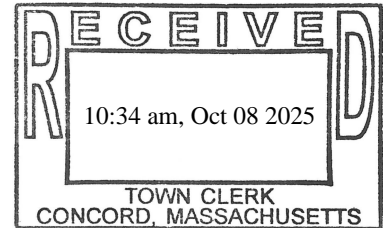


Select Board
Minutes
Town of Concord
September 15, 2025



Approved on 10/7/25

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a meeting at the Concord Town House, 22 Monument Square and hybrid via Zoom on Monday, September 15, 2025 at 6:00 PM.

Present were: Mark Howell, Chair, Wendy Rovelli, Clerk, Paul Boehm, Mary Hartman, and Cameron McKennitt

Call to Order

Chair Howell called the meeting to order at 6:11 PM. Ms. Rovelli confirmed that all members were present.

Public Comment

John Cooley, resident of 80 Highland St. voiced his support for the town's acquisition of lot 1A at the 1440 Main St. development for use as a public park. He stated that the neighborhood has been devastated by the profound change to the wooded space that was there. He sees the purchase of lot 1A as a great opportunity to preserve green space and trees. Mr. Cooley stressed that the town must act quickly, noting that the three-year timeline for purchasing the land is already underway. The West Concord Pocket Park Team has applied to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to help purchase the lot before the deadline. He highlighted that the community has submitted a letter of support for the project to the Select Board, which was signed by more than 110 households and 200 individuals.

Nika Engberg, resident of 62 Church St. voiced her support for the pocket park project that the previous speaker John Cooley just discussed. Ms. Engberg stated that the park would be a really great addition to the neighborhood because it would connect the Highland Street neighborhood to the new development in a very productive way, allowing children to safely pass between the neighborhoods and allowing residents of the new development to walk to the train station and center of West Concord.

Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes Approval: July 22, 2025; August 18, 2025; August 25, 2025; August 26, 2025; September 5, 2025
- b. Town Account Warrants: September 11, 2025, August 22, 2025

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Mr. McKennitt requested that the July 22 minutes be removed from the Consent Agenda because he attended the meeting and was not included in the attendance.

Chair Howell requested that the action that the Land Use Working Group took to approve minutes be removed from the August 18 joint meeting minutes.

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to approve the Consent Agenda with the revisions to the August 18, 2025 minutes as discussed and with the removal of the July 22, 2025 minutes.

Select Board Appointments

- a. The reappointment of John Flaherty of 156 Upland Rd. to the Financial Audit Advisory Committee as an at large member for a term to expire May 31, 2028.
- b. Stuart Ikeda of 35 Allen St., Arlington to the Economic Vitality Committee for a term to expire May 31, 2028 and to be exempt from APP #10, Residential Requirements.
- c. Matt Boger of 121 Baker Avenue to the Land Use Working Group as a representative of the Recreation Commission for a term to expire at the completion of the work outlined in the charge.

Mr. McKennitt requested to remove items b. and c. under Select Board Appointments from the motion to provide an opportunity for discussion.

Town Manager Appointments with Select Board Approval:

- a. Karen Young of 49 Crest St. to the Commission on Disability for a term to expire May 31, 2028.
- b. Justine Martinelli of 9 Nathan Pratt Drive Unit 5 to the Commission on Disability for a term to expire May 31, 2028

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to reappoint John Flaherty of 156 Upland Rd. to the Financial Audit Advisory Committee as an at large member for a term to expire May 31, 2028; Karen Young of 49 Crest St. to the Commission on Disability for a term to expire May 31, 2028; Justine Martinelli of 9 Nathan Pratt Drive Unit 5 to the Commission on Disability for a term to expire May 31, 2028.

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Ms. Hartman provided background on the exemption for Stuart Ikeda and confirmed that the Recreation Commission did appoint Matt Boger as a replacement for Phil Griffiths.

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** Stuart Ikeda of 35 Allen St., Arlington to the Economic Vitality Committee for a term to expire May 31, 2028 and to be exempt from APP #10, Residential Requirements; Matt Boger of 121 Baker Avenue to the Land Use Working Group as a representative of the Recreation Commission for a term to expire at the completion of the work outlined in the charge.

