

Stockton Springs Select Board Minutes

December 15, 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 5 community members were in attendance for 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 6:00 pm roll call – see attendance above
2.	Adjustment to the agenda	Two additional items added to the agenda after it was posted to the town website: the winter tax help item and the executive session.
3.	Approval of minutes from December 1, 2025	The notes weren't printed for the select board members before the meeting so it was requested that this approval get moved to the next regular meeting. Marsha Shute made a motion to table approval of the minutes for December 1, 2025 until the January meeting. The motion was seconded by Liz Lenharr and approved unanimously.
4.	Open to the Public	Susan Henkel – question for Liz since she's been spending so much time working on the Waldo County Budget, how are we as a town going to handle increase in county budget? LL – for now the county is going to operate at the current budget level, they are putting the budget on hold till the outcome of a multiyear audit. The potential for increase will come when the county eventually moves to the 18 month budget fiscal year budget (vs calendar year). Our town and other towns will need to begin to save money to prepare of that. The county considered converting to the 18 month schedule now until the other major increases in the budget were made apparent; towns can't take on both the increase in budget and the 18 month budget all at once. She's not sure right now when the 18 month budget will come up. Based on the push back from towns, she doesn't see how the 35% increase in regular 12 month budget will happen, they will have to pull back significantly on spending. The chair of the committee wants to meet in January to see what the commissioners raise as targets for the budget, the timeframe for getting the audit done in a timely fashion will be a challenge, they may need to look for an auditor out of state because there are only two in the state that work on counties. Susan – is there anything we'll do for our town budget to prepare? LL – will need to talk with Amber about how to calculate this SLM – talked to the commissioners, the timing will be important, they will need to move to the 18 month budget when it can be funded via tax dollars, towns can't pull from their unassigned funds (making us at risk of bad audit). Sadie said she intends to talk to Chip Curry to see if we can get a taxpayer vote on the county budget reinstated. She feels three people (the commissioners) shouldn't make the decision for the whole county. LL – affirmed the 18 month would not be a factor in 2026.

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5.	Town Manager report and updates	<p>Have completed the solar buyout with Sundog solar for the solar panels on the town garage and the town now owns all of the electricity it generates. There will be two more bills paid to Sundog for electricity the town used prior to the buyout date.</p> <p>Per a previous meeting's question about the upcoming election, she has an FAQ that Diane Reynolds created. The filing papers are available at the end of Feb and are due at the end of April. At least 25 signatures must be obtained by candidates. There will be three different seats up for election with staggered end dates. The FAQ will be available at the office and the dates etc. will be available on the town website.</p> <p>As of last week, we have collected 45% of taxes – last year at this time collection was 46% so we're very much in line with normal collection patterns. Things look good.</p>
6.	Select board reports	<p>Liz spoke to the county budget in the public comment section and just reassured folks that the process is ongoing. She says the two new commissioners are doing a lot to improve transparency.</p> <p>Marsha interjected that she agreed with people having a vote on this in the future.</p>
7.	Winter Tax help in the town office	<p>Joel Lee is holding ten free sessions offering help to people in Stockton Springs. The town will authorize his use of the downstairs because it can be used when the office is closed and is also more private since they can close doors. SLM recommends the board allow him to use the room. Sadie will let him know that there may be some conflicts but perhaps he could adjust hours, as necessary. Specifically on April 4th the Community Builders are holding an Easter Celebration in the Town Hall – Sadie will suggest that Joel that use the library that day or perhaps hold the meetings before and after the Easter party, he should be in contact with Community Builders to confirm.</p> <p>This is done through AARP.</p> <p>Dates – every Saturday in February and March, and April 4th and 11th. 8am-4pm by appointment</p>
8.	Utility pole application	<p>There are two applications for consideration: Church street, and Middle street. On Middle St. there is an abutter who doesn't want poles in the right of way on her property. Sadie checked through the Middle street property file in the office and there wasn't any ROW easement language. She also checked George's files and didn't find anything. MDOT says towns can decide on what is or isn't allowed in the right of way if there is no specific ordinance. She talked to CMP too and they thought the abutters were OK with the placement. However, one abutter may have changed their mind. She also called the town attorney to discuss it and he communicated that because towns usually decide this sort of thing, it doesn't matter if there is legal documentation on how to handle easements because most towns do not have such ordinances. The attorney suggested first indicating exactly where the pole will be with a marker and asking CMP to put the pole in a place that will make people as happy as possible. CMP has done that, Sadie confirmed the stakes are there. The criteria seems to be met, and because of that there really aren't grounds</p>

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		<p>to deny the request for placement. Acknowledging that the right of way in front of someone’s house is not always ideal which is why the abutter is not happy, but not placing the pole is also stopping the new house from getting electricity. All parties must be considered.</p> <p>Sadie asked CMP if electric could come up school street instead, it would be \$10,000 and the property owner would have to pay for that. All other alternative options are approximately the same cost. The good faith effort has been made.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to approve allowing CMP to place the utility pole application on Middle St. The motion was seconded by Liz Lenharr and approved unanimously</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to approve allowing CMP to place the utility pole application on Church St. The motion was seconded by Liz Lenharr and approved unanimously</p>
9.	Treasurer’s Report	<p>SLM shared a document with the current balances with the board. Amber gives her totals for all the accounts that make up the unassigned funds, this reflects the end of November balances. These numbers looked good as compared to other reports though she doesn’t have one for this month last year. She cautioned that certain departments may not have spent a lot of their budgets yet because they may have big allocations still to come, like plowing.</p> <p>The total cash balance is just under \$4M. She feels good about the numbers.</p>
10.	Treasurer’s warrant	<p>The select board reviewed the warrant. Sadie reminded the board that though there is a big charge for the dock (\$99,543), it is to be reimbursed from the state (and heard from the state the check was cut today). Also, the school payment is a bit lower because a previous month had been a bit too high due to the higher budget. Next months bill will be the true amount.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant 37, seconded by Liz Lenharr, motion was approved unanimously.</p> <p>The select board signed the warrant.</p>
11.	Open to the Public	<p>Sue Henkel – do we have any candidates to replace Sadie. Yes – they have been doing interviews and have good candidates in whom they are interested.</p> <p>Jerry Altoon – he missed the last meeting, can he get some info regarding the Pinkerton bill and the higher charge than expected.</p> <p>SLM – the sum of the invoices that came in last year and previous years were misallocated to the account, it was dispersed to other accounts so the trash and recycling accounts were somewhat lager than they should have been and the two clean ups were smaller than they should have been. But together the costs were comparable to the current year. Given the large cost of the two cleanups (about \$20,000), there was some discussion about whether we should proceed in the same way or do something different – but either way understanding the true cost is important for the town when approving the budget.</p>

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		<p>Linda Meadows – a long time ago the ambulance director mentioned a grant to look at making a regional service, what happened with that? BB and SLM – Amy got the grant and she and Sadie and the select board have been looped in on discussions.</p>
12.	<p>Executive Session pursuant to 1 MRSA 405(6)(A) – Town Manager Position</p>	<p>The meeting was closed before the board went to executive session.</p> <p>Marsha Shute motion to adjourn the select board meeting at 6:38pm, the motion was seconded by LL and approved unanimously.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to enter executive session at 7:15pm. Liz Lenharr seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.</p> <p>Marsha Shute made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:15pm. Liz Lenharr seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.</p>
13.	<p>Meeting Adjournment</p>	<p>Marsha Shute made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm and was seconded by Liz Lenharr. The motion passed unanimously.</p>