

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECTBOARD OPEN MEETING
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
JULY 28th, 2026**

- The meeting opened at 545 P.M. with the pledge of allegiance.
- Board members present Mary Ashcroft, Joe Denardo, and Matt Getty

Kari Clark Rutland Town Clerk and Treasurer:

Presented to the Board the tax rate calculation worksheets for the FY27 tax bills.

- There was discussion on how much needed to be raised to pay for the excavator. The ballot question and the motion during the March 24th Board meeting are slightly different. The motion gave an exact price which was based on a quote. After discussion, Selectman Denardo moved to use the \$146,526.46 in the calculation for the tax rate. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- Reviewed the calculations which include local option tax and other anticipated income, appropriations, depreciation accounts and bond payments.
- The Grand List total is up this year to \$10,803,823.17.
- The homestead school rate this year is 1.5659 up from 1.3765. This is a 13.76% increase.
- The non-homestead school rate this year is 1.9056 up from 1.6902. This is a 12.74% increase.
- The homestead town rate, which includes the school and municipal expenses, is 1.8737 up from 1.6501. The non-homestead town rate is 2.2134 up from 1.9638.
- The effect on the average home in town is an increase of \$250 to \$275 per \$100,000 in assessed value. The school rate, which is beyond our ability to control, increased 12.75%.
- The business personal property rate will be 0.3077.
- Selectman Denardo moved to accept the tax rate schedule as presented. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussed the budget estimates for the end of FY 2026.

- This does not include Cortina Settlement funds.
- Some departments were very close to their budgeted expenses, and some departments turned back a portion of their budget.
- There is approximately \$263,000 which will go into the capital improvement fund. A large portion of this is due to the local option tax coming in stronger than anticipated.

The August primary is in a couple of weeks and determines who will be on the November ballot. The regular polling locations will be open the regular times. Absentee ballots are available. The State will be mailing ballots to active voters for the November election directly. Local issues which may need to be included will likely require a second ballot created at Town expense. Discussed the logistics of making sure Town voters knew there was a second ballot.

Board to hold a public hearing on proposed changes to the Subdivision bylaw

- The Board opened the hearing at 630PM to hear public comments.
- The definition of Subdivision had been updated to clarify lease language.
- Discussed an exemption for parcels combined for tax purposes that are then sold off without changing their original characteristics. This should not require a subdivision.
- Clarification on the exemption listed in Section 2, exemptions, part b is needed and how the combined parcel exemption should be addressed.
- The public hearing was closed at 6:40PM.
- There will be another public hearing at the August 11th Board meeting.

Approval of Selectboard Minutes for July 14th:

The majority of Selectboard members from this meeting were not present. Approval will be on the next agenda.

Approval of Orders

Selectman Getty moved to approve the orders. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Board to discuss Habitat for Humanity request for tax exemption status to be included on the November ballot.

- Rebekah Stephens, Rutland Habitat for Humanity Executive Director, was present to discuss the request.
- Discussed the deadlines to submit their petition to have their request on the ballot.
- A copy of the petition was provided to Board members by Ms. Stephens for their review. It read "Shall the Town of Rutland exempt the property at 3092 Cold River Road presently owned by Habitat for Humanity of Rutland County, Vermont Inc from property taxation for a period not exceeding 10 years commencing with the 2026 – 2027 tax year so long as such property is used exclusively by Habitat for Humanity of Rutland County, Vermont Inc. for its purposes as a not for profit charitable organization."
- Town Lister Marie Faignant discussed the request and why the Listers Office had declined their request.
 - o There is a 3 prong test they must meet to qualify.
 - The primary use must be of benefit to an indefinite class of persons.
 - The property must be dedicated unconditionally to public use.
 - They must be a 501(c) organization.
 - o The 7000 sf building has administrative offices, their retail store, and their manufacturing facility. The manufacturing facility is not publicly accessible.
 - o They have built 7 homes in the county, none in the Town.
 - o They offer home repair, but only 1 Town resident has qualified.
 - o It was found 10% of the net proceeds must be tithed to Habitat for Humanity International. This organization does not offer support or assistance with running the local organization. Additionally, \$10,000 must be paid annually for the use of the HFH brand.
 - o Granting a tax exemption shifts the burden of the cost of the taxes to the rest of the Town residents.
- No action was taken by the Board.

