

Kingfield Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 16th, 2025; 6:00 PM Webster Hall 38 School Street

Attendance

Municipal Officers: Wade Browne, Chris Rushton, Morgan Dunham, Hunter Lander, Kim Jordan

Municipal Staff: Leanna Targett (Town Manager), Travis Targett (Wastewater Superintendent)

Public: Erica Bufkins, Brad Orbeton, Jeff Maget, Neal Tranten, MaryAnn Bergeron, Kathy Houston, Steve Yates, Julie Swain, Dennis Burnell and Lynn Burnell, Henry Williams, Claudia Diller, Jan Royall, Sue Davis, John Benson, Jean Benson, Polly MacMichael, Rob MacMichael, Mary Nodine, Julie Swain, Steph Rushton and two unidentified individuals.

Via Zoom: Danielle Mathieu

Absent:

Chairman Browne calls the meeting to order.

The board reviews meeting minutes from May 19th, 2025. Selectman Dunham makes a motion to accept the minutes as written. Seconded by Selectmen Lander. All in Favor

Old Business:

Chairman Browne states that there is no old business to discuss.

New Business:

Chairman Browne recognizes Kathy Houston to discuss next steps with the petition, school research and withdrawal. Kathy says the next steps are all data. She would like the board to consider an informal committee to present options. Kathy says this process is much bigger than I thought. Kathy says we want to present the info that is solid hard-core data with no feelings involved. Kathy says she already has some people that are interested. Chairman Dunham asks if she is thinking 4-5 people at first to gather the data. Chairman Browne asks if any money is needed. Kathy says yes 4-5 people and no funds are needed. Kathy says when you recommend a formal committee they will ask for money. Chairman Browne asks if the board is in support of this committee. Selectman Rushton asks what the timing is and what the vision is. Kathy says we will just be an informal group of fine individuals looking into this and not a committee. Julie Talmage states that the tuition calculations are not exactly transparent. If calculated by the entire budget it is \$25,000.00 per kid. Following further conversation, the board agrees to an independent group of individuals doing some research.

The next item if business is to discuss with Erica Bufkins from AVCOG the survey for comprehensive planning. Erica indicates that the purpose of the survey is to focus a big focus on public participation so that it can be incorporated into the comp plan. Erica says that the committee tried to keep it short with the majority of the questions being yes or no and also leaving room for a little more information. Erica says we needed to write questions that are relevant for this plan, some are directly pointed questions and some we could delete as the selectboard has determined. Erica says I did place one question back that would help with our transportation section and suggest we leave the questions in regarding barriers for businesses as this can be helpful. Kathy Houston asks if some questions about withdrawing/school could be added. Erica says she would be happy to present the findings to the selectboard once they are complete. Following further discussion, the board agrees with Erica and thanks her for her time.

Next is a discussion with former VEC members about prior VEC work. Claudia Diller asks if the benches will be put out this year. Chairman Browne says we are short staffed and are doing our best. Claudia asks when the picnic tables and bike rack will be put back out. TM Targett notes that they are covered with poison ivy and for the past few years the staff has come down with it from placing the tables out. Sue Davis says there is no poison ivy on the left-hand side. Selectman Lander states that nothing should be done until they can be reseeded. Sue Davis says the bottom two steps need to be fixed as all of the gravel and dirt have washed away. She suggests this be done with concrete.

Claudia asks about the planters that the school was going to repaint. Selectman Lander explains that this had not been completed as the kids just ran out of time. Claudia says we can put them back out unless the town is going to do it. She asks if they are going to get planted? Claudia asks what if there were volunteers or can the VEC plant them although they have been paused. TM Targett explains that there is \$3,000.00 in an account for the planters. Sue Davis says the post office cost \$80.00 which was for flowers and soil. Sue says last time I was paid for them to do the maintenance. The board disagrees with paying Sue and feels that volunteers can help to maintain. Jan says we will do it as a garden club.

Board to discuss changes to administrative budget following town meeting vote. TM Targett explains that she was tasked with eliminating \$48,000.00 from one of the leanest budgets. Which has resulted in the following changes in the administration budget.

