

**Town of Benton
Select Board Meeting
Monday, December 15, 2025**

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

Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer and School Board Chair; Mike Stiebitz, Town Clerk and Tax Collector; and Joe Boutin, Jr., road contractor

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 6:33 PM.

Member Elliott moved approval of the December 1, 2025, minutes, seconded by Member Chicoine, and the motion was approved.

The Chair noted the signed Woodsville Ambulance and Avitar contracts were transmitted to the respective contractors.

There was a discussion of cemetery regulations with the new information from the Town Clerk that the previous amendments to the regulations were approved by the Town Meeting.

The Board discussed the Town Clerk's proposal to acquire town clerk software from Avitar to make the Clerk's functions easier to replicate for any substitute or successor. The Avitar quoted price was \$6,000 for the software, including first-year maintenance, with an annual cost of \$700 thereafter. This would be a first step toward the Clerk being able to perform all motor vehicle registration functions. The motion to enter into the Avitar contract was moved by Member Chicoine, seconded by Member Elliott, and approved.

There was a discussion of the Town's powers to regulate vehicle junkyards, with the Chair sharing his research that, despite the Town having no specific regulations, New Hampshire state statutes granted the Town regulation and enforcement powers over vehicle junkyards.

Town Clerk Stiebitz reported that Avitar was reviewing the tax abatement request of Jason Newton, and the preliminary report indicates that some reduction will be recommended to the Board.

Treasurer Swauger reported \$348,255.94 in the Bar Harbor Bank & Trust operating account and \$246,184.71 in the NH PDIP account. The Treasurer submitted the checks for the Board's signature.

Member Elliott reported on several matters, including a stray dog annoying residents and the proposed efforts of the Beautify Our Little Town (BOLT) organization, the successor to Beautify Benton, to perform a makeover of the Town Clerk's office.

The Board set the following meeting schedule for the next three months:

January 5 and 19

February 2 and 16

March 2 and 16

The next meeting is scheduled for January 5, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.