MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
January 4th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

Highway: Road Agent Ken Stocker reported that to date 575 yards of sand have been used for winter maintenance as compared to 2,900 for this time last year. Likewise, only 25 yards of salt as been used, compared to 170 at this time last year. The warm and relatively dry December helped the highway department complete its fiscal year in good shape. However, experience has shown that January and February are the most expensive winter months. All agreed that a lot of winter remains.

The Selectmen encouraged Ken to continue his research on loader replacement options. Pricing on several different makes and models will need to be available for a complete discussion at annual meeting. Ken is now working on a set of desired specifications for the machine.

Halleran reported that $20,400 has come to the town from the school district as part of the arrangement made to have the Highway Department complete the connection to the Meriden Waste Water Plant. This money is intended to go to the town’s Transportation Enhancement Fund for work on Willow Brook Road.

Police: Chief Gillens reported that his department has filed the necessary paper work with the District Court, asking a judge to compel Jason Downs to remove from the town’s right of way a stonewall he constructed adjacent to his 427 Center of Town Road property. The highway department feels that the stonework is too close to the traveled portion of the roadway.

Unfortunately, the town’s efforts to reach an agreement with Mr. Downs for the relocation of the wall have not been successful.

Chief Gillens shared with the Selectboard accident data from around town. Again, this past year Willow Brook Road, Route 120, and Route 12A had the greatest numbers of accidents.

Town Office: Halleran reported that the property donation of approximately 10 acres of land directly adjacent to the town’s gravel pit has been completed. At this time the town has no plans to expand the existing gravel pit into the new land. However, that certainly will be the case at some point in the future. The Selectmen expressed a desire to include abutters to the parcel in discussions about its future use. The existence of a municipal gravel pit saves our community tens of thousands of dollars each year.

Halleran reported that again this year Singing Hills has made a payment in lieu of taxes to the Town of Plainfield.

The Selectmen reviewed the status of the 2007 budget and warrant. The first of two budget hearings is scheduled for January 17th. Halleran reported that the town’s financial audit begins on January 15th.

The Selectboard noted that the Lebanon Landfill Contract, the FEMA grant for Willow Brook Road, the KUA-French’s Ledges easement and now the property donation adjacent to the town gravel pit are all important projects that happened in 2006 that will serve our community very well into the future.

The January 3rd meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair

Robert W. Taylor
Plainfield Selectboard
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN’S 
January 17th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Highway Department: Assistant Road Agent Richard Collins met with the Selectboard. A review of the proposed specifications for the new loader followed. The goal is to replace the 1991 loader with a new machine of similar size. Editing the specifications proposed by the Highway Department, the Selectboard added the following: A requirement that the new machine have a 24 volt electrical system and come equipped with the necessary strobe lights. The Board felt it was important that all proposals include both the cost of the new machine and the trade value of the existing toward the purchase of the new one. The department plans to have proposals in hand for the second budget hearing.

Town Budget Hearing #1: The Selectboard met with the Finance Committee, Chief Gillens, Fire Chief Best, Plainfield Library Trustees Anita Brown and Beth Williams to review the proposed town budget. No members of the general public were in attendance. See attached fact sheet and budget proposal. The new plan calls for $43,000 in new taxes to fund town services, which is expected to add $.19 to the tax rate.

The Plainfield Library Trustees explained that their 8% increase, which exceeds the Selectboard’s target of no more than 3%, is due to the desire of the Trustees to expand the hours of the library again this year by two per week. Last year the library began to be open from 1pm to 9pm on Mondays, the same is now planned for Wednesdays. The Trustees noted that further staff hours would be needed once the basement portion of the facility is completed. The children’s room will be located in the basement. There was general support for the growing use the facility receives from Plainfield Village residents, but also concern for the ever-increasing budgets. One suggestion for reducing costs was to completely shut down the Plainfield Town Hall during the winter months once the new meeting room was available at the Plainfield Library.

Finance Committee members asked general questions about how the budget was constructed. The new contract for use of the Lebanon Landfill was noted as a significant source of saving in future years. Fire Chief David Best explained, that again this year his department was able to maintain a level funded request. Police Chief Gordon Gillens updated the finance committee on the operations of the Police Department over the last year, noting the significant increase for calls for service.

Following last year’s talks the Selectmen discussed with the Finance Committee the need to enter into an agreement with a municipal wastewater treatment plant to insure capacity for Plainfield residents. See RSA 484:A. Claremont is accepting waste; the cost would be $3,400/year ($1.50/capita) for the contract. The decision was made to include the new cost in the budget but to seek other alternatives prior to entering the agreement. It was also agreed that efforts would need to be made to educate Plainfield homeowners about this new arrangement. Haulers will need to remove the surcharges that are currently being added to their invoices.