1. **Removal of all legal fees.** This will halt all special town meetings for ordinances and such. IF we have an emergency need for legal we would need to take from Selectmen contingency.
2. **No Planning Board pay!** They are the only paid committee. This is average savings of \$2,680.00. We need to pay the health officer and the warden/ballot clerks for three elections.
3. **No special town meetings** unless they coincide with November/June elections. This includes voting on the school. There is enough money to pay the ballot clerks and for printing of necessary materials for the three mandatory elections. We have also lowered our advertising budget meaning that there is little money for posting public hearings.
4. **We will not have a town report printed next year.** An in-house printing will consist of the warrant and budgets only. This will be done in a limited quantity. Funds remain for tax bill printing/ mailing as the company can provide this service cheaper than we can in-house.
5. **Changes made to budget binders.** Cuts that include copy paper and printing – this may need to be scaled back to the basics. We may need to request that outside requesters send copies for all involved (x21) or we may need to look at sending necessary documents through email.
6. **Cut down on Supplies:** We will no longer print copies of ordinances, policies, agendas, and minutes. This will affect us all! Absolutely no copies for residents, clubs, society's etc. without a charge.
7. **There are no changes made to employee wages.**
8. We cannot take money from "map updates" as that was approved in the preceding article.
9. There was a plan in place prior to the vote to over expend one line item \$2,000.00 due to us budgeting \$17,500 in the computer line item (our trio operating system) and receiving the bill of \$19,500.00.

TM Targett says this was a very difficult task. Selectman Jordan said it best when she said that services will need to be cut. Bottom line is that this saved the average taxpayer \$12.00 in their tax bill.

Polly states that there is a lack of communication from the town and states that it is a simple fix to notify everyone by email that has signed up for the newsletter. It takes one email and notifies 100 people. Claudia says I used to get notifications from the town. TM, Targett explains that this was stopped as there was too much confusion on posts, minutes and agendas being only the six recent posts. Essentially the board decided it was more of a hassle. Selectman Jordan states that if the town had a municipal sign then notices could be posted there. Following further conversation TM, Targett is directed to use the email system again.

Next item is for the board to review first draft of a budget committee ordinance. TM Targett explains that this is a first draft for the board to consider. This is much more detailed than the one that is currently used. TM Targett says she suggests a seven-member committee instead of the fifteen as it has been years since all fifteen members show to meetings. TM Targett says this ordinance will need to go before the people at a town meeting.

Next item is misconduct with planning board member Susan Davis. Chairman Browne says Sue, you have great intentions, but you cannot represent yourself as a planning board member without prior approval. Sue asks how is any different than anyone else in town. Chairman Browne says you tell them you are representing the planning board.

Chairman Browne reads that when someone is overstepping their authority, they are acting beyond the limits of their role or position, often in a way that undermines others or disrupts the established order. This can manifest into making decisions that impact others without proper consultation or even undermining the authority of those above them. This includes undermining others by trying to exert control over them, giving advice without being asked, or generally acting in a way that challenges their authority. To summarize May 20, 2024, Village Enhancement Members (Susan Davis and Claudia Diller) contacted DOT for discussions on trees and apparently other items. No authority to represent the town was requested or given for this. August 1, 2024, Owners of 164 Main Street discuss with the selectboard an appointed official's harassment (Susan Davis). This was misrepresentation of authority as a planning board member and misrepresentation of the selectboard. August 13, 2024, Planning Board Meeting Minutes by Susan Davis where she is overreaching with planning board authority. September 17, 2024, Planning Board Meeting Minutes by Susan Davis appears as if this is an attempt to overstep the decisions/authority of the selectmen. May 1, 2025, email received from Erica Bufkins at AVCOG. Susan is trying to exert control and/or giving advice without being asked. And most recently - June 11, 2025, we received an email received from John Simmoneau at Bowdoin College about you contacting a retired professor for information. You had no authority to represent the town planning board. Furthermore, there are no permits or plan from Bowdoin at this time for Code Enforcement to review or the Planning Board. Following further conversation Sue says this is my last term and I am not renewing. Chairman Browne says we value what you do with the planning board. Selectman Jordan says there are boundaries that you must stay within.

Town Manager Updates/Discussion: TM, Targett says She has nothing to report at this time.

Selectmen Discussion: A reminder that Kingfield Pops is scheduled for June 28th.

Selectman Lander asks about the trail by the river that is pretty messed up due to Stratton School hiring a horse and wagon. Selectman Rushton states that it is getting better now that ATV's have compacted it back down. Selectman Lander asks if anyone was contacted for this?

Public Comment:

Brad suggests the board considers going back to the old format of town meeting to have more people attend. Polly MacMichael states that people can be at the town meeting and suggests that the date of the town meeting be changed.

Polly says at the town meeting we could have set money aside for non-motorized trails. Selectman Jordan says that the request must be done like all other that request funds. Polly says I advocated for this last time; we should be asking for TIF Funds. She says we are working on a project/plan so it would be great if the board just agreed to putting money aside for this purpose.

Selectman Dunham makes a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Lander. All in Favor.

**The minutes provided above are a summary. The Town meets record management requirements and retention schedules by maintaining permanent records of electronic recordings of meetings to satisfy the requirements of §403-A. Minutes by Leanna Targett.*