’s seeing some requests that don’t fall into the intent of the space, such as use by businesses.</p> <p>BB – can we have an example</p> <p>SLM – not really a business (didn’t want to call out a specific requestor), but it could lead to a money making endeavor later.</p> <p>Also there has been misuse of materials and security lapses. The tables haven’t been cleaned and there has been a lot of wear and tear. Or folks have forgotten to pick up a key before their event and have called employees on the weekend to open the building. Calling employees off hours is prohibited.</p> <p>SLM – We may be at a tipping point for changing use. The town can always use it, as can any Stockton based community group, but no out of town people. If the property is not well kept we could keep track and if they have two infractions, for example, they would be prohibited from reserving the room in the future. Because taxpayers pay for the building and the contents, we have to protect it’s use.</p> <p>BB – she is concerned about changing use: we have so much sensitivity about taxes and use of this building is one of the benefits (like garbage, pickleball courts etc.).</p> <p>George Russell – public works cleans this room three times a month and they aren’t able keep it clean because users are trashing it. Sees spills that aren’t picked up. People aren’t taking tape down properly etc.</p> <p>Marsha Shute– so if someone asks me to let them in because they don’t have a key, I have to say no?</p> <p>Angie Porter – yes, you should say no. The office staff has taken the form and are the ones who know who is supposed to be using the room, others don’t</p>

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	<p>have the same familiarity. She continued, there is no policing of how the room is used right now and doing that will increase the employees effort. She indicated that people are seeing this as a free event space, not for doing town work – someone even wanted it for a wedding reception.</p> <p>It was asked if the cleaner could come more often and not there is no money for that. If there were available funds, the town would use those services upstairs.</p> <p>There was general discussion about what types of groups use the room: SLM – Stockton based community groups, BB – what about democrats meeting, republican meetings? SLM – no, they shouldn't because they can meet elsewhere. Angie Porter – there is an exception to that, we have to hold allow political parties to hold caucuses because it's election related.</p> <p>MS – clarified: If people can reserve the room, but if they forget the key, she needs to say no. and will community builders be ok? SLM – Yes, community builders is a Stockton group. As for keys, it may be different if you have a relationship with a group that they ask you. But not in general, no. Who should use it, we need to put municipal groups first. Though it's up to the select board. She also suggest the form get updated to indicate that they must not call off hours for a key.</p> <p>Angie Porter – we also need to talk about tables and chairs being taken out of the building, getting damaged and not always coming back.</p> <p>BB - noted that the same groups we are saying can use the room are the ones taking the tables/chairs. George Russell – we are short about 40 chairs.</p> <p>Angie Porter – we don't have a system for tracking the equipment when it's borrowed. She's just bringing it to the towns attention because it will cost the town money (in personnel time or equipment replacement). She suggests that we allow community organizations, not private use, for the room and for the tables/chairs. Angie acknowledged that prohibiting use by some people or groups is going to make people unhappy, and she doesn't want to start charging for the room. She's seeing requests every weekend, she's even used the room for family events, but if these changes preserves the space for town usage, we should do it.</p> <p>SLM – as for the policing of the room, this not someone's responsibility, and it's a lot to ask staff to do that. Other towns have a rec staff to do the policing and cleaning, checking doors etc. Betsy/Marsha also suggests we also include cleaning requirements in the contract that folks are signing. At this time, the residents in attendance were asked their opinion: Sue Henkel – how many have been booked through the end of the year? Angie P – we would want to honor any that we've already agreed to.</p>
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		<p>Sue H – if it’s three that’s no biggie. If it’s fifty that’s different and then we’d have to set expectations that they clean/conserves equipment etc.</p> <p>SLM – agrees honoring existing bookings but going forward only allowing community groups and setting cleaning standards (however it’s still on staff to monitor and chase down problems).</p> <p>Kathy Kamzelski – is it possible to revise the current agreement for those who have booked into the future – adding requirements to leave it as it’s found and if not they would be assessed a fee. And if the people don’t agree to that, they can find a new location. Also specify that if they do not have a key then they are not getting in.</p> <p>BB reiterated for clarity after all of the discussion: continue allowing reservations that are community based and not personal use. Anyone with existing personal use reservations we will honor. We will also update the stipulations about cleaning and keys. How will we publish this change?</p> <p>SLM – it could go in the tax bill – stressing that we are trying to save money and we’ve noticed the space’s condition to be declining. Also, would need to specify that Stockton community groups will continue to be able to use the room. She will put a notice on the bulletin board and the website as well.</p> <p>Angie Porter – there are some employees who feel that they should be able to use the room as a perk. She doesn’t think there should be that exception.</p> <p>Liz Lenharr– doesn’t think that will look good to the rest of the community to allow employees favoritism.</p> <p>Marsha Shute makes a motion to discontinue any personal use of the Town office basement including the use table/chairs, except for what’s already on the schedule through 12/31/25 and to continue to allow use to Stockton based community groups. Seconded by Liz Lenharr, motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>SLM – if someone reached out to the select board members about getting into the building, if the board member knows the group, its OK to open the doors. However, they will also have to make sure they check that the doors are locked afterward. It is not ok for anyone to call the staff.</p>
14.	Treasurers warrant and report	<p>The select board members reviewed the warrant.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to accept the accounts payable warrant 13, seconded by Liz Lenharr, motion was approved unanimously.</p> <p>The select board signed the warrants.</p>
15.	Open to the public	<p>Jerry Altoon – related to broadband: Where is the information about Direct Communications?</p> <p>LL– On the Direct Communications website, look for 1A broadband project.</p>