Halleran noted that the warrant contains a $20,400 appropriation request from fund balance to transfer the monies received from the school district for the sewer line hook up, to the transportation enhancement fund. In addition, an article is planned to establish a fund for the maintenance of the Townsend Bridge and trail system. Said fund to be funded from donations.

The budget hearing closed at 8:45pm.

Other Business: Halleran reported on the town report progress, the finished document is due at the printer in early February.

The January 17th meeting adjourned at 9:00pm
Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair

Mark H. Wilder

Robert W. Taylor

Plainfield Selectboard
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
February 7th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

Highway Department: Road Agent Stocker shared with the Selectboard the four proposals received for the loader replacement. John Deere, Komatsu, Case, and Caterpillar all provided quotes. The range of replacement costs was from $79,000 to $95,000. Ken’s next step is to try each of the machines and to follow up with the salesperson for each dealership with questions about their specific proposals. Halleran was directed to adjust the budget request from the $110,000 proposed to $95,000 to insure that any of the four could be selected if determined to be the best value for the town’s needs over the next 15 years.

Police Department: Chief Gillens feels strongly that Sgt. Dore, Corporal Roberts and State Trooper Eric Brann should be given commendations for their efforts to save a young woman trapped in a burning car on Route 12A. The two car accident was horrible, and resulted in the deaths of two others. The Selectboard agreed and felt that annual meeting would be an appropriate place to acknowledge the extraordinary effort of these officers.

Budget Hearing #2: The final budget hearing and workshop with the finance committee was held. The proposed budget stands at 2.5% above the previous year with a net amount to be raised from taxes to increase by $47,288. The anticipated tax rate impact is $.22 on the current rate of $4.13. Halleran pointed out that with the professional audit now complete the town did, exceed the authorized appropriation by about $9,200 or a little more than ½ of 1%. Fund balance is used to absorb the overage, which is mainly due to management decision made concerning legal representation, pending lawsuits, and the FEMA grant application ($5,000 in engineering costs) and the decision to overlay Methodist Hill Road.

Turning to the current budget, the only changes since the first hearing is the addition of $3,400 to insure access to an approved waste water treatment plant for resident’s septage and $5,000 for the use of the Planning Board. The Planning Board request centers on plans to update ordinances and regulations and the board’s desire to have some professional assistance with this work.

As part of the budget review, the Selectboard reduced the recommend amount for the sign project from $5,000 to $3,000. The board supports the idea for four new signs to signify the town’s borders, but is not entirely in support of spending, at this time, additional funds on signs for the village areas in town.

Other business: The Selectboard expanded the Tax Collector discretion, when in her judgment circumstances warrant, to waive up to $25 in interest charges without Selectboard authority. More than that will require Selectmen approval.
Selectman Taylor reported that he attended a meeting of the Meriden Fire Department where the department received a $6,000 check from the Fireman’s Association. The monies will be used to update turn out equipment for some of the new firemen.

It was noted that the Plainfield Fire recently received a Federal Grant valued at more than $56,000 to assist them in updating air packs for the fire fighters.

The meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair

Mark H. Wilder

Robert W. Taylor

Plainfield Selectboard
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
February 21st 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Highway Department: Road Agent Stocker indicated to the Selectboard that as part of the loader replacement project a Komatsu and a Case loader would be demonstrated next week. To date the process has eliminated the John Deere and the Caterpillar machines. The John Deere was too expensive and the wrong sized (too small) Caterpillar machine was proposed.

Selectman Taylor reported that he has received many favorable comments from residents about the snow removal work done by the Highway Department during the recent Valentines Day blizzard, which dumped more than 20” of snow on the Upper Valley.

Halleran has now received an e-mail confirmation from Richard Verville of the Bureau of Emergency Services that FEMA has given final approval to the town’s hazard mitigation grant. The approval will make $167,000 of federal monies available for Plainfield use on the worst sections of Willow Brook Road.

Police Department: Gordon updated the Selectmen on several ongoing investigations. The property owner who constructed a stonewall in the right of way for Center of Town Road will be in District Court early next week. The town continues to hope that the owner will simply agree to remove the wall without a need to move forward with enforcement action.

Town Office: The Selectboard signed the 2007 Warrant and Budget sheets for posting around town. The 2006 annual report will be mailed to residents next Friday, 3/2. School Meeting is Saturday March 10th to be followed by the business portion of Town Meeting on Saturday March 17th. Voting for school and town officers will be Tuesday March 13th.

