

KEB ~~KB~~

**Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Thursday February 26, 2026, 4:00-6:00 pm**

Present: Dillon Gallagher, Keith Beardslee

Absent: Jason Bourne, Chair

1. Dillon called the meeting to order at 4pm.
2. BOS reviewed mail and invoices.
3. Skip Erskine was in to report on road conditions. He asked if the Town had hired a Road Agent yet. BOS explained that the Town has not. He also noted that he did not have interest in the job as he is happy with his current employer.
4. Skip reviewed an invoice from Bellows Falls Tire. He explained the circumstances that led to tire failures on the '02. He is researching an improvement on hubs and wheels. He will get a quote from Reeds. He updated the BOS on future weather and that roads should be posted soon. He will be moving snow and winging back banks and getting ready for softer conditions. BOS asked about materials for mud maintenance. He has 10 loads of 1 ½ and is ordering some other material as well.
5. Reyer Jaarsma and Mike Ackerman came in on BOS recommendation that Mike may need an intent to cut. Reyer explained that on a house lot conversion the Division of Revenue had recently changed some guidelines. The size of the cut does not require an intent to cut. BOS thanked them for the quick follow up.
6. Marie Derusha, Welfare Director, came in to discuss a fuel assistance payment. She requested an additional \$1,000 be designated to the account. BOS agreed to the request and noted it on the invoice per BOS.
7. Justin Walker came in to follow up on a recently filed building permit. BOS provided him with a driveway application.
8. BOS asked Mary to inform Eckman Engineering that the bridge number 070/155 is the bridge that the Town wants a quote for the cost of doing a load rating calculation.
9. Keith moved, Dillon seconded to adjourn. Aye 2-0. Adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dillon Gallagher

KAG 

**Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday February 23, 2026, 6:00-7:35 pm**

Present: Dillon Gallagher, Keith Beardslee

Absent: Jason Bourne

1. Selectmen signed checks and reviewed mail and invoices.
2. Bill Wall was in. He pointed out a note about Plainfield residents being authorized to use the Cornish Recycling Center for Styrofoam waste. The information was published in a publication called Plain Facts. The recycling center is open to Cornish residents only. Plainfield residents have other locations and options to recycle Styrofoam. BOS will ask Administrative Assistant to contact Plainfield.
3. Bill brought up the potential construction project the elementary school after a bond vote. He re-iterated the need for a Clerk of the Works and a performance bond to protect the taxpayers of Cornish.
4. BOS received new hard copies of the tax maps from Avitar.
5. BOS discussed the gravel needed by the side door entry to the Town Hall for voter access.
6. Keith reminded the BOS that Bob Johnson had reached the 90 day mark of his employment and is due his \$2/hr. raise. Mary will make the necessary changes.
7. Kevin Noble came in. BOS expressed thanks for his service on both TRAC and Broadband Committees. He explained the futility of trying to create a viable data set of unserved and underserved households in Cornish.
8. Moderator Gwyn Gallager came in. BOS discussed setup for Town Meeting. Gwyn asked Kevin if he was ready for the PA work at Town Meeting. Kevin explained the advantage of corded microphones. He will need 2 and the BOS suggested the Town could purchase the needed equipment. The Moderator expressed the advantages of a cordless microphone. Kevin explained some details regarding cordless mics. The BOS asked the Moderator to get in touch with the school regarding the use of their wireless lapel microphone and necessary equipment. Kevin will give Mary the necessary information to order 2 corded, switched, microphones.
9. BOS mentioned using a 24 pound paper for ballots. Dillon moved, Keith seconded to authorize the Town to purchase 2 switched, corded microphones. Vote was 2-0 in the affirmative.
10. Erich Weeks stopped in to check on the Road Agent hiring process. BOS explained that it was going slow. He pointed out that the Town has not had a Road Agent for months.
11. Mike Ackerman came in to ask about a tax abatement for the property on Center Road. He will give the necessary paperwork and documentation to Mary.
12. BOS discussed follow up information they are anticipating from counsel.
13. Keith moved, Dillon seconded, to adjourn.
14. Adjourned at 8:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dillon Gallagher

Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Thursday February 19, 2026, 4:00-6:00 pm

Present: Jason Bourne, Chair, Dillon Gallagher, Keith Beardslee

1. Chair called the meeting to order at 4pm.
2. BOS reviewed mail and invoices.
3. Skip Erskine stopped in to talk to the Select Board. Chairman Bourne said that the electric bill at the Highway Department electric bill appeared to be lower than last year. Skip said that closing the door in the bathroom which is heated by electric baseboard likely made a difference. Skip reported on the highway department employees, pointing out that one was past his 90-day trial period. Selectman Beardslee thanked Skip for his report on the highway crew. Skip provided clarification regarding emergency tree work performed on Lovejoy Hill and the need for tree work on Center Rd. Skip reported on gravel pricing from Pike and St. Pierre and said that the town currently has no gravel. Selectman Gallagher asked if Skip had contact Twin State. Skip said he had not and thought it would be more expensive due to transportation cost. Selectman Bourne said the Town had been purchasing from Twin State and pricing was competitive. Selectman Beardslee said Twin State was trucking from Hartland. Skip said he would follow up with Twin State. Skip asked if the BOS had considered when to post roads, now that the roads are thawing. The BOS will work with Skip to coordinate the posting date. Skip reported on problems experienced with the loader steering after prolonged usage. Skip said that he ordered a new valve to repair the hydraulic system. Skip reported that he would be leaving his post running the Highway Department as a contractor around April 2nd or 3rd. Selectman Gallagher thanked Skip for his assistance.
4. Joanna Sharf reported that she would be stepping down from the Energy Committee after the upcoming meeting. Joanna reported that the committee had voted to recommend Stuart Foote from Cornish Flat as a full member. Joanna reported that Keith Foston would not be available. Joanna reported that the committee had voted to recommend that Susanne Haseman be promoted to full member. Selectman Gallagher asked if the vote occurred during a warned meeting. Joanna reported that Stuart Foote has attended the past three meetings, was retired, and has a background in computers and GIS. Selectman Bourne asked if Joanna would be interested in serving as an alternate. Joanna said she was burnt out. Joanna said that the Energy Committee had revised their statement regarding Community Power. Selectman Gallagher asked if the statement was revised in a meeting or by email. Joanna said that they revised during a meeting, but there were some minor edits which were done by email. Selectman Gallagher asked if the statement could be emailed to the BOS so that it could be read. Joanna said that they could vote to approve the statement at the March 3rd meeting, but there was a draft in progress. Selectman Gallagher reminded Joanna that 91-A prohibits meetings by email. Joanna apologized. Selectman Beardslee confirmed that 91-A can extend the amount of time it takes to complete Town work since it needs to be done in a properly warned meeting.
5. Mary Curtis reported that Robin Monette provided the identification requirements for the upcoming election and asked if it should be posted at the posting locations for the Town warrant. Selectman Gallagher said that it should be at all posted locations.
6. Selectman Bourne asked if there was an update for the Road Agent hire. Selectman Gallagher said that Selectman Beardslee had written an employment agreement and goals for a Road

Agent and that selectman Gallagher reached out to Town counsel with those documents to understand if the documentation would be sufficient to terminate at the discretion of the BOS. Selectman Gallagher said town counsel suggested that the town would be able to enter a 1-year contract, but that the position was otherwise protected from discretionary termination. Selectman Beardslee said that the job description includes many tasks and skills which would not be required for a small town highway department. Selectman Beardslee stated that he felt the BOS could document any deficiencies to support a decision to dismiss a Road Agent. Selectman Beardslee said that clear expectations and procedures should protect the Select Board in situations where expectations are clearly not being met. Selectman Bourne said that he agreed with Selectman Beardslee, that the BOS should be able to document any deficiencies and manage poor performance, as we have done previously, but that if a contract provided greater assurance to selectman Gallagher, he would be in favor of incurring the legal expense to draft a 1-year contract.