Chair's Report

Chair Howell announced that the Town Manager's merit pay increase would not be announced at the meeting as the Select Board did not discuss this agenda item in the Executive Session held directly prior to this meeting and it was not properly noticed to the public to be discussed at the open session meeting. Rather, the Select Board will discuss the Town Manager's merit pay increase at an upcoming open session meeting.

Chair Howell recognized the town's first responders, noting that the previous Thursday was the anniversary of 9/11. Chair Howell attended the recognition event on 9/11 where a firefighter, a dispatcher, and a police officer were honored for their contributions to the community. The event is covered in the Concord Currents.

Town Manager's Report

Ms. Lafleur encouraged the community to go to the Town of Concord website, where there is a button labeled [Stay Connected](#) on the left hand side. This will direct the user to the communications page where there is the option to [sign up for Concord Currents](#) along with other communication resources including the Deputy Town Manager's [podcast](#).

Ms. Lafleur echoed Chair Howell's recognition of the public safety officials honored at the 9/11 anniversary event and spoke to the response that the remembrance evokes even twenty-four years later. Ms. Lafleur addressed questions that she received regarding flying flags at half-staff, particularly with the large 250th-anniversary flag. Ms. Lafleur assured the community that the town always lowers the flags to half-staff when it receives a request from the state or federal level. However, due to the flag's large size, it can be difficult to see that it has been lowered.

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Discuss and Vote to Approve the Donation of a Teak Bench, the Cost of Installation, valued at more than \$500.00, the placement and engraved plaque; Donated by the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Delia Kaye, Natural Resources Director

Ms. Kaye requested the Select Board's approval to install a wooden teak bench along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. The bench was donated by the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the Concord Runners Club in memory of Robert "Bob" Hall. She read the proposed text for the plaque, which honors Bob Hall as a leader of the Concord Runners and a board member of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. The plaque may also include a dragonfly, which is the trail's insignia. The bench is planned for a spot about 500 feet south of the Williams Road intersection with the trail, near a handicap parking space. She noted that plans for a second bench are on hold at the request of the school, which is evaluating a potential new trail nearby. In response to Mr. Boehm's inquiry about the installation costs, which were noted to be higher than the cost of the bench itself, Ms. Kaye explained that the cost is an estimate for the labor involved. This includes site prep, installation of anchors, and ensuring the bench is located a safe distance from the trail so it doesn't interfere with use. She confirmed that there is a lot of work involved in the installation, which will be done by Concord Public Works.

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to approve the donation of a teak bench, the cost of installation, the placement and engraved plaque valued at \$2,230.00 donated by the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Hearing for Grant of Location Petition Pole Relocation for Old Marlboro Road from Verizon New England Inc. and Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP).

Presenters: Don Voner, Right-Of-Way Specialist, Verizon, Joseph Repoff, Assistant Director of Concord Municipal Light Plant and Jeff Cosgrove, Lead Electrical Engineer Concord Light Plant, Representative, CPW Engineering

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to open the Public Hearing for a Grant of Location Request for a Poll Petition for Old Marlboro Road from Verizon New England Inc. and Concord Municipal Light Plant.

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The public hearing was opened at 6:35 PM.

Mr. Voner presented the petition, which requests permission to relocate pole 36 at 406 Old Marlboro Rd. to accommodate a new Concord Housing Development Corporation project. The pole needs to be moved twenty-seven feet southwest of its current location. Mr. Voner noted that he had spoken with an abutter at 416 Old Marlboro Rd., who had asked about the stake that was put in place. After the call, the new location for the pole was staked and spray-painted. Although the stake was run over, the abutter is aware of the new location. When asked by the board, Mr. Voner confirmed the pole would remain in line with the other poles and was being moved because its current position is in the way of the driveway for the new housing development. Regarding the timeline, Mr. Voner stated that if approved, the work would be queued immediately, would hopefully be completed in the fall, and would take about half a day.

Chair Howell gave the public, both in person and on Zoom, an opportunity to ask questions or provide feedback.

Keith Bergman of 56 White Ave., Chair of the Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust spoke in favor of the pole relocation as it is necessary for the Assabet River Homes development of five affordable units. There were no other questions or feedback.

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was **UNANIMOUSLY voted:** to close the Public Hearing at 6:44 PM.

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was **UNANIMOUSLY voted:** to approve the Grant of Location Request for a Poll Petition for Old Marlboro Road from Verizon New England Concord Municipal Light Plant.

