



**BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY
MEETING as BOARD of ABATEMENT
DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 27, 2026**

Members Present In-Person: Dawn Hill-Fleury, Chair; Betsy Dunn, Vice-Chair; Tatsiana Bussiere (non-voting); Shannon Jackson; Georgia Lavigne; Cynthia Seivwright; Ken Signorello; Margaret Smith; Irene Wrenner; Meg Zimmerman

Members Present via Zoom: Kendall Chamberlin; Andy Watts

Others Present In-Person: None

Others Present via Zoom: Ryan Lawrence

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM by Ms. Hill-Fleury, Chair.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

SHANNON JACKSON made a motion, seconded by BETSY DUNN, to accept the agenda as presented. Motion passed 10-0.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

None.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes: ~~April 28, 2026~~; December 3, 2025 and October 29, 2025

IRENE WRENNER made a motion, seconded by BETSY DUNN, to remove the minutes of April 28, 2026 from the Consent Items. No vote, but motion carries forward.

IRENE WRENNER made a motion, seconded by SHANNON JACKSON, to approve the minutes of December 3, 2025, and October 29, 2025. Motion passed 10-0.

6. REQUESTS FOR ABATEMENT

a. Ryan and Chantal Lawrence - Request to abate sewer/water charges under 24 V.S.A. §1535(a)(10)

Mr. Lawrence said he has provided additional information on the dates in which he is questioning his water usage. These dates are 12/18/25-12/23/25. He said the reason for this high rate of usage is undetermined, and that no leaks nor other issues have been detected. He would like to get an abatement back to his standard usage. Mr. Lawrence said he did not have any company or anything else that would lead to higher water usage during this time. Answering a question from Mr. Signorello, Mr. Lawrence said he does not have a specific monetary amount that he would like to have abated. Mr. Lawrence suggested abating 60% of the usage during this time, or around 320 cubic feet of usage. He then suggested a figure of \$200.

TOWN MANAGER	PARKS AND RECREATION	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	PUBLIC WORKS	ASSESSOR	FINANCE	TOWN CLERK	LIBRARY	FIRE	POLICE
878-1341	878-1342	878-1343	878-1344	878-1345	878-1359	879-0413	879-0313	878-5308	878-8331

Ms. Zimmerman asked about the potential impact of working from home on the water bill. In response, Mr. Lawrence said he and his wife have been working from home for many years. Ms. Wrenner asked if extra laundry or visiting children could contribute to the higher bill, and Mr. Lawrence said this was not the case. Ms. Hill-Fleury said a decision will be prepared after deliberative session.

7. DELIBERATION

The Board entered into the deliberative session.

After the Board exited the deliberative session, **GEORGIA LAVIGNE made a motion, seconded by MARGARET SMITH, to deny the motion for abatement due to a lack of evidence.**

Amendment by KEN SIGNORELLO to deny the amended abatement due to a lack of compelling evidence.

The amendment passed 10-0.

The motion passed 10-0.

At this time, Ken Signorello switched to attending the meeting via Zoom.

8. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Minutes of April 28, 2026

IRENE WRENNER made a motion to approve the minutes of April 28, 2026, with the correction of correcting the spelling of Kendall Chamberlin's name and including Cynthia Seivwright as an attendee.

BETSY DUNN made a motion, seconded by SHANNON JACKSON, to approve the minutes of April 28, 2026 as amended. Motion passed 10-0.

b. Establish Clear Guidelines and Create a Formal Policy for Future Abatement Requests

The Board discussed establishing guidelines for water and sewer bill abatements, as no specific guidelines currently exist in the State of Vermont.

Mr. Chamberlin said that the Water and Sewer ordinance should be referred to when making decisions. Ms. Wrenner suggested utilizing the Vermont League of Cities and Towns model abatement document for guidance. Mr. Jackson suggested that there be a process in place to consider what to do about abating sewer usage when an applicant fills up a pool or hot tub. Ms. Wrenner said some municipalities have different rules and suggested that more examples be reviewed. Ms. Smith said it costs the Town in stipends when the Board meets and suggested that this be considered when setting a minimum amount for abatement.

The list below summarizes the suggested guidelines:

- Inability to pay (owner needs to provide proof)
- Circumstances that were difficult to foresee or outside of the person's control (e.g. meter malfunction)
- Natural disasters
- Use of current rates when calculating estimated bills (e.g. 120% of last/ average bill)
- Proof of effort to remediate issues
- Proof of the Town's culpability
- No minimum/ no maximum amount for abatement

Ms. Hill-Fleury said she anticipates the need for tax abatement meetings in late summer and fall. This will also involve a site visit to the property. Ms. Wrenner suggested that there be a method to ensure that all board members attend meetings regularly.

9. ADJOURNMENT

BETSY DUNN made a motion, seconded by IRENE WRENNER to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Darby Mayville,
Recording Secretary