

MEREDITH SELECT BOARD
MEETING AGENDA
Meredith Community Center - 1 Circle Drive
November 10, 2025 at 4:30pm

CALL TO ORDER AT ____{time}____ / ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ITEM 1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – page 1

AGENDA ITEM 2. WORKSHOPS – page 6

- A. Community Development Rename and Reorganization (Manager Milner) – page 6**
- B. 2026 Budget Wage & Benefits Overview (Manager Milner/Director Carpenter) – page 11**

AGENDA ITEM 3. BUSINESS – page

- A. 2025 Tax Rate Setting (Director Carpenter) – page 12**
- B. Conservation Commission Landowner Consent for Grant Funded Project – page 13**

AGENDA ITEM 4. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT – page 24

AGENDA ITEM 5. VISITOR AND RESIDENT COMMENTS – page 34

AGENDA ITEM 6. SELECT BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS – page 35

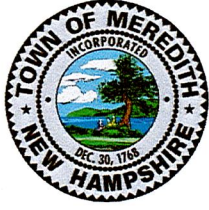
AGENDA ITEM 7. NONPUBLIC – page 36

ADJOURNMENT AT ____{time}____

Next meeting: November 24, 2025

The Selectboard of the Town of Meredith reserves the right to enter into nonpublic session when necessary, according to the provisions of RSA 91-A.

This location is accessible to the disabled. Those wishing to attend who are hearing or vision impaired may make their needs known by calling 603-279-4538 (voice), or through "Relay New Hampshire" 1-800-735-2964 (T.D./TRY)



Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025

From: Kerri Parker, Recording Clerk

Subject: Selectboard to consider approving meeting minutes

Suggested Motion:

Selectboard member moves, *"I move that the Selectboard approve the minutes of the October 27, 2025 Selectboard meeting."*

Selectboard Chair calls for a second, discussion and vote.

Attachments/Exhibits:

Applicable public minutes

1 MEREDITH SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

2 October 27, 2025

3 Chairperson Mike Pelczar called the meeting to order at 4:30pm with members present,
4 Selectperson Jim Gregoire, Selectperson Jeanie Forrester, Selectperson Lynn Leighton, Vice
5 Chairperson Steve Aiken, Chairperson Mike Pelczar, Town Manager Judie Milner, Recording
6 Clerk Kerri Parker.

7 **Housing Champion Presentation**

8 Representatives from the NH Housing Finance Authority and BBA presented Meredith with the
9 designation as a "Housing Champion." Meredith was recognized for proactive zoning changes,
10 infrastructure planning, and board training to support affordable housing. The town is eligible
11 for funding through the Housing Champion program, including infrastructure grants and
12 production incentives. Meredith is one of ten communities awarded in the second round,
13 receiving priority in other state grant applications.

14 **Approval of Minutes**

15 Selectperson Lynn Leighton motioned to approve the minutes from October 6, with corrections,
16 seconded by Selectperson Jim Gregorie, all in favor, Selectperson Jeanie Forrester abstained.

17 **Sewer Assessment & Management Plan**

18 Phil Sausville, shared slides of pictures of the Route 3 Station's 3 levels as well as the pipes
19 when the "flushable" wipes that are not truly flushable are sent through the system and clog
20 the pipes which can cause many expensive issues. Reminding all the 3 Ps for proper Sewer
21 usage Pee, Poop and Paper.

22 Water and Sewer Superintendent Jason Bordeau and Sean Osborne, OSD LLC consultant,
23 presented updates on sewer infrastructure, challenges, and future planning. Issues include
24 aging pipes, inflow/infiltration, and non-dissolvable wipes. Recommendations include a 9%
25 annual rate increase over 8 years to address budget shortfalls and infrastructure needs. The
26 Town has been working on a 14% shortfall since 2020, and they are only looking to get the
27 department to be self-funded and build the reserves back to a comfortable amount for
28 emergencies. Discussion on transitioning from uniform block rate to increased block rate
29 structure deferred.

30 **Family Promise of the Lakes Region Presentation**

31 Sarah Al-Sheraidi presented a funding request for \$5,000 to support homelessness prevention
32 and case management services. The organization aims to assist families at risk of homelessness
33 with stabilization and housing support with the goal of assisting ten families in Meredith.

Selectperson Jim Gregoire asked if they were looking for assistance from the other towns/cities in the area. Sarah confirmed that they are looking for assistance from all the communities. Town Manager Judie Milner explained that this program would be an asset to our community as with others where most people come to the town only after exhausting all other available resources for help.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Annual review of the FEMA-required plan was presented. Many items are completed or in progress; board to review and discuss further on November 10.

Goal Setting Summary Draft summary from September workshops with Primex was distributed. Final prioritization scheduled for November 24. The facilitator Rick will be in attendance as this was his next available date.

Community Power Coalition Agreement

Selectperson Jeanie Forrester asked for clarification about the process and if in fact we join but are not obligated to change our rates for electricity until it comes back before board. Town Manager Judie Milner confirmed that that is the case, and this authorization is the last step to be able to join the coalition to take advantage of lower rates if that happens.

Selectperson Lynn Leighton moved the Meredith Selectboard authorize the Town Manager to enter into the Cost Sharing Agreement and Member Services Contract for the Complete Service Bundle with the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) with Town Manager Judie Milner and the Selectboard Chair to be advised when there are rate changes, Seconded by Vice Chairperson Steve Aiken, Selectperson Jeanie Forrester abstained, 4-1 in favor.

Appointments

Selectperson Lynn Leighton motioned to approve the appointment of Jim Wiler to the Waukegan Watershed Advisory Committee, seconded by Selectperson Jim Gregoire, all in favor.

Town Manager's Report

- Staff updates: Jordan Duplessie joins Water Dept.
- Director Vint Choiniere retiring Dec. 31, 2025.
- John Parent – DPW, passed his CDL learners permit test – congratulations!
- Historical Society, Planner LaBrecque and Selectboard Member Forrester – representing Meredith admirably by highlighting Meredith's historical walk, sculpture walk and Laverack Trail as mobile tours at the Travel & Tourism Research Association Conference which was held right here in Meredith – thank you all!!!
- Director Choiniere – leading the team to the successful completion of the adaptive launch project – fantastic job!

- Budget books distributed; proposed increase of 5.69%.
- Health insurance rates increased modestly (2.3%–7.5% depending on plan).
- Deeded property sales generated \$460,801.65 in net revenue.
- Parking study for Main Street reviewed; engineer presentation requested.
- Holiday party scheduled for December 17 with a request for the employees to return to work that day instead of having the rest of the afternoon off and allowed to close Town Hall for Christmas Eve at 1:00pm

Visitors and Resident Comments

Kathleen Estrich raised her concern over the town not having better signage for Elections. She feels that the small signs along the roadsides would be beneficial to the residents to know when elections are taking place. Selectboard members agreed but explained the Town is working on better communication through the website and existing signage throughout the Town. She further proposed a downtown holiday event to bring people to the businesses on Main Street.

