

Minutes of May 12, 2026 Meeting
Warren Select Board
-draft-

Members Present: Camilla Behn, Harvey Blake, Devin Klein Corrigan, Joel Taplin

Staff Present: Jeff Campbell, Fire Chief; Rebecca Campbell, Town Administrator; Ruth Robbins, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: Alice Cheney, Jito Coleman (Conservation Committee), Roberta Elliott, Julie Frost (FMR), Michael G, Randy Graves, Austin Hart (ReArch), Chris Huston (ReArch), Bert DeLaBruere (ReArch), Lisa Loomis (Valley Reporter), Steve Roy (Weimann Lamphere), Jim Sanford, Chuck T, Quayl Rewinski, Kate Wanner (Conservation Committee), Keith Streeter, Ginnar Nurme, Tim Seniff

Ms. Klein Corrigan called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The meeting was held in person at the Warren Town Offices and online via Zoom.

Public Comment

Rebecca thanked the volunteers who helped with the recent Town property cleanup day, as well as the Fire Department for putting up flags for Memorial Day.

Agenda Changes

An item was added for information to be provided by Friends of the Mad River (FMR).

Town Garage Solar Array

Steve Roy presented various reasons for which installing solar panels at the time of garage construction would be beneficial. These include a lower long-term cost, taking advantage of current financial incentives, the benefits of installation on a new roof, and the pairing with an all-electric building.

The bids received were reviewed, with further details covered for the lowest bids received, which were from Sterling Mountain.

	<u>100kWh installation</u>	<u>167kWh installation</u>
Roof coverage	will not cover entire roof	maximum roof coverage
Bid amount	\$226,142	\$349,982
Net investment with credits, etc.	\$158,299	\$244,987
Payback complete	within year 8	within year 9
Energy cost savings at year 25	\$431,368	\$611,764

Mr. Roy explained that the system will continue to operate longer than 25 years, with some lowering of production to be expected as the system ages further. The system warranty covers 25 years, with a one-year warranty for the building and roof if the system is installed at the time of construction. Mr. Roy explained that the savings estimates are based on a conservative consideration of rate increases over the 25 years. He also outlined that the impact to the overall Garage budget for the larger installation would be that the project would be expected to come in \$423,386 under budget. It was confirmed that his firm and ReArch have worked with Sterling Mountain on other projects, and were comfortable with their doing Warren's solar installation. Mr. Huston emphasized that it is unusual to be in such a favorable under-budget cost projection, allowing for solar installation while still remaining under budget for the overall project.

There was some discussion regarding what the bond interest payment impact would be on the costs outlined. Mr. Roy did some calculations, and estimated that the energy savings would still total \$309,568 for the 100kWh system and \$423,464 for the larger system. He also explained that there has not yet been energy modeling completed for the building, and so it could not be evaluated what amount of

excess electricity would be produced for use by other Town buildings. It was agreed to look into the use of capital funds for the installation rather than including the cost in the bond amount borrowed.

The timeline was discussed, with it being confirmed that a decision is needed by the end of May in order to qualify for certain credits.

MOTION: *Mr. Blake moved to approve installing a 145kWh system on the roof of the new Town Garage, as quoted by Sterling Mountain, and to authorize the Town Administrator to research the availability of reserve funds that might be used to finance the installation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Klein Corrigan, and passed unanimously.*

Planning Commission Appointments

Roberta Elliott spoke with the Board regarding her interest in the Planning Commission.

MOTION: *Ms. Behn moved to appoint Roberta Elliott and Sam Robinson to the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taplin, and passed unanimously.*

Local Emergency Management Plan

Mr. Campbell reported that the annual update contained some changes to personnel listed, but no significant changes; work continues on providing an animal annex at the cooling center.

MOTION: *Ms. Behn moved to adopt the updated 2026 Local Emergency Management Plan. The motion was seconded by Ms. Klein Corrigan, and passed unanimously.*

Conservation Committee – Robinson Parcel

Gunnar Nurme from the Department of Forest, Parks, and Recreation (FPR) outlined that he had been working with the Conservation Commission to purchase and protect 75 acres of land adjacent to the Roxbury State Forest. He noted that the purchase would serve to protect shared conservation values, important higher elevation habitat, several beneficial natural communities, and headwater streams. Once acquired, there will be provisions for public access as well as FPR management access to the State Forest. The purchase of this property will be used as a match/cost share to help leverage federal funding through the Forest Legacy Project.