7. Selectman Bourne recommended that the BOS review applications and follow-up to at least acknowledge their applications and to understand if they were still searching for employment.
8. Mike Duval stopped in to ask if there was any plan for dirt work in town for the upcoming summer. Selectman Beardslee said that there would be gravel road work. Mike reported that dirt work was getting hard to plan in for the summer due to lack of contractor availability. Selectman Bourne said the BOS would keep him informed as projects arise. Mike asked if there had been a hire for the Road Agent position. Selectman Gallagher said the BOS was close. Mike said that the highway department had been doing a good job plowing this winter and offered praise for Skip Erskine's timing for plowing.
9. Selectman Gallagher suggested that the BOS and counsel consider the possibility of a 90-day probationary period in an employment contract. Selectman Gallagher said that counsel had suggested a Road Agent could be either exempt or non-exempt. Selectman Bourne offered to follow up with Town Counsel regarding these issues. BOS agreed that he should do so.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Bourne

568 JB

**Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday February 16, 2026, 6:00-7:35 pm**

Present: Jason Bourne, Chair, Dillon Gallagher, Keith Beardslee

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Selectmen signed checks and reviewed mail and invoices.

Bill Wall came in to explain that somebody had piled snow inappropriately at the Flat Fire Station. He said he spent 5 hours moving snow. He reported that he had been to the School Board meeting on Saturday. He reported that three Board members were in attendance. He reported that they asked him questions about the school addition. He explained that they needed to have a Clerk of the Works and a fine schedule for finishing behind schedule. He told the School Board that they needed to request a ten year history from bidders showing their previous performance and ability to finish on schedule.

BOS signed MS 626 for NH DRA.

BOS signed the 2026 Warrant.

Chairman Bourne recused himself as Dillon and Keith planned on discussing the Road Agent position.

BOS discussed the Road Agent position. Will follow up on new information ~~expected~~, expected soon, on Thursday.

Keith moved, Dillon seconded, to adjourn.
Adjourned at 7:35. Motion carried 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dillon Gallagher

JB KLB

**Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday February 9, 2026, 6:30-8:30 pm**

Present: Jason Bourne, Chair, Dillon Gallagher, Keith Beardslee

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30pm

Bill Wall brought in a newspaper article pertaining to the costs of recycling and suggested that the Town could save money by eliminating the recycling center costs. Mr. Wall asked if the property the Rescue Squad was interested in had been approved for development. Selectman Gallagher said it did not meet setbacks. Selectman Gallagher said that, in theory, the Rescue Squad would be able to build up vertically. Mr. Wall said that he was concerned that the Rescue Squad might fold if they can't expand.

Selectman Bourne asked Selectman Gallagher if Article 1 should be done at the end of the budget and warrant hearing. Selectman Gallagher said that his recollection was that Article 1 is typically done at the end, after the articles with money allocated are discussed.

Selectman Gallagher asked Mary Curtis for an update regarding a refund from Burlington Communications from the repeater project. Mary said that they said they were working on it.

Selectman Beardslee asked if Selectman Bourne would respond by email to a request from Stephanie Core regarding DAR markers in Trinity Cemetery. Selectman Bourne said that he would.

Public Budget hearing

Chair called the hearing to order at 7:01pm

The chair reviewed the protocols for the public hearing and asked Selectman Gallagher to begin with the main budget review.

Selectman Gallagher reviewed the budget, line by line.

- Town Office budget, increase of 2.7%
- Tax collector, 1% increase.
- Town Clerk, 3.4% increase
- Elections, 35% increase due to increased number of elections this year.
- Audit, up 5%, contracted price
- Reevaluation 1.8% increase, contracted price
- Legal - level funded
- Planning board - level
- Zoning - level
- Buildings and Grounds - decrease of 4.3%

Cemeteries - increase of .7%
Insurance - decrease 2.4%
Town records - level
Spirit - level
Police Department - decrease of 2.8%

Andrew Johnson from Center Road asked if the budget included part time police officers. Chief Vivian said that there is some part-time help but that the budget did not reflect an increase in part-time.