Lori Hoyt brought concerns raised about Japanese knotweed; recommendation for town-wide mitigation program. She thanked the Conservation commission member Scott Powell for his insight and assistance for her own property mitigation plan.

Resident Richard Demark thanked the town for support during a peaceful public assembly recently for No Kings Day..

Board Comments

Selectperson Jeanie Forrester reminded everyone about the Veterans Day festivities. The Planning board meeting went well, and the recent Tourism Summit was a great success.

Selectperson Lynn Leighton reminded people about Trick or Treat for Friday evening and Main Street Closure, thanking all the departments that are coming out to participate.

Vice Chairperson Steve Aiken on October 28, HOP meeting is at 4:30pm the Master plan meeting at 5:30pm followed by the Planning board meeting at 7:00pm. He stated that the Zoning board is looking for more members. He also praised the Zoning board for their professionalism and preparedness

Non-Public Session

Chairperson Mike Pelczar motioned to enter non public per RSA 91-A3 II (d) consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community AND under RSA 91-A3 II (a) the dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the discipling

101 of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee
102 affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which
103 case the request shall be granted. Seconded by Selectperson Jim Gregoire,

104 Roll Call vote

105 Selectperson Jim Gregoire Yes

106 Selectperson Jeanie Forrester Yes

107 Selectperson Lynn Leighton Yes

108 Vice Chairperson Steve Aiken Yes

109 Chairperson Mike Pelczar Yes

110

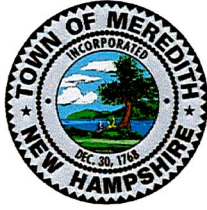
111 Entered non public at 6:35pm

112

113 Public meeting resumed at 7:15pm

114 Meeting adjourned at 7:16pm

DRAFT



Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025

From: Judie Milner, Town Manager

Subject: Board to consider reorganization of the community development department

Suggested Motion:

No Motion – Workshop Only

Recommendation:

My recommendation is to rename the Community Development Department to the Planning and Development Department and implement alternative 3.

Background/Discussion:

In the Spring, the board asked me to review the community development study completed by Jay Minkarah in February 2023 and make a recommendation for the department. At the selectboard meeting on July 14th, I presented the board with a recommendation to rename and reorganize the department. The board asked me for other alternatives to consider. I decided to wait until after our strategic goal process to consider alternatives that would best support the goals of the community.

The board has made it clear that they expect the manager's office to take the leadership position in economic development. Based on my experience, the role of economic development closely ties with the planning function of the community. The community development study made it clear that the department needed five positions to operate at their current level, which does not include a proactive approach to economic development.

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Alternatives:

Note: All alternatives include renaming the department to Planning and Development to better align with the functions of the department.

Alternative 1

Keep functioning under the current model proposed by a former manager where community development has 4.5 positions and the manager functions as the complaint/resolution person for the department.

Staffing under Alternative 1:

Town Planner (Gr 17)

Code Enforcement (Gr 16)

Administrative Assistant (Gr 10)

Office Clerk – FT (Gr 4)

Office Clerk – PT (Gr PTS-14)

This alternative is not working for the community or the staff. The staffing configuration is not adequate for the complexities of this office and places too much burden on two positions. There is very little oversight and no leadership for the department leading to staff dissatisfaction and inefficiencies. This is not to say the staff is not doing everything they can to deliver satisfactory work; in fact, it is producing above and beyond. However, this is not sustainable and may not be focusing on the highest and best use of the resources to the economic development goals of the community.

Alternative 2

This alternative was first introduced to the board at your July 14th selectboard meeting. This alternative adds a director to the department, reclasses the positions to best suit the functions of the department, and brings the department up to 5 positions as recommended in the 2023 study.

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Staffing under Alternative 2:

Director (Gr 22)

Senior Planner (Gr 17)

Code Enforcement (Gr 16)

Planner I (Gr 12)

Office Clerk – FT (Gr 4)

While this alternative brings the staffing level to the recommended 5 positions per the 2023 study, that study recommends the 5 positions for the status quo and not adding in the proactive economic development. While the department would have the required oversight and may gain some efficiencies, the tie between the economic development push expected from the managers office and this important component of economic development is not established. Likely the director will need to work on planner activities exclusively and will not be able to contribute to economic development without at least one more FT employee. This may not be the most efficient solution given the Board's expectations of the Manager's office.

Alternative 3

This alternative includes a reorganization of the Community Development Department and the Town Manager's office. It resolves the oversight deficiency and has the two offices working together proactively for economic strategies that best suit the community and most closely fits the board's expectations.

Staffing under Alternative 3:

Current:

Community Development:
Town Planner (Gr 17)
Code Enforcement (Gr 16)

Recommended:

Planning & Development:
Senior Planner (Gr 17)
Code Enforcement (Gr 16)

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Admin Assistant (Gr 10)
Office Clerk – FT (Gr 4)
Office Clerk – PT (Gr PTS-14)

Planner I (Gr 12)
Admin Assistant (Gr 10)

Town Manager Office:
Town Manager (contract)
Human Resources (Gr 16)

Town Manager Office:
Town Manager (contract)
Deputy Town Manager – HR & Spec Projects (Gr 22)
Admin Assistant (Gr 10)

Under this scenario, the Deputy Town Manager would take on the oversight of the department and the administrative duties associated with that oversight – supervision, employee development, evaluations, time approvals, goal setting, etc..

The Administrative Assistant in the TM office would assist in managing schedules, coordinating meetings, agendas, materials and presentations as part of the communications part of website and content development. This position would provide minute taking for the Select Board and be a backup to the Planning and Development Department for minute taking and administrative tasks as necessary.

This allows the Town Manager to pursue proactive economic development strategies while utilizing a consultant for higher end tasks, such as pro forma generation and grant writing, that include federal, state, and local solutions, making sure to entice the highest and best use of properties that balances the needs of the community while keeping the small town atmosphere .It is my opinion, this scenario most closely achieves the directives, expectations and goals of the board while responsibly utilizing our resources and people.

Fiscal Impact:

The recommended alternative, alternative 3, will reclass the currently vacant full time Office Clerk position (grade 4) to a Planner I (grade 12), reclass the HR position (grade 16) in the Manager’s office to Deputy Town Manager – HR & Special Projects (grade 22). It will eliminate the current part-time office clerk position in Community Development and add a full-time Administrative Assistant in the Manager’s office that wouldbe shared with Community Development.

