

**Town of Benton
Select Board Meeting
Monday, October 6, 2025**

Select Board Members: William Darcy, Chair; Gina Elliott, and Philip Chicoine

Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer and School Board Chair; Michael Stiebitz, Tax Collector and Town Clerk; Joe Boutin, Jr., road contractor; Sam Gregory, Planning Board member.

These draft minutes of the Town of Benton Select Board are believed to be accurate and correct, but they are subject to additions, deletions, and corrections by the Select Board at the next meeting when the Board votes its final approval of the minutes. These minutes are made available at this time to conform to the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 91-A:2.

Chairman Darcy called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Member Chicoine moved approval of the draft September 22, 2025, meeting minutes, seconded by Member Elliott, and approved.

The Chair opened a discussion about the recent report of DRA on compliance with tax exemption record-keeping. DRA noted the lack of records and of updated verification of eligibility for various tax exemptions and current use. It was decided that the Chair and Tax Collector would review the files to determine how much work is required to achieve compliance. The Chair also noted the need to update our property files for changes in ownership and Planning Board subdivisions and lot line adjustments.

The Board received a copy of the signed Yield Tax Levy Warrant that was signed at the 9.22.25 meeting.

There was a discussion of estimated taxes and methods to mitigate changes in tax rates over multiple years. Warrant articles for the school board to ensure that budget surpluses are captured by the reserve fund were noted as something that should be adopted annually, even if the SAU was predicting a budget deficit.

Treasurer Swauger reported \$142,377.19 in the Woodsville Savings Bank operating account and \$443,332.61 in the NH PDIP account. The Treasurer submitted checks for the Board to sign.

School Board Chair Swauger noted a large deficit in a statewide health insurance fund that will increase the school board budget. Also noted, were problems with the SAU school bus contractor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.