The Selectboard determined that in cases where one home is being replaced by another on the same lot, that certificates of occupancy will not be issued until the home that is being replaced has been removed from the property.

Halleran reported that the Planning Board is going to attend the Selectboard’s next meeting (3/5) to discuss directly with the Selectboard their opposition to the Wetland Conservation District zoning amendments. A vote on these amendments has been pushed back one year.

The February 7th minutes were approved as amended. The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair

Mark H. Wilder

Robert W. Taylor

Plainfield Selectboard

MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
Selectmen present:

Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

**Drew Marrazzo Townline Equipment:** Mr. Marrazzo met with the Selectboard to go over the proposal that he put together for the replacement of the town’s existing Caterpillar loader with a Case 621D machine. The town has received proposals from four equipment dealers (Case, Komatsu, Caterpillar, John Deere). The board reviewed the Case proposal and how it compares to the desired specifications. Responding to an inquiry, Drew confirmed that the loader has a 24-volt electrical system and includes a full set of tire chains and a three-yard bucket. Drew noted that the close proximity of the highway garage to the Townline facility will provide continued opportunities for the town to save money and time on machine upkeep and maintenance. The board thanked Drew for his attention to the details in the specifications. The board hopes to be able to complete the project immediately following town meeting.

**Wetland Conservation District Amendments:** Chairwoman Jane Stephenson, Des Hudson, Mike Sutherland and Ron Liston met with the Selectboard to discuss their ongoing efforts to update the town’s Wetland Conservation District. Also in attendance were Conservation Commission Chairman Dave Grobe, Conservation Commission members Gordon Wilder and James Taylor and resident George Koehler. The Planning Board hopes to update the town’s wetland definition and to develop a required vegetative buffer from all wetlands greater than ¼ acre. As proposed, the new definition for wetlands which will no longer be based solely on hydric soils and will reduce the areas in town classified as wetlands, will provide enhanced protections for the designated wetlands. A natural vegetative 50’ buffer will be required to be maintained around all wetlands greater than ¼ acre. Zoning Board approval will be required for any development within the 50’ buffer. A review of the 2006 building permits was unable to locate any projects that would have been adversely affected by the new regulation. Possibly two permits would have required further review and perhaps slight modification of the building location.

The need to established clear guidelines for the Zoning Board to use in reviewing applications for waivers of the Wetland Conservation District requirements was suggested. The Selectboard explained that their main concerns with the proposal are that it be reasonable to enforce and that it not place any unnecessary burden on landowners and treats all land uses equally. The Planning Board hopes to complete the work on the change in the next month or so and the measure will be placed on the 2008 ballot.

**Other Business:** The Board reviewed correspondence and approved orders for the week. Each board member was given a booklet with pertinent materials for next Saturday’s town meeting.

The February 21st minutes were approved as amended.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair
Mark H. Wilder
Robert W. Taylor

MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
March 21st 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

William Knight: Mr. Knight met with the Selectboard to discuss various options for formalizing the work that is being done on the trails in and around French’s Ledges. Use of the new trails has been extraordinary and while he has been doing the grooming and maintenance long-term he feels that a more defined arrangement will be necessary. He envisions an organization that will be in position to offer programs for mountain biking, cross country skiing and other non-motorized activities as well as doing trail maintenance. The three concepts discussed were creating nonprofit organization, using a department of the town (for local use of the trials), or getting Kimball Union Academy involved in the project with their outing club. The Selectboard expressed concern about making the organization part of a town department. The board also encouraged Bill to talk to the school board about how much non-school related activity they are comfortable with around the school building. Kimball Union Academy’s involvement in the project seemed a good fit as the school has expressed an interest in assisting with these types of community service projects.

Highway Department: Road Agent Stocker updated the board on the highway department’s efforts to deal with the annual mud fully posted at this point and vehicles over 6 tons are not allowed to use them until the ground becomes less saturated with moisture.

Police Department: Chief Gillens noted that the new police cruiser would be ready for delivery to the town late next week. To save money town forces are doing as much of the equipment transfer as possible.

Compensation Issues: Responding to the concerns expressed at last week’s town meeting about pay rates for town employees, the Selectboard consulted with Road Agent Stocker and Chief Gillens. The Selectboard determined that wage increases for April 1st would move forward as previously budgeted and between now and July 1st a complete evaluation of the town’s wages and benefits would be completed. In addition, the annual employee evaluations will also be done. The overall project goal is to address the most significant deficiencies that are discovered.