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Savings will also be realized through the elimination of the part-time recording clerk and part-time website development as the Manager's admin assistant will take on these duties.

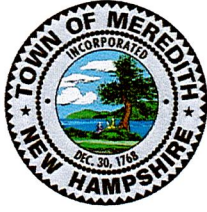
Concurrences:

The recommended alternative (3) is included in the proposed 2026 budget presented to the board on October 27th.

Attachments/Exhibits:

Community development study link:

<https://www.meredithnh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1189/Community-Development-Assessment-Final>



**Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025**

From: Judie Milner & Robert Carpenter

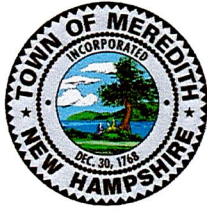
Subject: 2026 Budget

Suggested Motion:

No Motion Workshop only.

Background/Discussion:

Manager Milner and Director Carpenter to present an overview of wages and benefits included in the 2026 budget proposal.



Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025

From: Robert Carpenter, Director of Administrative Services

Subject: 2025 Tax Rate Setting

Suggested Motion:

Selectboard member moves, *"I move that we accept the tax rate as presented."*

Selectboard Chair calls for a second, discussion and vote.

Recommendation:

The recommendation is to move forward with the tax rate as presented.

Background/Discussion:

Review of DRA Preliminary Tax Rate form

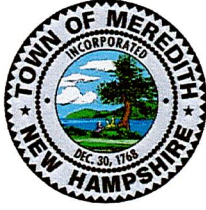
Review of Fund Balance Policy/Practice

Fiscal Impact: --

Concurrences: --

Alternatives: --

Attachments/Exhibits: --



**Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025**

From: Conservation Commission

Subject: Board to consider allowing consultant for conservation commission project funded by state "Moose Plate" grant on town owned land

Suggested Motion:

Selectboard Member moves, "I move that the Meredith selectboard authorize board chair Michael Pelczar to sign the Landowner Acknowledgment and Consent Form for the grant funded project along the Hermit Brook and Hermit Lake tributaries, Merrill Brook and Pemigewasset Lake tributary."

Board Chair calls for a second, discussion and vote.

Discussion:

See attached from Meredith Conservation Commission and Belknap County Conservation District Chairs.



TOWN OF MEREDITH

Meredith Conservation Commission
41 Main St., Meredith, NH 032523
Email: Conservation@Meredithnh.gov

Belknap County Conservation District
64 Court Street, Laconia, NH 03246
Belknapconservation@gmail.com

October 28, 2025

The Meredith Conservation Commission and Belknap County Conservation District are working with local landowners to improve water quality and fish habitat in local streams and lakes. We are reaching out to you and other landowners along three Meredith streams: Hermit Brook and Hermit Lake tributaries, Merrill Brook, and a Pemigewasset Lake tributary. These streams appear to be good candidates for this work and have native eastern brook trout populations. Two projects have already been completed in Meredith, Stoney Brook in 2025 and Reservoir Brook in 2021. As a first step, we do a quick stream assessment. We're seeking your permission to allow Ryan Harvey, our stream restoration contractor to walk along the stream on your property taking measurements and photos. Please respond by November 24th to allow time to do the assessment before winter.

To explain more about this stream assessment and potential restoration work, we've attached some information. If you have questions, we'd be glad to talk with you on the phone or on the ground. Grants have been secured to pay all costs for the stream assessment and implementation work.

Our initial focus is just to walk the stream and assess its potential for improving water quality and habitat. Once we have the landowner permission, we'll schedule the assessment date and notify you in advance. Our contractor is fully insured, so there's no liability issue. We'll share the assessment findings, and let you know if your property is in the focus area for any recommended measures to improve water quality. The attached landowner permission form just allows our contractor access to take a brief walk along the stream once and doesn't commit you to anything further. After the assessment, you'll have an opportunity to decide if you want to participate in any improvements recommended. There is no cost to landowners for any phase of this project. It is funded through a NH "Mooseplate" (License plate) Conservation grant.

Please sign the attached agreement and return it in the self-addressed envelope to the Belknap County Conservation District. Thank you for your interest in protecting water quality and stream habitat. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Morin, the District's Program Coordinator or Scott Powell, Chair of the Meredith Conservation Commission at the email addresses at the top of this letter or call Lisa at 603-527-5880. We've enclosed an article about stream restoration using wood additions to mimic natural processes and answers to frequently asked questions

Sincerely,

Scott Powell
Meredith Conservation Commission Chair

Jamie Campbell Irving
Belknap Co. Conservation District Chair

New Hampshire State Conservation Committee Conservation License Plate Grant Program

Landowner Acknowledgment and Consent

Stream Assessment

I/We the undersigned, understand and agree to grant stream contractor, Ryan Harvey access onto my/our property for the purpose of conducting a brief assessment of the potential to improve stream conditions and habitat.

Landowner Acknowledgment

Signature _____

Print/Type Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

OR

Governing Body Acknowledgment

Governing Body

Municipality (if appropriate) _____

Signature _____

Duly Authorized Representative

Print/Type Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

Please complete this form by November 24, 2025. If you have any questions, contact us.

Optional to keep you informed:

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Mail to BCCD, 64 Court St., Laconia, NH 03246 (self-address envelope provided)

For Information: Email: belknapconservation@gmail.com or Conservation@Meredithnh.gov



Restoring Streams with Large-Wood Habitat Enhancement: Frequently Asked Questions:

Does our stream need improvement?

We assess local streams to learn if they would benefit from habitat enhancement. Many local streams lack the natural amount of wood that would fall across them and help reduce stormwater damage, excess nutrients in lakes, and improve habitat. Stream habitat can be improved by carefully adding large wood to mimic natural processes.

Define "large-wood"

On average, pieces of wood that are at minimum 4-inch diameter at breast height (DBH). A large wood installation usually includes at least two key pieces of large wood, which act as a framework for the installation. Smaller branches are then tied in and secured into this framework, adding three-dimensional complexity and roughness to the installation.

Are we building dams?

No, we are not building dams. Our wood installations are not intended to be impervious/non-porous barriers. Added wood should allow for the passage of both water and aquatic organisms. Over time, added wood will capture sediment and organic matter, which may create a step/pool hydraulic, but will not prevent Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP). Added wood does have the potential to raise water levels upstream of the installation, resulting in floodplain re-engagement. This is considered when adding wood to stream reaches in close proximity to infrastructure/bordering properties.