Board to review for approval, contract for MS4 work in the Wynnmere development.

- Andres Torizzo from Watershed Consulting was present to review the contract for work.
- There is a state block grant which can fund the project.
- The Act 250 permit approval is pending; it is expected next week.
- 1 bid was received from Sanderson Trucking and Excavating for \$70,000.
- A contract for the work was provided to the Board.
- Selectman Denardo moved to approve the contract contingent on confirmation the grant funds can be used to construct this project, and to authorize the Board Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Town. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Board to meet with Devon Neary from the RRPC to discuss grant funding projects and other Town topics

- There are grant opportunities which could help fund different projects in town including infrastructure and planning. The RRPC can help the Town apply for them.
- With 2 absent Board members tonight, Mr. Neary will come back at future meeting to talk with the full Board.

Marie Fagnant Rutland Town Lister

1. Provided the Board with a draft contract with NEMRC to conduct the Town wide reappraisal. After discussion, the contract will be sent to our Town attorney for review.

Chris Clark Rutland Town Fire Chief:

1. Discussed the purchase of replacement radios for the department, in anticipation of the impact fees to come from the BAI Rutland impact statement for the Walmart project.
 - a. Since initially getting them priced, the cost has gone up.
 - b. Chief Clark would like to purchase the radios using the depreciation account and then reimburse it once the funds are received.
 - c. After discussion, Selectman Denardo moved to approve the purchase as requested with the funds to come from the depreciation account to be reimbursed by BAI Rutland. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Chair Ashcroft read and presented a proclamation to Selectman Joe Denardo in recognition of his nearly 50 years as Town Forest Fire Warden. The State has eliminated the position and given the responsibility to the Fire Chiefs.

Mike Rowe Rutland Town Recreation Director:

1. Discussed the options for getting ice cream for the Community Day event. Paying the Sundae Sisters to provide it is our best option. The funds will come from the event budget.
2. The summer concert series was very well attended.
3. The senior luncheon was last Tuesday had great attendance despite lots of rain.
4. The last day for the pool this year will be August 22nd.
5. The new mower is in and is great.
6. Discussed invoices from the July 3rd event. The cost will be split with the City of Rutland. After discussion, we will pay the invoices and bill the city for the difference. Selectman Getty

moved to pay the vendors from this event prior to the next Board meeting. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Work is underway upgrading the cameras at Dewey field. The new ones provide much better coverage.

Ted Washburn Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. The new cruiser is done and is with our department. It will be going for lettering and radios this week.
2. Our department will be participating in the National Night out event in the City.
3. An applicant for the Patrol position is in background now. A second interview for the School Resource Officer position will be soon and if that is good, they will start background as well.
4. Finger printing for the Town school parents who will be going on field trips has been going strong.
5. Discussed the 2 indemnity agreements approved by the Board for the Police Department several years ago.
 - a. Discussed ratifying them and also forwarding them to our Town attorney for his review.
 - b. Selectman Getty moved to ratify the 2 agreements. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Discussed the need to update our personnel policy regarding police officer specific issues. Our Town attorney will be helping us with the updates needed.
7. Discussed retention of the videos from committee meetings used to create the minutes. Mr. Sweet sent the question to VLCT. They referred us to the State Records retention office. They were contacted and have asked for a little time to research our request and follow up.

Reviewed the next reimbursement request to be sent to the State for expenses for the Route 7 North sidewalk. This request is for \$6486.66. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the request and to authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Selectman Getty left the meeting at 8:17 PM.

David Sears Rutland Town Road Commissioner:

1. Reported on maintenance tasks done around Town.
2. Roadside mowing will start next week.
3. Reviewed the topics covered at the Highway Committee meeting.

Barbara Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. Discussed the subdivision bylaw hearing from earlier in the meeting. If minor changes are made, they must be done not less than 14 days prior to the final hearing. The next hearing is planned for August 11th.

Bill Sweet Town Administrator:

1. Discussed the August 11th meeting. This will be brief since it is primary voting day. The agenda can be modified to suit.

7/28/2026

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Sweet, Town Administrator.

Mary Ashcroft, Chair

Joseph Denardo, Clerk

_____ABSENT_____

Sharon Russell

_____ABSENT_____

Kurt Hathaway

Matt Getty

Center Rutland, VT.