Ambulance - level
Fire Department - increase of 14.9%
Chris Chilton of CFD explained that a large portion of the increase is due to PPE, which represents two sets of turnout gear, helmets and masks for new recruits

Emergency Management - level
Highway Department - 3.5% increase
Gwyn Gallagher asked if there was a timeline for replacing the grader. Selectman Gallagher said that the timeline would normally be around now, but the grader is in good condition and seems to work well.

Kathi Patterson asked about a warrant article for a blower. Selectman Gallagher said that would be addressed in the Warrant Article section of the hearing.

Selectman Beardslee said that new equipment tends to come with higher maintenance needs at higher costs and recommends running the current grader as long as possible. Selectman Beardslee pointed to the fact that the 2002 town truck was more reliable.

Kimberly Patterson asked if the town would still have a public sand pit. Selectman Gallagher said there would be.

Susan Chandler asked if the BOS was closer to hiring a permanent road agent. Selectman Gallagher said the board was incrementally closer.

Sanitation up 7.3%
Health and Human Services, down .4%
Community & Recreation, level
Conservation - level
Interest - level

Everett Cass asked why the Town maintains a capital reserve fund for the library if we were getting a new library. Kathi Patterson said that she thought it would be available for any library. Heidi Jaarsma said that the capital reserve fund was for the Stowell library and that the Town would need to vote a 2/3 majority vote to change that.

Selectman Beardslee read the warrant, beginning with Article 3.

John Hammond asked if the BOS had a plan for the class V road improvements. Selectman Bourne said that the plan in 2025 was to rebuild gravel sections of East Road.

Everett Cass asked why the number was not \$250k, which was the number last year. Selectman Gallagher said that there was a block grant available to make up the balance of that funding.

Article 4

Article 5

Justin Ranney asked why article 3 did not have recommendation of the select board. Heidi Jaarsma said that select board recommendation was for special warrant articles when money is being added to a fund.

Article 6

Article 7

Article 8

Article 9

Article 10

Article 11

Article 12

Article 13

Article 14

Article 15

Article 16

John Hammond asked if perpetual care funds could be used to offset some of the costs for the work at Trinity Cemetery. Selectman Gallagher said that the funds could come from fund balance.

Joanna Sharf asked why the cost was \$8000. Selectman Gallagher described the size of the stone and the scope of the project.

Nancy Wightman asked if the stone had the masons engraving.

Scott Baker said that the condition of some gravestones is poor and that some have been thrown over the bank. Heidi said that the Old Graveyard Society might be willing to do some repair on such stones.

Kathi Patterson asked if John Dryfout had offered money for the project. Selectman Bourne said he had not.

Susan Chandler asked if the Historical Society could offer to fund the project. Heidi Jaarsma said that they expressed no interest funding in that project.

Article 17

Article 18

Chris Chilton asked if the leaf blower was PTO-powered. Selectman Gallagher said that it was.

Kathi Patterson asked if this was to replace the existing blower. Selectman Gallagher said it was and that it would be an improvement which would keep debris out of the culverts. Kimberly Patterson asked how wide the blower is and asked if it hung off the side of the tractor. Selectman Gallagher said that it would fit between the wheels of a truck. Chris Chilton confirmed it could sit in a truck bed.

Article 19

Article 20

Article 21

Article 22

Bill Caterino asked if the tax impact of an increased 100% disabled veteran's credit could be calculated for Town Meeting. Heidi Jaarsma provided an estimate based upon the number of veteran's who may be eligible in Cornish at this time.

Judith asked if the tax credit for war service was in addition to the tax credit for disability and asked if the credit would apply to a home where a veteran lived even if they did not own the

property. Heidi said that the credits are not stackable and that the veteran would need to be the property owner to qualify for the credits

Article 23

Article 24

Article 25

Article 26

Article 27

Nancy Wightman asked what other business might come before the meeting.

Gwyn Gallagher said that it was unfortunate that trustees, fire department chief, sexton were not in attendance for the purpose of responding to questions.