Other Business: The Selectboard signed the necessary paperwork to satisfy reporting requirements with the NH Department of Revenue Administration for actions taken at town meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair
Mark H. Wilder
Robert W. Taylor
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN’S
April 4th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

Highway Department: The Selectboard and Road Agent Ken Stocker discussed a recent bank slide on River Road near the Moynihan residence. About 400’ of the bank has been impacted, however, a 75’ section represents the worst of the damage. The town has been in contact with the Connecticut River Commission and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) to see if any technical assistance is available. The SCS has not sent an engineer to the site, but had one of their engineers who is working in Alstead New Hampshire look at digital photos of the slide and make some general recommendations. See attached. The repair will likely involve both the use of rock for stabilization and vegetative plantings to help hold the bank during future high water events. Ken plans to meet next week with Miller Construction to see if the use of one of their cranes might assist with the repair and minimize damage to the existing roadway. Repairs will not be able to start until the spring high water has receded.

The new loader will be in-service by the end of this week. Townline equipment plans to deliver the new machine on Friday and will take with them the existing 1991 Caterpillar that is being traded. Ken will use the small pick up trucks for plowing the spring storm that is forecasted for our area tonight and tomorrow. Five to as much as ten inches of snow is possible.

Nicholas Cohen: Mr. Cohen met with the Selectboard to see about converting the temporary permit he was issued in late 2005 for a shed on his 729 Stage Road property into a permanent status. The Selectboard explained that the current location, while out of the state right of way, does not meet the criteria for a permanent location. At a minimum, with ZBA approval, the shed will have to be moved back about 15’ or moved to some other location. The temporary permit expired late in 2006.

The Selectboard also took the opportunity to make it clear to Mr. Cohen that the accumulation of junk cars on this property, over and above the two allowed by statute, would not be tolerated. Currently, the property is already out of compliance with this law. Mr. Cohen acknowledged this but indicated that when the current tenant moves out two of the four would be leaving the property.

Sign Hearing: As noticed in the Valley News and the town’s website, the Selectboard held a hearing on the proposed new signs for Plainfield. Sign committee member Greg Davini was in attendance. The Selectboard reviewed the final designs for the four “Welcome to Plainfield” signs to be located on each of the town’s corners (Rte 12A and Route 120). The designs were approved as shown. Turning to the Welcome to Plainfield Village Signs Greg discussed the details of these signs which include several small “dangler” type signs to announce special events that occur during the course of the year in the village. The committee’s hope is that the signs will help with traffic calming efforts in the village. While the Select board’s main focus has been on the four Welcome to Plainfield signs, the board directed Halleran to have similar village signs made up for both Meriden and E. Plainfield villages. The order for the signs will be placed tomorrow. The group has a goal of having the signs installed by mid summer. Each sign is hand painted by a sign maker in Farmington Me.

Other business: The Selectboard signed both septage contract with the City of Claremont and the ambulance contract with the Town of Windsor Vermont.

The April 4th meeting adjourned at 8:00pm
Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair
Mark H. Wilder
Robert W. Taylor
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN’S

April 18th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:

Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Highway Department/Police Department: Road Agent Ken Stocker and Police Chief Gillens provided the Selectboard with a full report of damage and conditions around town following the weekend nor’easter storm that featured sustained winds of over 40mph with gusts up to 60mph along with heavy rains. Hardest hit areas in town were Meriden Village and E. Plainfield. Downed trees and power outages were widespread in these areas. Ken noted that all roads are now open. Chief Gillens added that except for a few remote areas most of the town’s electricity has been restored. All homes should be back on by Friday. Chief Gillens noted the extraordinary efforts of both fire departments to assist with this very powerful storm.

The highway crew has started repair work on minor washouts and will begin chipping brush and cleaning up downed roadside trees in the next day or so. This work will be ongoing until completed.

Gordon feels that the town office should have its own dedicated generator. The building was without power all day on Monday. The building was outfitted with a transfer switch some years ago. Halleran and Gillens will look into this in the coming weeks.

The Selectboard expressed sadness for the tragic accident at the Gardner and Kay MacLeay house. Both of these longtime residents were hurt when a wood fired boiler in their home burst. They were using the unit to warm the house during a power outage. The Fire Marshall’s office is investigating the accident.

Town Office: Halleran reported that requests for proposals are out to several appraisal firms for the 2008 required update. Proposals are due at the town office by May 21st.

Reacting to requests by several landowners, the Selectboard determined that no timber tax would be assessed for salvage clean up operations that resulted from this latest storm. This policy is consistent with what the board did back in 1999 when similar damage was caused by a storm.