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		<p>Amber Poulin – She will put a link on the town website.</p> <p>Jerry Altoon– the previous town manager said that for residents on private roads with underground service that it will be installed underground. Is this still true?</p> <p>SLM – in her experience in Waldo that was not the case. But that’s not something the town could ensure, it needs to be coordinated via the individuals and the company.</p> <p>BB – can we ask Direct Communications? Can Liz take it to the broadband committee to ask?</p> <p>LL– yes she will ask.</p> <p>Jerry Altoon – didn’t the town vote on this? It’s disappointing if his understanding was incorrect.</p> <p>SLM – yes we voted to approve the broadband project payment, not how it will be delivered.</p> <p>Jerry Altoon – Where does the comprehensive plan stand?</p> <p>SLM – the same place as a few weeks ago. We have to hire a contractor to manage that process.</p> <p>Jerry Altoon – that is a change?</p> <p>SLM – no John Bellino wanted to use a grant from MCOG to pay for it. When Sadie talked to MCOG, their grant didn’t seem like a good fit. John didn’t do anything wrong, he was just hopeful it would work. If there was a grant available then getting this worked on sooner would be possible but it will likely need to be budgeted next year.</p> <p>Jerry Altoon – what will the committee look like and will this be a public process?</p> <p>SLM – yes, comprehensive plan is a very participatory process. Residents will need to provide lots of input. The contractor would be the facilitator but the committee would be comprised of community members. Ideally we need a committee with diverse representation. The contractor would create the document based off the work of the committee and community input then there would be meetings to review/update it before it’s put up for approval at town meeting.</p> <p>Kathy Kamzelski – had question about the timeline for the school budget but she found the answer before she was called on. There’s a meeting tomorrow (8/29) where she thought it was the voting meeting but it’s an informational meeting.</p>
16.	Adjourn to executive session	Marsha Shute made a motion to adjourn the select board meeting at 7:33pm, seconded by Liz Lenharr and passed by unanimous vote.
17.	Executive Session – Economic Development and Personnel Duties	<p>The select board and town manager relocated to the first floor conference room to hold the executive session.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to go into executive session at 7:36pm, seconded by Liz Lenharr, motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to go out of executive session at 8:45pm, seconded by Liz Lenharr, all voted in favor.</p>

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18.	Resumption of select board meeting/meeting adjournment	Marsha Shute made a motion to direct the Town Manager to work with the town attorney to remove the Right Of Way access from town owned property R3-132 and spend up to \$500. Liz Lenharr seconded the motion and it passed 3-0. Marsha Shute made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46pm, it was seconded by Liz Lenharr and approved unanimously.
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