Where are trees sourced from?

Trees are sourced from the surrounding the project area. We usually do our best to maintain a 50-foot riparian cutting buffer, but chop and drop trees will be sourced from within this buffer. No trees that have root wads forming the bank will ever be cut. Trees that provide ample canopy cover to the stream channel will be avoided when possible. The amount of trees cut is not noticeable. Trees to be used can be adjusted based on landowner preferences (for example, don't cut in this area, or this species, etc).

Do we excavate?

We do not excavate, with the exception of sometimes moving larger instream cobble/boulders. All wood is placed in/around the stream channel, but there is no excavation of streambed substrate. Added wood is secured into place with the help of riparian trees & boulders (wedging in) and securing logs into the banks.

What does construction involve/What does installation entail?

Usually done with a crew of 4-6 people. The only power equipment used is a chainsaw for felling/limbing trees. Wood addition sites are selected based on channel characteristics and morphology and trees for installations are sourced from the immediate surrounding area. In some cases (not often), wood is brought in from off-site. In streams where the average bank full width is 10-15 feet, large wood is sourced/cut outside the riparian buffer and added to the stream channel by hand. In streams with an average bank full width greater than 15 feet, a 'chop and drop' method is employed; trees are felled (within the riparian buffer) directly into the stream channel and maneuvered into place using a hand operated winch. Wood is added with the intent of staying in place during high flows.

Physical & aesthetic impact?

Instream wood help restore natural stream channel conditions and aquatic habitat. A lack of large wood in streams results in increased flow energy, which moves sediment downstream, erodes the streambed and banks. This can lead to channel incision, which interrupts connection to the floodplain, and poor habitat conditions. In undisturbed systems, large wood is naturally recruited into the stream channel via wind throw, ice storms, disease, etc. Our goal is to mimic the appearance of naturally recruited large wood.

Chainsaw-cut ends of key logs can appear less than natural; if this is a concern, logs & stumps can be facet-cut to appear more natural.

Stony Brook, Granby, VT – About one year after installation. Wood has captured sediment and organic matter, creating a step/pool hydraulic. Downstream scour will create a deep pool which will provide refuge during low flow conditions.



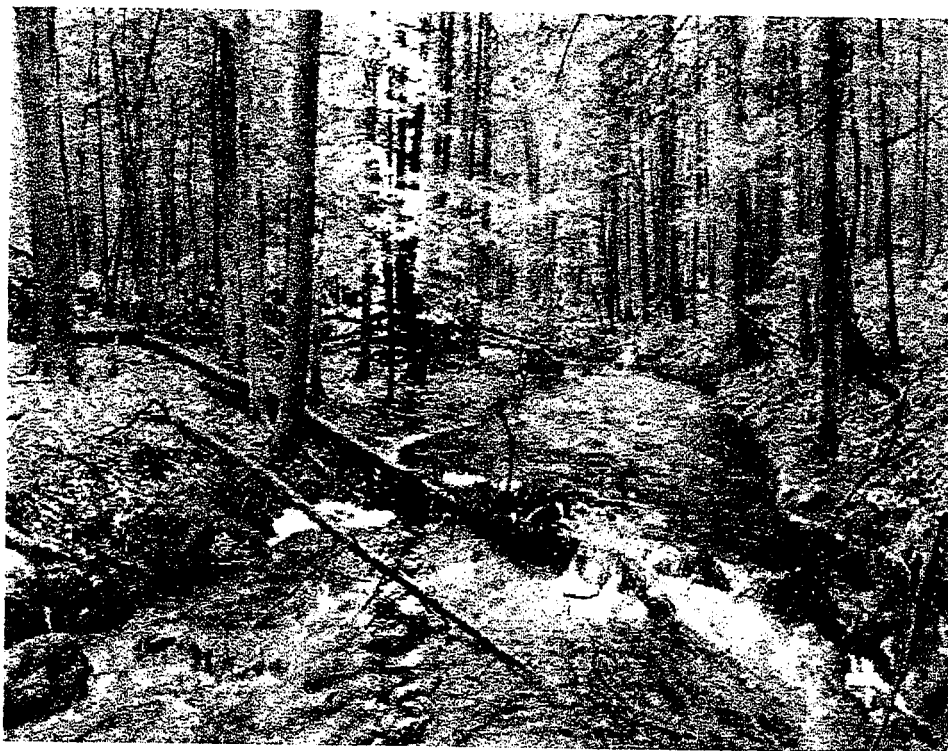
Stony Brook, Granby, VT – About one year after installation. Wood has captured sediment and organic matter, creating a step/pool hydraulic. Downstream scour will create a deep pool which will provide refuge during low flow conditions.



Griffin Brook, Deerfield, NH – About 3 years after installation. Large-wood added to this location has collected organic matter, creating a step/pool hydraulic.



Griffin Brook, Deerfield, NH – About 3 years after installation. Added wood has created an upstream backwater, allowing the stream to reengage with it's surrounding floodplains.



Lamprey River, Deerfield, NH – About 3 years after installation. Large-wood has been 'keyed' into bank growing trees to prevent wood from moving during high-flows. Added wood has created beneficial hydraulics while capturing organic matter and sediment.



Isinglass River, Strafford, NH – About 3 years after installation. Added wood has been locked behind instream trees to prevent movement during high-flows. The development of a downstream riffle reach provides good spawning substrate for eastern brook trout.



Lamprey River, Deerfield, NH – About 3 years after installation. Trees felled directly across the stream channel have begun to create beneficial hydraulics, allowing for upstream floodplain re-engagement



Eastern Brook Trout photo by Dianne Timmins, Goldwater Fisheries Program Director of the New Hampshire Fish & Game Dept.

NACD's mission is to promote the wise and responsible use of natural resources for all lands by representing locally-led conservation districts and their associations through grassroots advocacy, education and partnerships.



National Association of
Conservation Districts

Saving our brook trout with wood in streams

by Linda Brownson

As a first-time forestland owner located in the foothills of the White Mountains of New Hampshire, each spring, as soon as the snow melted and the ground firmed up, I would head down to the main stream that cuts through the valley in anticipation of work that needed to be done. Chainsaw in hand and, if lucky, a young muscular helper along to help move wood, we would start with an exploratory hike up the stream to see what 'damage' had been done after many winter windy storms and tree fall. I began this task with enthusiasm, recalling how satisfying it was to remove the fallen logs and woody debris that clogged the stream and restore the full flow and beauty of this winding waterway.