Kate Wanner outlined that the potential for this purchase was first brought to the Selectboard's attention in July 2025, at which point the purchase price had not been negotiated. She explained that the Conservation Committee is recommending that the Town expend \$57,800 from the Conservation Reserve Fund, to be put toward the \$226,000 total cost. She noted that there had already been a Town expenditure for appraisal of the property, bringing the Town's total cost to \$60,800.

There was some discussion regarding the low assessed value of the property, which Ms. Wanner explained is due to deed restrictions, property steepness, and the need for a stream crossing if residential access was required.

In response to questions from Board members, Mr. Nurme explained that the roadway ROW provides an opportunity for access, as it is in decent shape although quite steep. Potential future use of this access by FPR would be for forest management purposes, but there are no plans in place to develop it into a significant road; currently it is likely accessible by a 4WD vehicle. Members of the public will be allowed foot access only.

Mr. Nurme also noted that the Roxbury State Forest Management Plan is slated for review, and there will potentially be some harvest activity on the parcel, but no development of the land, which will be in keeping with the current uses of the Roxbury Forest. He confirmed that a new PILOT amount will be determined at the time of purchase.

The Conservation Committee requested a letter of support from the Town and approval to use the proposed Reserve fund amount.

MOTION: *Ms. Klein Corrigan moved to approve providing a letter of support for the Conservation Committee to work in conjunction with FPR to acquire the 75-acre Robinson parcel and to use reserve funds in the amount of \$57,800 for the purchase. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taplin, and passed unanimously.*

Culvert Projects – Friends of the Mad River

Julie Frost explained the process that FMR is using to identify priority projects, and reported that the top two candidates resulting from recent site visits and funding evaluation are both in Warren. These top candidates were selected to move forward with 30% design work, for which the funding is already in place. One is for Clay Brook, where it crosses Golf Course Road, and the other is for a tributary to Lincoln Brook, on Lincoln Gap Road. Both sites will benefit from an aquatic organism passage, so both habitat and road infrastructure benefits could be realized through a completed project; both are also complex sites, which will benefit from a 30% design study which identifies the work needed and helps to determine the full costs of each project. FMR would also be finding the bulk of the funding needed to move forward once the 30% design is completed.

Ms. Frost explained that FMR is seeking the Town's support to publish an RFP and move forward with the design process for these two culvert projects. Board members were in agreement that the Town will support this effort by FMR.

Ground Breaking Ceremony Plan

It was confirmed that this is now scheduled for May 27, at 11:30 am. It was agreed to keep this as a low-key event.

Other Business

Town Garage schedule update – site work is scheduled to begin on May 19.

Sidewalk work – the project is going well, and the contractor is collaborating well with residents.

Time Capsule update – digging scheduled for May 19, with a rain date of May 26. Logistics were discussed.

Upcoming agenda items – it was agreed to schedule VHB for June 9, and KMK for both May 26 and June 23. The Town's Purchasing and Procurement Policy will be reviewed by Board members in advance of the next meeting.

Ms. Campbell reported that there is a need for a portable toilet in the area of the Town Green for the summer, as people are using the area behind the building; it was discussed that signage would be preferable to a toilet, which often creates various problems. It was noted that there is a wastewater connection at the Blair Barn.

Administrative Items

Documents were signed as necessary.

MOTION: *A motion to approve the payroll warrant in the amount of \$30,402.51 passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve the accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$66,312.36 passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve the Minutes of April 14, 2026 passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve a First- and Third-Class Liquor License Renewal for Road Trip Hospitality (Hostel Tevere) passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve a First- and Third-Class Liquor License Renewal for Fit to Be Thai'd passed unanimously.*

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carol Chamberlin

The Warren Selectboard

Devin Klein Corrigan, Chair

Camilla Behn, Vice Chair

Joel Taplin

Harvey Blake