Kathi Patterson offered to review the Library Report. Kathi described the increase in salaries to include a 2.8% COLA and reflected an increase in hours. Kathi explained that the budget totaled \$52,080.

Heidi Jaarsma read the 2026 Estimated Tax Computation. Heidi explained that the estimate is based upon everything in the budget and warrant passing. Heidi explained that money from fund balance would be present in the non-property tax revenues. 2026 estimated tax rate would be \$18.37, an increase of \$1.07. Heidi explained that a median home in Cornish is \$440,000. \$8082 would be the estimated tax bill for a median home in 2026.

Everett Cass asked how much the school's proposed bond would add to the tax rate. Heidi said that it would add more than \$1000 to a median home.

Andrew Johnson asked about the appearance of highway budget with separate language under article 2:zb. Heidi explained that the highway block grant is a source of revenue being proposed for use in that budget and has to be voted on separately.

Jim Fitch asked how the Town is doing relative to inflation. Heidi said the town increase was 2.5%. Colleen Salinger said inflation as of 12/2025 was 2.7%. Colleen Salinger thanked Heidi for her work and felt that Capital reserve funds were a good idea.

Scott Baker asked if fund balance was being used to keep the tax rate down artificially. Heidi said that we had a very high fund balance. Heidi reported that our fund balance was still at 17.2%, at the high end of what DRA recommends, even using some funds to lower the tax rate.

Bill Caterino said that fund balance is important since the first tax bill is in July each year and it is important to maintain fund balance to cover operating costs.

Selectman Beardslee moved to adjourn the public hearing. Selectman Gallagher seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Public Hearing adjourns at 8:36pm.

Chief Vivian visited with the BOS after the Public Budget Hearing. Selectman Beardslee told Chief Vivian that there was some concern at a BOS and Finance Committee meeting that the Po-

lice budget may not provide enough part-time coverage. Chief Vivian said that there were relationships with State Police and that there is also part-time help in the budget. Selectman Beardslee asked how many incidents the police department was responding to. Chief Vivian said there are a lot of incidents, but some are self-called, so the numbers of crime and accidents would need to be determined.

Chris Chilton asked the BOS if there was a timeline for Road Agent.

Selectman Bourne left the meeting at 9:01pm to allow Selectmen Gallagher and Beardslee to further discuss hiring for the vacant Road Agent position, which Selectman Bourne has recused himself from as his brother is an applicant under consideration.

(See Dillon's minutes for the remainder of the meeting.)

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Bourne

Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Thursday February 5, 2026, 4:00-6:00 pm

Present: Jason Bourne, Chair, Dillon Gallagher, Keith Beardslee

Chair called the meeting to order at 4pm.

BOS reviewed mail and invoices.

Selectman Bourne asked if the other selectmen would like to receive a call from Hub66 at 5:30pm. They agreed to take the call.

Selectman Bourne shared drafts of the Selectmen's Report and the Highway Department Report for the 259th Annual Cornish Report. Selectman Bourne reported that he omitted the completion of the radio repeater project from the grant-funded section of the report.

Selectman Beardslee stated that a prior conversation the BOS had regarding ADUs and certificates of zoning compliance ought to be considered for the Selectmen's reports, stating that a certificate of zoning compliance is required going forward. Selectman Bourne said that the report was for the year ending December 31, 2025 and the Board had not made a decision on that by then.

Selectman Beardslee suggested an email be sent to Burlington Communications requesting the balance of LFRF funds allocated to the radio repeater project, which was completed under budget, to be returned to Town of Cornish. Selectman Bourne reported that a prior call to BCS made by Mary Curtis was not fruitful because the customer for the repeater project was UV-COMM Town of Hanover, NH. Selectman Beardslee asked for copies of the invoices and payments which showed that Town of Cornish paid for the project directly to BCS. Mary offered to follow up with Doug Hackett for a point of contact at BCS.