Many years later, after study and workshops on forest ecology and wildlife habitat, I can now see the folly of my ways. The more I learned about the interrelationships of trees, plants, water, and wildlife—our ecological system—the more my attention shifted. Native Americans well understand the concept, but we have been slow to learn from them. It implies another perspective, one could say a paradigm shift, in fact, to operate from 'cleaning up the environment' to one in which the approach is to protect the ecosystem of which we are a part along with the forests, streams, and wildlife.

More than 20 years ago, in the Pacific Northwest, the value of putting wood in streams was being evaluated closely, as work was being done to rescue the

endangered salmon population. Interest in 'wood in stream' started picking up in the Northeast a few years after. Fish biologists were behind it, as our native population of Eastern Brook Trout was declining.

Brook trout [*Salvelinus fontinalis*] are the only native stream dwelling trout species located in the eastern United States. The species requires cold and clean water to survive. Brook trout are extremely sensitive to environmental changes and habitat alterations. Such sensitivity has made brook trout a particularly important indicator species, as its decline provides early warning signs of a reduction in the overall health of the aquatic ecosystem.

We have learned that large wood is a critical aspect of the forest stream ecosystem and, importantly, for the survival of trout that inhabit the streams. Large wood diverts water flow, changes water velocity to trap sediment, creates cascades and riffles increasing oxygen in the water. The wood helps form deeper pools where the fish can survive the summer heat and shade to reduce the water temperature. The logs and brush add structure to streams and provide escape cover and collect leaves and twigs. The leaves and twigs (organic matter) feeds insects and invertebrates, the food source for brook trout. The concentration of essential nutrient elements increases considerably as large pieces of wood decompose, providing improved habitat conditions for the fish and other aquatic creatures.

Trees don't fall in the streams anymore like they did when northern forests were older forests. Hundreds of years of land use, abuse, and control or elimination of most sources of natural disturbance has led to an even-aged mature forest. In addition, the beavers significantly altered the landscape, damming up small streams, felling trees, until their activities were considerably reduced by human intervention.

Until very recently, the importance of wood in streams for fish habitat was not very well understood, nor communicated. The Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont was one of the first in the east, to work with wood in stream applications with great success. After years of experimenting, they nearly doubled the amount of biomass in the streams they were working on and the fish were getting bigger and fatter. According to Don Keirstead, NH Resource Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the GMNF provided the benchmark as to how much wood in stream to apply, which is being used today.

Providing the ecological benefits of older trees falling in the streams is possible through controlled practices that imitate these natural forces. "Mimicking nature is what we are doing by putting wood in streams," explained Nels Liljedahl, NRCS District Conservationist in Conway, NH, who has been working with NH Fish & Game, Trout Unlimited, and Tin Mountain Conservation Center to design and implement these new practices and collect the data.

As the scientific community was learning more and landowners were becoming more aware, suddenly there was a real surge of interest. NRCS led to that surge, according to John Magee, Fish Habitat Biologist with NH Fish & Game. NRCS created wood in stream cost-share practices to help landowners with the funding and technical tools to implement this conservation effort. As more was communicated about the importance of large (and small) wood in streams, the more landowners and foresters were asking questions.

This is where conservation districts started playing a key role. "We knew right away that we could start doing this work through our district," explained Belknap County Conservation District (BCCD) Chair Donna Hepp.

One of their first projects was the Poorfarm Brook Large-Wood Restoration Project in Gilford, NH. This project was initiated by the district in June of 2018, with assistance from numerous grants and partnerships—indicating the value and increase of popularity



associated with this work. Along a 2.9 mile reach of Poorfarm Brook, a total of 96 instream large-wood structures were installed with the goal of creating and enhancing instream habitat for eastern brook trout and other local fish species by slowing water velocities, trapping sediment, and increasing the morphologic complexity of Poorfarm Brook—which empties into Lake Winnepesaukee, the largest lake in New Hampshire.

Optimal results, according to Colin Lawson of Trout Unlimited, are "pools forming downside of the wood work which create the hydraulics so freshets scour the banks with scour pools, and the bigger stuff moves down to a tailwater and goes over the top; we are looking for a 'pool-riffle combo!'

Already many wood in stream projects and workshops are in the works for the BCCD district including a statewide Stream Restoration Conference, in conjunction with the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting, in October, 2019. "There are resources available to help communities and landowners. Our recent projects offer examples of what can be done at the local level," said Lisa Morin, BCCD District Manager.

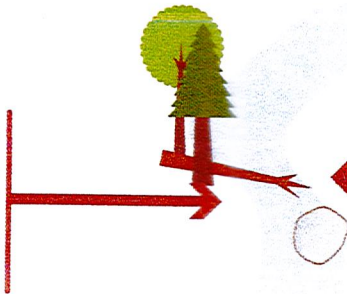
In Grafton County, NH, the Grafton County Conservation District is providing landowners with answers to the question: Can water quality and fish habitat be improved by adding wood to streams? Grafton County borders the Connecticut River on the western part of the state and every stream in the county flowing into that river has brook trout. Last October, the District, NRCS, and UNH Cooperative Extension educators convened on Bruce and Sarah Schwaegler's Tree Farm in Orford, NH to offer a "Wood Additions to Stream Workshop." They focused on the environmental benefits, site selection, permitting, and what it takes for a successful project, encouraging local landowners to take a fresh look at wood in streams.

A Sample Stream with Added Wood

Flow
Direction

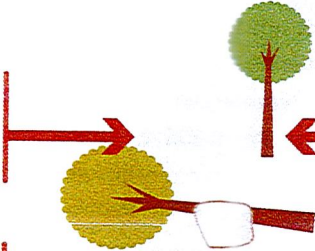


Single tree
installations,
somewhat
perpendicular to
stream channel.



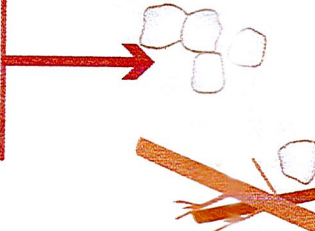
Log is pinned at a
bend, between
trees on bank. One
end is wedged in
an undercut

Leaving some of the
log in the upland
helps secure



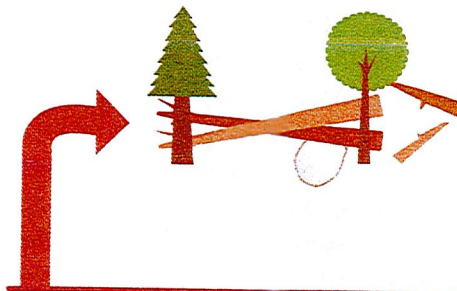
Do **not** cut trees on
bank. Roots help
stabilize soil.

It's OK to add wood
near boulders to
capture leaf matter
even if pools
already exist in
these areas.



