Braintree Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Present at the Town Office: Daniel Burson, Selectboard Chair; Lou Helmuth, Vice Chair; Loren Bent, Selectboard Member; Chelsie Brown, Selectboard Member; Linda Lubold, Braintree Representative to White River Valley Ambulance; George Daniel of Randolph Center; Bob Moyer, Development Review Board Chairperson; Nathan Cleveland, Planning Commission Chairperson; Paul Kowalski, Administrative Assistant; Braintree residents Sam Paddock and Jason Messier joined shortly before adjournment to make Citizens Comments.

Present on Zoom: Jessica Brassard, Town Clerk and Treasurer, joined after the meeting began.

1. Call to Order - Mr. Burson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Review of the Agenda - The Executive Session topic was changed from "personnel matter" to "legal issues." Item 6b was moved to be heard ahead of 6a.

3. Approve Minutes of September 15, 2026, Selectboard Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Helmuth, seconded by Mr. Bent, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 15, 2026.

4. Approve Minutes of September 23, 2026, Special Selectboard Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Bent, seconded by Mr. Helmuth, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2026, Special Meeting.

5. Citizens' Comments

a. George Daniel introduced himself as a resident of Randolph Center. He expressed concerns regarding Braintree's annual financial contribution to the Randolph Public Library (approx. $18,000) and representation of Braintree on the library's Board of Trustees. He wondered aloud whether a reimbursement-based "pay-for-use" model might better reflect actual library usage by Braintree residents and whether the current arrangement justifies Braintree having trustees serving on Randolph's library board. The Selectboard inquired how trustees are currently selected or appointed, and Mr. Daniel did not know. The Board thanked Mr. Daniel for his comments and acknowledged the need to review background information before considering any changes.

b. Comment submitted via staff regarding the fire pond at Ferris Farm - A citizen came to the Town Office and had raised concerns about the fire pond near Ferris Farm. They asked whether

the pond has been cleaned out recently and whether excavation or maintenance is needed. They also asked whether vehicles parked around the fire access area impede emergency response.

The Board recalled that the Town Road Crew had previously been tasked with cleaning the pond and asked the Road Foreman to verify if the work had been completed and to investigate current conditions.

6. Reports

b. White River Valley Ambulance (WRVA) – Ms. Lubold presented the semi-annual WRVA report. WRVA has seen high 911 call volume with increasing occurrences where both ambulances are out simultaneously. The service relies in part on mutual aid (assistance provided from neighboring and nearby towns) during peak periods. WRVA conducts ongoing public safety and medical responder training. The past six months have seen increased CPR/First Aid class demand and new instructors added. The service has an upcoming Emergency First Responder course. Budget planning is underway, and rising costs (especially healthcare and fuel) continue to strain WRVA's resources. The Selectboard thanked Ms. Lubold for her service.

a. Planning Commission & Development Review Board (DRB) – Bob Moyer & Nathan Cleveland briefed the Selectboard on a recent joint discussion between the Planning Commission and DRB about improving zoning application workflows. They were inspired to meet jointly to help ensure that permit applicants appear before the DRB with required documentation. They proposed a cross-body working group to develop checklists for applicants and the Zoning Administrator (ZA), and to provide standardized procedures and decision pathways. Mr. Moyer and Mr. Cleveland recommended Selectboard participation in this process because the ZA is a Selectboard-supervised position. The Selectboard expressed support. Mr. Burson will speak with Selectboard member Colin Evans (not present) and Vice Chair Lou Helmuth to determine who will serve on the working group.

c. Highway Report – Road Foreman – Mr. Bent reported that there are three remaining culverts to be installed later this week, and a new culvert was recently installed on Thresher Road. The Town trucks are currently undergoing inspections. Gravel screening work has been completed for use on Jarvis Road. Mr. Bent has drainage mapping work scheduled with TRORC's transportation specialist. The hydraulic study has been received for Bent Hill Road near the old sugarhouse. The Town Highway Crew has shifted to fall hours (8-hour days). Mr. Bent has a large excavator rental scheduled for stumping work on Davis Acres Road next week.

d. Grants Report – Administrative Assistant – Paul Kowalski reported that the Class 2 grant close-out work is underway, and documentation gathering for the MERP reimbursement is in progress. Kowalski is also working on getting an extension of the FEMA grant (DR-4720), and will follow up on that with Mr. Burson. Mr. Helmuth provided some clarification needed regarding ACH invoices for MERP reimbursement and Efficiency Vermont rebates

7. Old Business

Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) Update – Mr. Helmuth reported that Climate Systems has installed motorized louvers and a vent in the Town Garage; exhaust fans remain back-ordered. Efficiency Vermont confirmed the project funding amounts, though the process has been administratively bumpy. The Selectboard expressed appreciation for the substantial energy-efficiency improvements.

8. New Business

a. Review of PACIF Ballot Documents - The Board discussed the annual ballot for the slate of officers of the Town employees' provider of health insurance. Lacking sufficient information, the Selectboard agreed to consult Ms. Brassard for guidance. Action was deferred to next meeting unless time constraints require earlier submission.

b. Review and Acceptance of Local Highway Safety Improvement Program Grant - The Board reviewed the grant agreement, in hopes of covering guardrail replacement and ledge removal, and installation of signs and curve warning indicators.

On a motion by Mr. Burson, seconded by Ms. Brown, the Selectboard voted unanimously to accept and sign the Local Highway Safety Improvement Program Grant Agreement.

9. Payment Orders

On a motion by Mr. Bent, seconded by Mr. Helmuth, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the payment orders.

10. Payroll Warrants

a. Payroll for 9/6/26 – 9/19/26 (Paydate 9/24/26)

On a motion by Mr. Helmuth, seconded by Ms. Brown, the payroll warrants for 9/6/26 to 9/19/26, with a paydate of 9/24/26 were approved unanimously.

b. Payroll for 9/20/26 – 10/3/26 (Paydate 10/8/26)

A Board member noted a missing spreadsheet entry for Jesse Braussard's 73 hours, despite her timesheet being included.

On a motion by Mr. Helmuth, seconded by Ms. Brown the Selectboard voted to approve the 9/20/26 – 10/3/26 payroll warrants with a notation that Ms. Brassard's hours must be corrected on the CompuCount spreadsheet.

11. Executive Session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)

On a motion by Mr. Burson, seconded by Mr. Helmuth, the Selectboard entered Executive Session at 6:50 p.m. to discuss legal and contract matters. The Board exited Executive Session at 7:00 p.m. No action was taken; no decisions made.

12. Additional Citizens' Comments

Shortly before adjournment, Sam Paddock and Jason Messier arrived to voice concerns regarding the Town Pit. Mr. Paddock, who owns the land on which the Town has for years extracted and stored gravel and materials, had found rocks and unusable soil in areas of the field which the Town had restored after use. He believed this was caused by a lack of screening of material before soil replacement. Town truck traffic has led to wear on a bridge owned by Mr. Paddock, with a bridge plank needing replacement. Also, stumps and culverts have been stored on the property without a clear timeline for removal. Mr. Paddock believes he has experienced economic losses due to the inability to hay sections of the field.

The Selectboard requested that the Town Road Crew replace the bridge plank. Mr. Bent, as Town Highway Foreman, confirmed that the culverts will begin being cut up in the coming weeks and removed gradually to fill the Town dumpster. The Board acknowledged insufficient clarity on the original reclamation agreement, and they will review historical records and meeting minutes to understand prior commitments.

The Board thanked Mr. Paddock for bringing his concerns forward.

13. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Helmuth, seconded by Mr. Burson, the Selectboard voted to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Kowalski
Administrative Assistant