Selectman Bourne asked the other board members about the Road Agent hiring process, wanting to understand their sense of urgency or lack thereof. Selectman Gallagher said that the process was going slowly and there was still work to be done and time needed to meet to make progress. Selectman Beardslee referred to an employment agreement addendum to a job description which could be used to hold an employee accountable for poor performance. Selectman Gallagher referred to an NHMA article regarding appointed Road Agents which provided guidance for removal, when necessary.

Mary Curtis presented a draft of the Annual Report cover page and asked if the BOS approved of the design. The BOS approved of the cover image.

Selectman Gallagher suggested that Selectman Beardslee's employment document be compared to the Town's employment policies.

Michael Mateja from Hub66 called the BOS and reported that Liberty Utilities approved make ready work on the utility poles along Rte. 120 to get from Plainfield to Cornish and that the work Liberty is doing should be done within the next two months. Michael said that April would be an expected start date for Hub66's work. Selectman Gallagher suggested that the gravel roads in spring there may be

weight restrictions in the spring due to mud season. Selectman Beardslee asked if Hub66 had permission to build out on any poles in town now. Michael said they would not until April. Selectman Beardslee asked if Hub66 had enough staff to support working on the various utility poles. Michael said that they had subcontractors lined up for the work and could provide up to a dozen trucks on the job. Selectman Beardslee asked when the first customers could expect service to be provided. Michael said that would likely be in May. Selectman Beardslee asked how people will know that it is available. Michael said that Hub66 would notify residents as the buildout continues. Selectman Beardslee asked if they could do work along Rte 120 sooner. Michael said that the poles along the section of 120 they were recently licensed for would not be ready until April. Selectman Bourne asked if Hub66 could report on the status of TDS utility poles. Michael said that the TDS make ready work would be done by Hub66 as a "one touch" make ready and buildout process. Selectman Bourne asked Michael to provide periodic updates. Selectman Gallagher emphasized the importance of updates as the BOS fields questions from residents who are without broadband connectivity. Selectman Beardslee suggested an update prior to Town meeting to address concerns. Michael asked if Hub66 could be present to provide information to residents at Town Meeting. Selectman Gallagher and Bourne said that did not feel right to them as it felt like a Town endorsement.

Selectman Bourne left the meeting at 6pm to allow Selectmen Gallagher and Beardslee to discuss Road Agent hiring, from which Selectman Bourne has recused himself due to his brother's candidacy for the position.

(see Dillon's minutes for non-public and adjournment details)

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Bourne

W/KIB JB

**Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday February 3, 2026, 6:30-8:30 pm**

Present: Jason Bourne, Chair, Keith Beardslee
Absent: Dillon Gallagher

BOS reviewed checks, mail, and invoices

Selectman Beardslee asked Mary Curtis if she could locate prior correspondence from legal counsel for the BOS review. Selectman Bourne suggested that the correspondence Selectman Beardslee referred to was telephone correspondence and that an email may not exist.

Selectman Bourne asked about progress on the Road Agent hire. Selectman Beardslee presented work he had drafted as potential hiring paperwork. Selectman Bourne asked if an offer had been made to either of the finalists. Selectman Beardslee reported that he and Selectman Gallagher are still working on selecting a candidate from the finalists. Selectman Bourne expressed concern that a candidate could be hired elsewhere if the process takes too long.

Selectman Beardslee moved to approve minutes from January 2026. Selectman Bourne seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

BOS reviewed the draft budget and draft warrant and sent corrections to Mary Curtis.

BOS reviewed a draft document from Selectman Beardslee, outlining responsibilities and goals for a Road Agent in Cornish in 2026. Selectman Bourne offered praise for a thorough review and description of the highway department goals the BOS had been working on in 2025.

BOS discussed topics for the Selectman's report and the Highway Department report for the Town Report.

Selectman Beardslee asked if the BOS would consider posting a "seeking cleaning services for town hall and town office buildings once a month or as needed. Inquire at town office. 603-675-5611." on the town website, including a linked description of the work to be done, as provided by Kellie Patterson-Parry previously.

Selectman Beardslee moved to adjourn, Selectman Bourne seconds. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Bourne