Criss-crossed logs
with smaller
branches collect
leaves that attract
invertebrates. Big
log on top helps
secure.

This log is not
secure and does
not count as an
installation.



**Make a larger "strainer" every ~300 feet to catch
any loose logs from upstream.**

Strainers also help spread water into floodplain
during high flow if channel is not too deep.

100 ft.

Within a 100ft
stretch place at
least three
installations.
This example
100 foot stretch
shows three.

Wood Loading in Stream, USDA-NRCS diagram concept, by Kelly Boland.
Created with input from NH Fish & Game, Tin Mountain, and Trout Unlimited



These two photos reflect the original installation and then the revisit two years later. You can see the development of the pool below the structure. This installation would involve the hand placement technique to engage the stream immediately. (Trout Unlimited photos)

Foresters are attending these workshops too, as they also want to learn about a practice they have not necessarily paid attention to, especially as, in the past, guidance provided to landowners was often to remove wood from streams. “As a forester, I will say that streams tend to be overlooked; and I don’t know if we are always also thinking about fish,” commented Andy Fast, a county forester with UNH Cooperative Extension (UNHCE).

“This is a very interesting practice from a forester’s perspective,” explained Karen Bennett, Forestry State Specialist with UNHCE, “because ‘best management practices’ has been to keep wood out of streams, and the laws generally don’t allow it.” The knowledge base is growing, but “there needs to be a readjustment mindset,” added Bennett. “Are there ways for us to accomplish this when doing a logging operation? This needs to be explored!”

But, in fact, a unique opportunity exists during timber harvesting to place large wood in streams to enhance fish habitat. During the timber harvest, the equipment is on site, as well as the trained personnel capable of placing the wood strategically and properly into the streams. Thus, fish habitat enhancement can be accomplished through wood addition as an add-on to the existing logging operation. ‘Chop and drop’ is the primary installation method in these cases, accompanied by hand placement. Most installations should touch the water at low flow. Of course, there are guidelines to follow and, in NH, permits are required from the Department of Environmental Services.

“Most of the research on wood in streams is focused on how wood affects brook trout,” Fish Biologist Magee stated. He is a big proponent of placing large wood in streams—though with careful review by an experienced professional. There are situations when, for public safety concerns, for example, it

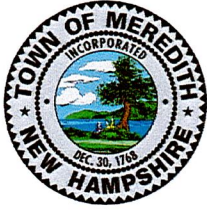
is not advisable to put wood in streams. It also makes sense to choose the right stream types that are suitable for the active restoration of instream wood and woody habitat. These would include relatively small streams with channels less than 15 ft across, a stream with little or no instream wood in it, no public or private infrastructure immediately downstream that would be damaged if added wood moved, and streams with wild brook trout present.

As putting wood in streams becomes a new interest on private land, conservation districts are becoming the contact point for helping landowners make such decisions and providing the educational tools through workshops and demonstrations. Conservation districts keep a pulse on changing resource concerns through their local work groups and networks. Working with their key partner NRCS, they can help accommodate changes in thinking and research as it relates to natural resource concerns.

Arguably, a shifting forestry paradigm is a reflection of our changing cultural values. Some trends related to this shift might be the growing interest in organic and regenerative agriculture, and the decline, or extirpation, of various species of wildlife. The findings of modern science offer strong support for a more ecological paradigm. Mimicking nature by putting wood in streams may offer the best hope for our native brook trout.



Linda Brownson lives in the western foothills of the White Mountains in Wentworth, NH, where she manages 200 acres of mixed northern hardwoods and conifers for wildlife habitat. She is NACD Executive Board member for the Northeast Region and Vice-President of the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association.



**Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025**

From: Judie Milner, Town Manager

Subject: Town Manager Report

Retirements:

Director Faller – After 28 years of service, Director Faller has announced that he will be retiring on 12/31. Mike was the first person to stop by on my first day with Meredith & took me on a very eye-opening tour of Meredith within my first week. I appreciated both! Mike, thank you for your service and best wishes in your retirement.

Selectboard Invitation – staff is putting together a joint retirement party for Director Choiniere and Director Faller on Wednesday, December 3rd at noon in the Community Center, we would love for you to join us.

Shout outs:

Capt Currier & Lt. Suiter attended ODP 1st Level Chief Officer at the NED-IAFC Conf/Expo, which is in conjunction with the IAFC and Credited through Southern Columbia University

Lt. Suiter and Intern Chris Koza passed the Nation Registry EMT

Chief Jones is now Past President of the NED-IAFC for one year.

2026 Budget Process –2 Workshops scheduled for November 12th at 4:30pm and November 18th at 5:30pm. I plan to discuss overall payroll and benefits for 2026 at your 11/10/25 regular Selectboard meeting. We may need a 3rd workshop the first week of

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

December but we will play it by ear. Then 2 workshops for follow up discussion at your regular December meetings (12/8 & 12/22) for completion well ahead of January 2026.

Tentative Schedule of Budget Presentations:

November 12th

Assessing,
Library,
Community Development,
Town Clerk,
Police Department
DPW, and
Water/Sewer

November 18th

Conservation,
Parks and Recreation,
Fire Department,
Executive | Admin Services | Taxes | Municipal Administration | Long Term
Debt | Expendable Trust Funds | Revenue

Outside Agency FY2026 Warrant Article –

Selectboard Email Addresses – checking in, did LR Computer reach out to you?

Coalition 2.0 – I attended the annual meeting of this group – the group advocating for our interests in the education funding issues at the court and legislature – on October 21st. I've been elected as the appointed (vs elected) alternate to the 5 member Joint Board which acts as the Executive Committee for the group. There are 23 communities participating in Coalition 2.0 with some active recruitment of 5-6 other communities who stand to lose significant tax dollars if the donor community model is reinstated. Meredith's share of the fee is expected to be \$5,194 in 2026 down from \$13,208 in 2025. 2026 is not a State budget year so less advocacy is needed. I will update the board of upcoming meetings of the executive board as they occur.

Vision, Mission, Strategic Goals – summary was one of 10/27 workshops so that we can digest it ahead of our Nov 24, 2025 meeting where Rick Alpers from Primex will facilitate

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

final thoughts on the vision, mission and goals and the prioritization of the objectives to meet those goals.

Flood Map Update – the comment period ended on 10/14. FEMA representatives will be speaking at the LRPC meeting on 10/27. More from Planner LaBrecque after the LRPC meeting.

Winnepesaukee River Basin Program Update – the advisory group is still working on mitigating the huge cost increases specifically in the replacement fund. Reminder, the State sets the numbers in the budget and the communities are expected to pay. The letter attached to my 10/27 TM update was finalized and is being circulated to the member groups for signatures. I signed the letter and will keep you informed of the process.

