Town of Litchfield
Select Board Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2026

1.0 Convenes 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen and Guests present

Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman; Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick in these minutes); Tom Pelletier.
Staff: Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; Corey Hanson, Public Works Director; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager (absent); Tom Wood, Chm. Budget Comm.; Steve Ochmanski, Code Enforcement Officer (absent); and others per sign in sheet (attached).

2.0 Minutes of April 13, 2026 & April 15, 2026

There was a motion made by Tom P. to approve the minutes of April 13, 2026 & the minutes of April 15, 2026. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence

3.1 Town Manager
A. Online property tax payment capability will be going live tomorrow. This was announced in the Sodalite.
B. Kelly has been working to get the bid request out for the Dennis Hill Brook Culvert rebuild and continues to work to get the budget finalized. Rick asked what the deadline for the book of warrants is. Kelly said June 30th is the deadline. [Correction. The deadline is May 18, 2026.]
3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector
Steve will be back in attendance for next meeting with his monthly permit report. He has begun doing his annual in-person review of all properties around town. Gary asked if he took his camera. Kelly followed up by saying that he does have a list of properties to see and to send letters to clean up their properties, if still needed.
3.3 Transfer Station
A. Traffic has officially picked up at the Transfer Station. Both the bulky bins needed to be emptied
B. Next weekend the Transfer Station will be open on Sundays again for the summer.
C. Currently the brush pile area is still too wet, however it is expected to be open soon.
D. The old oil building site has been cleaned up (building removed and small amount of contaminated soil removed), the gravel was removed by Public Works Dept. with the supervision of the DEP.
3.4 Public Works

A. Corey also touched upon the oil building site that was cleaned up. The crew took waste blocks out to the Transfer Station and make a retaining wall. Gary asked, Corey said there is now a 3-4 foot drop off. Gary reminded him of the requirement for a handrail for that height to prevent dangerous situations.
B. Roadsides are being worked on during this spring season, tree grinding culverts, etc. Corey is trying to get as much done as possible while he still has an employee with a Class A driver's license available.
3.5 Fire & Rescue
A. There was a basic pump(s) class this weekend for the members of the Fire department. Chief was happy to have the Maine Fire Service Institute come out and provide the training.
During the training West Gardiner was able to provide Engine 5 for coverage over the weekend.
B. Chief Sherman recently went back out to the hydrant on Rt. 197 to assess the post-accident damage more closely now that the ground is no longer frozen. He was able to dig down to find the break in the hydrant. He is confident that he will be able to repair the damage fairly easily, the whole hydrant doesn't need to be removed.
C. Two trucks have needed repairs. The rear axle went on Truck 66, that repair was completed today. Then Engine 67 needed repair to its DEF system via a good deep cleaning and is now back together and working as it should.
3.6 Emergency Management
A. Rain is coming so Chief Sherman said he will be able to stop talking about the drought at every meeting.
B. Today Chief Sherman went to the preplanning meeting for the Iron Man race that is scheduled for July 2026. Katie from KVCC (Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce) said she is happy to come and give a presentation to the board. Rick asked if there was discussion about the closure of roads? Yes, Thorofare road will likely be shut down for the race. Plains Rd towards the West Gardiner end will be half open. Chief Sherman or Kelly will be reaching out to Katie and will set up a presentation to happen during a regularly scheduled meeting. Rayna suggested contacting Richmond as they will also be affected significantly, they may want to attend the meeting in which Katie presents. Also, Kelly will be reaching out to the town's legal counsel about what rights KVCC, and the Iron Man have to be shutting down roads in town, State or otherwise.
3.7 Assessing Agent
RJD was in office this past Thursday, April 23, 2026, and will be here again this week (Thursday) getting ready to do spring work. This means reviewing permits for the past year and visiting sites to include additional value into the town's valuation.
3.8 Other Town Committees
Tom W. scheduled an extra meeting for this coming Thursday April 30, 2026, to review what is discussed tonight and to also review the warrant.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Review remote meeting policy

The current board policy for meetings reads that regularly scheduled Select Board meetings can be held over Zoom if necessary, and Selectmen can vote on motions while in attendance via Zoom.

