APPROVED MINUTES
TOWN OF RYEGATE
18 S. BAYLEY HAZEN RD
RYEGATE, VERMONT 05042

SELECTBOARD MINUTES
July 13, 2026
Town Office & Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Andrew Smith. Other members present: Regina Hazel and Darryl Perkins. Also present: Lorinda Blood, Carl Bayer, Greg Murray, Levi Welch, Sally Wilson, David Punt, Brandon Thrailkill and Jeffrey Haslett.
Additions to Agenda:
Sightline at 26 School Street and Route 5; Dog waste at Ticklenaked Beach

Regina moved to add two additions to Agenda. Darryl seconded the motion and it carried.
The minutes of June 22, 2026 were reviewed. Regina moved to approve the minutes as written. Darryl seconded the motion and it carried.
Caledonia Sheriff, Brandon Thrailkill was present to give the Board a midyear update. Sheriff Thrailkill stated the Sheriff's Dept. is fully staffed and he has increased patrols and other security details. All officers are continuing training. The towns that have a contract with the Sheriff's Dept. are seeing increased patrol hours. His goal is to build and increase the patrol services to the contracted Towns. The culture and working as a team has contributed to the success of the Dept. Andy stated the Town would value the opportunity to interact with a Dept. member to target patrols in Town other than Rt. 5 and Rt. 302. Sheriff Thrailkill instructed the Board or Town Clerk to call or email the dispatcher Peggy Cochran or himself with concerns. The Board thanked Sheriff Thrailkill for the update and the Dept's continued service to the Town.
Treasurer's Report:
The Board reviewed bills and signed orders.
Set the 2026 Municipal Tax Rate:
The Board reviewed the worksheets provided by the Treasurer and followed along as she explained the details. After a lengthy discussion Darryl moved to approve withdrawing $50,000.00 from the Non-Committed Reserve General Fund to reduce the property tax rate. The tax rate for 2026 Homestead is 2.7766 and Non-Homestead 2.7267. Regina seconded the motion and it carried.
PUBLIC COMMENT:
Regina-There is a lot of concern about what the Board can do to offset the tax rate. The CLA is not going to change until the Townwide reappraisal in 2029-2030. The school rate will be similar next year. The Town will be looking at a similar scenario. We need to be careful not to deplete the Non Committed Reserve in case on an emergency.
Jeffrey Haslet-Expressed concerns regarding inflation. Whatever the town can do to offset a tax increase is appreciated.

Carl Bayer-Thanked the Treasurer. Any money the Town can Contribute to offset the tax increase is appreciated. Sally Wilson- Does the Town have any control over freezing delinquent taxes.
Andy-The BOA has control over abating taxes. The State continues to push more costs on the Town and our only option is to increase property taxes.
Road Report:
The Hwy crew has been assisting with the cement installation for the Biomass System. Continuing grading and applying Chloride for dust control. The beaver problem around Symes Pond is stable. More beavers were trapped near the campground at Ticklenaked Pond. Nelson has ordered a hidden drive sign for Witherspoon Rd. The bulky dumpster at recycling was compacted.
Fire Department:
Fire Chief Greg Murray discussed the Forest Fire Warden Statute Changes and referred to ACT 162. The Fire Chief is now the forest fire warden, and he has appointed Levi Welch and Joshua Hansen as deputy fire wardens. The deputies should be contacted for burn permits.
Greg presented the Board with three new fire dept. applicants: one firefighter, a cadet, and an auxiliary member. After reviewing the applications Regina moved to approve the three applicants for the Fire Dept. Darryl seconded the motion and it carried.
Greg expressed his concern for the Corner Fire Station. They have found some decaying timbers due to insects. He will research grants for replacing the building.
FOR ACTION:
Appeal of VTEL Wireless Stipulation regarding Appeal to BCA
Lister, Sally Wilson, stated that the State of Vermont is setting the values of all utilities starting in 2026. Any organization that appealed or grieved the new values would have to go to the State of Vermont instead of grieving to the BCA. VTEL is asking to grieve the value set by the state. The stipulation regarding the appeal needs to be signed by the Board rather than Listers. The stipulation was signed by the Chair.
The Board reviewed the contract with Vermont State Police. Regina moved to approve and sign the contract with the Vermont State Police. Darryl seconded the motion and it carried.
Board of Civil Authority Meeting is scheduled for July 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM before the August Primary on August 11, 2026
Recycling Center Discussion was tabled until next meeting.
Biomass Update:
David Punt asked the total cost of the project.
Andy stated that the total project cost would be under $250,000.00. The town will be receiving the Clean Energy Grant that will possibly amount to $180,000.00. The Board is still working on the USDA Grant. The town has $80,000 and $12,000 from Efficiency Vermont that will be used as the local match for the project.
The concrete has been completed. The floor of the storage will be paved to save costs. The Town plans on purchasing local chips and the system will dry those chips.

Legal Trail # 6 & 7 was tabled until next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: David Punt requested that the Town does something to acknowledge the July 4th holiday next year. He is willing to donate funds.

There being no other business. Regina moved to adjourn at 9:40 PM. Darryl seconded the motion and it carried.

_____Elizabeth Page, Clerk for the Board