126 Meredith Road Code Enforcement Update – this is the subject of our legal nonpublic session on tonight's agenda.

Union Arbitration Update – Arbitration occurred on September 15th. The 2 attorneys filed their summations within the 30 day window; Arbitrator Shea asked for 45 days to render her opinion which brings us to early December. As discussed with the board, this opinion could have a significant impact on both the current budget and 2026 budget.

State DOT cuts to 10 yr Plan - GACIT hearings are continuing for districts other than ours. We are still concerned that another district may get their cut project put back in which will mean another project is cut. Town Planner LaBrecque has been attending the GACIT hearings as well as the joint community meeting hosted by the Town of Raymond. It is important to have your voice heard. A News Flash has been issued on the town's website explaining the issues and providing the link for citizen comment. A helpful flyer provided by Town Planner LaBrecque follows:

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD NH DOT 10YR TRANSPORTATION PLAN



GACIT is working on the [2027–2036 Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan](#), which shapes the state's transportation goals, project priorities, and funding decisions — including road, bridge, transit, and multimodal projects.

[Comment Here](#) Ask DOT to keep the cut projects on a priority list or retain in the plan as not funded projects. All the projects being cut were evaluated, scored and deemed priorities. Let's not lose the work that went into identifying them. Consider asking DOT to increase their revenue through toll increase.

[NH DOT Public Hearing Ten Year Plan Presentation](#) All you need to know about cuts to the DOT 10 Year Plan.

In addition, DOT is looking for communities to support an increase in tolls throughout the state as projects are being cut and revenue is not keeping up. Thoughts?

I signed onto a letter prepared by LRPC for the 4 communities along the route 25 corridor, reminding DOT not to forget about the projects that support our busy and important economic driving corridor. The letter is attached to this update.

NH DOT project on Neal Shore Road – the railroad crossing will be replaced on Neal Shore Road. The work is expected to occur the first part of November; DOT plans to keep one lane of traffic open at all times so residents who live near the lake can access their homes.

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Adaptive Launch Project – installation is complete; Director Choiniere is working with Bldgs and Ground to update the approach path to the launch.

Zoning Review (HOP grant) - Public Outreach and Engagement in Fall of 2025 for potential amendments at March 2026 Town Meeting. Schedule as follows:

11/25 5:30pm Planning Board Workshop review revised regulatory language

12/9 7pm 1st Public Hearing

There is a survey that was sent out in a News Flash and still available on the community development page of the website (www.meredithnh.gov) for community input on zoning changes.

Bios for Website – I'll be sending the bio's to the website people shortly.

Master Plan – draft plan is on the website, edits are still being made, the Planning Board reviewed the 2nd draft of the plan at their meeting on 10/28 at 4:30 and made a few tweaks regarding short term rental and permitting process.

Upcoming Events on Town Property:

DPW FACILITY USE PERMITS APPROVED				UPDATED 10/21/2025	
NAME OF APPLICANT	PROPERTY	Event Date	TIME	EVENT	APPROVED
2025					
Lakes Region Dance	Solid Waste	October 4-5	8am to 3 pm	fundraiser	x
ILHS Class of 2028	Solid Waste	October 18	8am to 3 pm	Fundraiser	x
ILHS Track & Field Team	Solid Waste	November 1	8am to 3pm	Fundraiser	x
Lakes Region Dance	Solid Waste	November 8-9	8am to 3 pm	fundraiser	x
ILHS Freshman Class	Solid Waste	November 16	8am to 3 pm	Fundraiser	x
Hooks & Needles Club	Christmas Trees in Hesky Park Pavilion	Nov 12 through 19th	24 hrs each day	Hats/Mittens Give away for Needy	x
2026					
Meredith Rotary Club	Solid Waste Facility	January 3rd	8am to 3pm	styrofoam collection	x
Rick Loader, Guitar Army	Hesky Park	Every Tuesday night	5:30 to 8:30 pm	guitar concert	x

As we discussed, I will be speaking with DPW about the frequency of fundraising activities at the transfer station in 2026.

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Upcoming Meetings:

Town of Meredith

Selectboard Meeting Schedule - Fall 2025

Date	Time	Meeting	Location
11/10/2025	4pm	Selectboard Regular Meeting	Community Center
11/12/2025	4:30pm	Budget Workshop	Humiston Bldg Conference Room
11/18/2025	5:30pm	Budget Workshop	Humiston Bldg Conference Room
11/24/2025	4:30pm	Selectboard Regular Meeting	Community Center
11/25/2025	5:30pm	Planning Board Workshop	Community Center
12/8/2025	4:30pm	Selectboard Regular Meeting	Community Center
12/9/2025	7pm	Planning Board	Community Center
12/17/2025	noon	Holiday Party	Community Center
12/22/2025	4:30pm	Selectboard Regular Meeting	Community Center

State Zoning/Housing Mandate Dialog – the Town of Raymond is putting together a meeting with the Governor and key State officials regarding the unfunded mandate some of the zoning and housing legislation has put on communities. The first meeting was October 6th – Town Planner Labreque attended. We'll keep you informed of future meetings.

Short Term Rental Licensing – The STR licensing software has been configured. Town Planner LaBrecque ran through a demo and suggested some edits and those are being made. The outreach letters are drafted, which will be circulated and ready to mail when the software goes live.

Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge – a \$3.50 per ton surcharge has been enacted on solid waste beginning 1/1/26. Municipalities will be able to request reimbursement of the

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

surcharge on a quarterly basis. This creates more paperwork and filings for the Administrative Services department and will require education in the budgeted process as the fees will be appropriated in the tipping expenditure line and the reimbursements will be appropriated in a revenue line with \$0 net effect on taxes but the expenditure line will look like a sizable increase. More to come during budget process.

Town Wide Road Assessment – completed and implemented in the proposed 2026 budget.

CIP Update – on Oct 1st, the CIP committee recommended \$2,440,374 in projects of which \$1,186,374 recommended funding with existing monies saved in the expendable trust funds leaving \$1,254,000 recommended for appropriation in the 2026 budget. Next steps will be narrative write up by Director Carpenter and Planning Board Review/Approval at their 11/25 meeting.

Tax Deeded Property Project:

Current Deeding - Our Deputy Tax Collector Christina Brown is starting the deeding process with the required intent to deed letters. I expect a very short list of properties for consideration sometime in November/December.