However, executive sessions cannot be held over Zoom for privacy concerns. Currently the town attorney can't be present (in person) due to a medical issue. Gary would like to amend the policy so the town's attorney could attend via Zoom.

There was a motion made by Tom P. to amend the executive session to include Zoom for the town's attorney for the next 6 months, ending October 2026. Seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

4.2 Schedule selection of Burnham Trust scholarship recipients

Kelly summarized the Trust which was discussed at the last Select Board meeting. He has been in contact with Oak Hill High School staff; they have sent over 2 applications to review. He would like to set up a time for the Select Board to review them. $1,000.00 will be going to the Litchfield student chosen, possibly both students. The applicants have applied and submitted an essay each. Kelly will make copies for the selectmen to take home and review, these will be discussed further at the next board meeting. Kelly will contact the Litchfield School Board and invite them to the select board meeting for review.

4.3 FY27 Budget projected revenue review

Kelly suggested walking through the budget, starting with a look at the road budget and making sure all agree with the plan moving forward. Then he would like to walk through the warrant and make sure it all matches up. They walked through and looked for any changes needed and to make sure previously requested alterations were made.

[Addition: the CEO position is mandated by the State.] Code Enforcement Officer job description was reviewed as well as hours of operation. Kelly said the job is getting closer to full time, and that Steve advises the Planning Board. Steve has over 25 years of experience, this is significant value added. Steve is also a backup to the Town Manager if the town manager is on vacation or incapacitated.

Mr. John Patton voiced several concerns about the contract being negotiated. Mr. Patton has an issue with the 18% raise indicated by the amount noted in the budget.

He said that his research indicated Steve would be one of the highest paid CEOs in the state. Kelly explained that the amounts are still in negotiation, and nothing has been finalized. The topic concluded with Gary noted that they have been looking for the next person to step into Steve's role for as long as he has been on board. They can't find anyone else who wants to do the job.

Next, Tom W suggested going back to having a Budget Committee member assigned to the department heads so everyone can all be on the same page and it helps with the process of

budgeting, etc. All can work together and help with research/market norms. Rick would like to see this happen. All are going to make sure this program/opportunity will happen.
Kelly will be getting in touch with Gardiner EMS to get an update on their hiring of more staff. To find out whether they are moving forward or not.
Regarding road maintenance, Kelly said a primary point is to decide what needs to come from unassigned funds. Gary feels as though this would be a longer conversation. Gary reviewed Toby's list of road maintenance that was handed out and discussed at length during the last meeting and the board set up a meeting at 7:30 am on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, to discuss road maintenance further.
Gary suggested at some point there is going to be the need for an estimate to maintain the bell tower on the academy building, the amount being put away currently is not going to do much to help. He isn't suggesting this year, but it needs to be thought about. This led to Capitol Projects being discussed. Several projects listed are not for this year, this is mainly to show what is coming and what funds are available for future projects. Gary asked about the rear emergency exit that had been previously discussed for the Town Office, so that all exits don't lead to the front of the building. Kelly said there are a lot of things to consider when thinking about moving forward with that project, including where to put the file cabinets that are along the back wall currently. The budget discussion concluded with an explanation of what Contingency is and what Overlay is used for and that Kelly would be adding a warrant article regarding Woodbury Pond Dam projects, and a request to take money from their reserve.
4.4 FY27 Budget & Warrant final review – held for later discussion

5.0 Unscheduled Business

5.1 RSU4 school budget vote is Wednesday, April 29, 2026, evening at 6pm at Oak Hill High School.

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

6.1

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant #20 $132,251.28

There was a motion made by Tom P. to approve town warrant #20 in the amount of $132,251.28. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

7.2 Town Payroll #21 $38,661.58

There was a motion made by Rick to approve town payroll in the amount of $38,661.58. This was seconded by Tom P, vote 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/ Communication

8.1 Rayna noted the passing of two prominent Litchfield residents.

9.0 Future Agenda Items

9.1 New Mills Dam Grant

9.2 Web page upgrades

9.3 Gravel bid

9.4 Gardiner Ambulance Status

10.0 Adjournment at 9:32 pm

Respectfully submitted by Angela Parker and Kelly Weissenfels