Discuss Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

Presenter: Kerry Lafleur, Town Manager & Ryan Ferrera, Interim CFO

Ms. Lafleur provided a progress review of the FY27 budget process, noting it was starting a month earlier than in previous years. A packet was provided to the Select Board- both a hard copy and in the meeting materials packet. Additionally, the packet is available to the public on the Select Board page under [meeting documents for September 15, 2025](#).

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Ms. Lafleur encouraged the Select Board to communicate any goals and priorities for FY' 27 that require financial resources. At the Finance Committee's request, Ms. Lafleur was asked to identify the top FY' 27 challenges, which are outlined in the packet. Ms. Lafleur proposed a visioning session with representation from all the Boards and Committees to help focus on the priorities of the community- with potentially the first item being- solving wastewater treatment capacity limits (because all housing or commercial growth depends on the resolution of wastewater capacity limits) with a special focus on working with boards and committees that specialize in environmental concerns. Ms. Hartman stated that the data already exists regarding goals and priorities that each board and committee maintains and she feels that it is the job of the Select Board to review the data and transform it into an action plan which would involve prioritization and budgeting. Mr. Howell weighed in on goals for transportation improvement, increasing housing and development and acting wisely in regard to ecology. Mr. Boehm expressed that there are many existing plans that are interdependent and that Concord has land which is an enabler. Mr. McKennitt added that he has knowledge and work experience in strategic planning and offered to assist with planning. Ms. Lafleur feels that it is problematic that, due to the cycle of the budget, budget planning is happening prior to goal setting and she would like to see an updated process unfold. Ms. Rovelli weighed in the importance of infrastructure as the foundation to further growth and development while Ms. Hartman expressed caution regarding not losing sight of the impact to taxpayers. Ms. Lafleur will follow up with Mr. McKennitt to work on a framework. The Select Board members had an opportunity to ask Ms. Lafleur questions about the proposed additional FTEs. Mr. McKennitt challenged the budget planning team to look at the budget from multiple balanced perspectives.

Discuss and Vote Habitat for Humanity LIP Application for Assabet River Homes

Presenter: Elizabeth Rust, Director, Regional Housing Services Office

Ms. Rust requested that the Select Board approve the LIP application, which is a standard step to obtain state approval for the project's affordable housing component. This step is necessary to place a perpetual affordable housing restriction on the properties. The project includes three units, two three-bedroom homes and one four-bedroom home, for households earning up to 80% of the Area Median Income. Two of the three homes will be offered with a local preference for eligible Concord residents. When asked about demand for these homes, Ms. Rust stated that larger family homes like these are very much in demand and she gave an example of a similar home in Lexington that recently received fifty-eight applications. The homes will have a perpetual deed restriction, which means if they are sold in the future, the price will be limited, and they must be sold to another income-eligible buyer.

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Mr. McKennitt shared that when the School Committee met last week, Dr. Laurie Hunter provided an extensive update on actions being taken to address antisemitism and that the schools have received grants that are going to be used for programs and training to address antisemitism. The schools have also engaged with a communications firm that will help to improve communication with the community. Mr. McKennitt also provided an update from the Concord Municipal Light Plant; that there has been extensive review of the time of use rates and they were largely approved (with some modifications) and the changes will take effect on January 1, 2026. Ms. Rovelli asked if there would be any community education on the new rates, to which Mr. McKennitt replied that he was not sure and would follow-up.

Mr. Boehm shared that there was a public hearing on recycling solid waste collection. The billing will now occur monthly. Mr. Boehm mentioned the Public Works Commission [September 2025 Director's Report](#), which is available online and also stated that the Transportation Advisory Committee and Public Works will be working on a presentation for the Select Board in regard to how to keep the public informed.

Ms. Hartman shared that the Land Use Working Group is working at the sub committee phase; looking at the potential consolidation of offices. The group is currently collecting data to make informed decisions.

Mr. Howell stated that the [MCI Concord Vision Plan](#) was uploaded to the website today. At today's MCI Advisory Board meeting, the public engagement group agreed to reach out to 95 different stakeholders with communication about the vision and invite comment about the report. This report will not be updated with new information as the provider who created the document has completed their work as contracted.

Ms. Rovelli shared that the Sun Day and Stone Soup events will take place on 9/21.

Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Rovelli and seconded it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM.

[**Meeting Documents**](#)

[**Meeting Recording**](#)