Deeded Properties in the Town's Name – all properties but 2 (R17-16 Chemung & R35-3 off edgarly school) received bids and have been paid. Attorney Sullivan is preparing the appropriate paperwork for the winning bidders and handling the return of excess contributions for the applicable tax deeded properties. I plan to re-bid the 2 properties in the near future. Total received is \$513,555.54 with \$52,753.89 to be returned to previous owners for a net revenue of \$460,801.65. I have deeds for the board's signature tonight.

Pleasant Street Wall – Part of the CIP presentation

Waterfront infrastructure – Part of the CIP presentation & I'm working through the 2019 study completed by Weston & Sampson. After the review, I'll add a workshop to discuss board's direction and next steps.

Parking PILOT Program – Draft data collection report was attached to your 9/8 packet. Reports from PD and DPW have the parking lots with open spaces. I think there is a

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

misconception out there that the Town is required to provide parking and that the PD has the capacity to enforce 24/7 parking regulations at the 2 lots. I hope to address it so we may move forward with realistic expectations of what can be done. As the selectboard knows, there is a rsa that tells us we must charge taxes associated with the use of municipal property if the property is restricted to a few users. The committee met on 10/16 (after the PILOT program ended on 10/15). It seems there is a consensus of the committee to establish another PILOT program for next season with a few tweaks suggested. There is another meeting schedule for 10/30 at 5pm in the Annex to confirm the recommendation to the Selectboard from the committee. We are meeting 11/7 at 3pm in the Annex to discuss phase II recommendation to the board.

Main Street Project – parking study is complete and was attached to the TM update for 10/27 selectboard meeting. It will be available on the website soon under projects. Per our engineers, “the long and short of it is, Meredith has ample parking along Main Street and its vicinity”. Separately, I applied for a grant on 9/8 through a DOT Grant Program - Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program - for \$432k to finish the preliminary and final design phases for the project - fingers crossed. I have not heard as a result of the federal shutdown prior to the award date (expected 10/8). I will let you know when I hear – let’s hope for federal resolution soon. As discussed at the 10/27 meeting, I am asking the engineer to come back in to discuss main street recommendations in light of the parking study results – stay tuned!

Status DPW Bldg/Hutter – Attorney Sullivan working on resolution as discussed in nonpublic session on 10/6. More to come when this is public.

Next Department Head Meeting – November:

Budget Discussion based on priorities set in strategic summary

Personnel Policy Review

Waukegan Dam & Canal project – The FEMA grant for the project in the amount of \$5,073,634.95 to be obligated by 9/26/27 was approved by Governor & Council on 9/17/25; Meredith has already accepted and appropriated the pass through grant for the project; next steps will include a request for extension to 9/26/28 (one year extensions are the max that we can request). The engineer is working on several pieces of the request; Director Carpenter is handling the town portion of the request and will submit the completed request. The engineering firm has redesigned the project to avoid the need

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

to disrupt Dover Street and having minimal disruption of main street and water/sewer. They may be able to expend the grant funds in the allotted time period without relying on future extension request approval with the new design. I expect there will be another meeting with FEMA folks shortly to get approval for the new approach.

Route 3/25 assessment(underground) – Superintendent Bordeaux, Crew Chief Sausville, Director Faller, Asst Director Hale and I met with representatives of NH DOT and Bay District (Center Harbor) representatives on October 28th to discuss the sewer force lines which go through a storm water basin by the docks. We have documentation that the force mains were put in after and through the storm water basin. Next steps are a flow analysis and meeting with Center Harbor on the calculation of community payment for the project. We are expected to meet with Center Harbor in November. Here is a picture of the issue:



Route 25 Pedestrian Crossing – Director Faller has started conversations with DOT on a better way to do the crossing so traffic is not confused and stopping when they shouldn't for pedestrians which is putting further strain on the already congested area. Thank you Mike!

Town of Meredith Selectboard Agenda Report

Sewer Storm Water Asset grant- Scheduled for completion late 2025

Asset management/ Strategic planning grants- Both studies are scheduled for workshops in October 2025 with the related rate study.

Water/Sewer Rate Studies – October workshops were held (10/6 & 10/27) with the board, November public hearing will be at your 11/24 meeting with a 1/1/26 implementation. Director Carpenter has asked the engineer for the rate calculator should the board wish to discuss a different LTD split and the workshop meeting on 11/12.

Prescott Park Renovation – playground placement has been determined with the engineers for the greater project; site preparation will occur this fall with a spring construction.

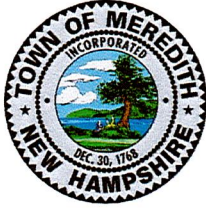
Community Power – final documents were executed as voted at the 10/27 selectboard meeting. They will be on the website soon.

Fire Department Study – on hold until after the strategic objectives are completed.

Engine 3 Build – final inspection is expected to occur the first week in December for a expected delivery shortly after.

Space Needs RFP –The kickoff meeting with SMP Architecture and town hall/annex departments occurred on November 6th. The firm took measurements of the existing spaces and we discussed needs, constraints and pros/cons possible solutions. There will be meetings with each employee in November and a few follow up meetings with the departments in December. The firm is shooting for a presentation of findings and public discussion as a workshop in your 1/26/26 selectboard meeting.

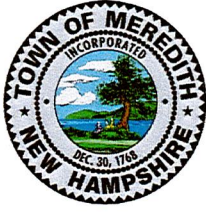
Projects working on – Stay Tuned for Future Update
PFAS Settlements



**Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025**

Subject: Visitor and Resident Comments

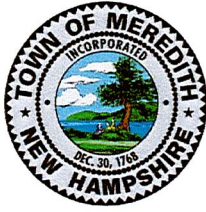
Board Chair opens the meeting to public for comment.



**Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025**

Subject: Select Board Reports and Comments

Board Chair recognizes Board Members for reports and comments.



**Town of Meredith, New Hampshire
Selectboard Agenda Report
For the Meeting of November 10, 2025**

Subject: Nonpublic Session

Suggested Motion to Enter Nonpublic Session:

Selectboard member moves, *"I move the Meredith Selectboard enter into nonpublic session under RSA 91-A3 II (L) the consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even when legal counsel is not present."*

Selectboard Chair calls for a second, discussion and **ROLL CALL** vote.

Suggested Motion to Exit Nonpublic Session:

Selectboard member moves, *"I move the Meredith Selectboard exit nonpublic session."*

Selectboard Chair calls for a second, discussion and **VOICE** vote.

In public session, Suggested Motion to Seal the Minutes:

Selectboard member moves, *"I move the Meredith Selectboard seal the minutes of the 8/11/25 nonpublic session because it is determined that the divulgence of this information likely would render a proposed action ineffective."*

Selectboard Chair calls for a second, discussion and **ROLL CALL** vote.