The Selectboard approved the use of an image of the Parrish Backdrop to be used by the Claremont Chamber of Commerce. This image will be used in conjunction with information about Plainfield.

The April 4th minutes were approved as amended.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair
Mark H. Wilder
Robert W. Taylor
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
May 2nd 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Judy Belyea
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

Gibson Fence: The Selectmen visited the property of Margaret Gibson, 143 Colby Hill Road, to view a newly installed replacement split rail fence. Road Agent Stocker feels that the fence is too close to the road and is not in conformance with the letter the town sent Ms. Gibson last April. At that time, too, a replacement fence had been installed directly adjacent to the road. The town asked that the fence be moved back away from the road at least as far as the original, preferable, back to the existing tree line. That fence was never moved, but was damaged during winter plowing. This latest fence is moved back from the road further than the first replacement, but still not back as far as the original. The Selectboard showed Ms. Gibson the holes from the original fence and again requested that the fence be moved back at least to that location. The board requested that the relocation be completed no later than mid summer.

Back at the Meriden Town Hall

Highway Department: Ken reported that he has hired for one of the town’s two open positions. The new hire has experience with heavy equipment and seems to be fitting in with the crew. Ken sought Selectboard approval for rehiring Jerry Serum to a part-time position for the summer. Jerry is familiar with the town and the department. The board approved this request.

Ken reported that storm cleanup will be completed in the next couple of days. Spring grading rounds are just now beginning. Most of the roads are no longer posted for 6 tons. All the postings will be off by week’s end.

Ken and Steve will attend a meeting with representatives from the Meriden Congregational church to discuss the church’s plans to improve the travel surface of Mitchell Drive and to create several new parking spaces. The church has no plans to request a change in the existing class VI status of Mitchell Drive.

Police Department: Chief Gillens reported on department activities over the last two weeks. Patrol efforts have been increased to help deal with the usual spring speeding concerns. Calls for service are at or exceeding the previous year for this same time period. Chief Gillens has positively reported to the state on their plans to relocate the speed zone signs in Plainfield Village, effectively expanding the 30 mph zone north and south of the village area.

Responding to complaints from other residents on the street, the Police Department is attempting to have much of the junk and general debris at 208 Methodist Hill Road cleaned up. The tenants have agreed to clean the property up to avoid enforcement action. The Police Department will follow up with them again in a few days.

Town Office: The Selectboard directed Halleran to have town appraiser George Hilbum review the MacLeay’s tax assessment taking into consideration the damage that occurred to the building from the burst boiler. As the damaged occurred after April 1st the town is not obligated to do this, however, the Selectboard felt that such a review was consistent with other assessment adjustments that have been made when homes have been damaged.

Responding to a request by Cora Gilson to replace one of their two mobile homes. The board agreed that this could be done through the building permit process as long as the property taxes on the unit
that is being removed are fully paid and all permit fees and necessary inspections are passed. Tax
Collector Ruth Wheeler explained that state law requires that taxes on mobile homes be paid in full
prior to the unit leaving the town.

Halleran reported that recycling coordinator Hillary Sundell, Solid Waste Committee Chair Susan
Williams and himself would be meeting on May 15th with representatives of the NHDES to address
operational deficiencies with the recycling shed. It is expected that the outstanding issues can
reasonably be addressed. The small shed has had a difficult time complying with state requirements,
which are more typically designed for larger transfer station type facilities. By example, the volunteers
are not level 1 certified and the facility is not access restricted during hours when the facility is not
open.

The Selectboard expressed an interest in seeing the town road map project started a year ago
completed this summer. The goal of the project is to update the town road map that was originally
done by the Conservation Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Judy A. Belyea, Chair

Mark H. Wilder

Robert W. Taylor
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
May 16th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

The Selectboard reviewed their correspondence file, building permit applications and signed orders for vendor payments. The board asked Halleran to get additional documentation for the septic system serving Kevin McNamara's planned new residence.

Highway: Ken Stocker provided the board copies of the highway department employee evaluations. The Selectmen will perform evaluations for the Road Agent, Police Chief, and Town Administrator in the coming weeks.

Road Agent Stocker sought board authorization to have the southern section of River Road (just south of 825 River Road to the intersection with Ferry Hill Road) reclaimed and returned back to gravel. The pavement condition is such that it is near impossible to patch. The board approved the request, which has been under consideration for several years.

The board determined that it would hold a public site visit to the Beauty Hill Road project on June 6th at 6pm to discuss the details of the project with Ken. Project abutters and the public will be invited to this meeting.

Based on his research, Ken has determined that the use of a long reach excavator may be the best way to stabilize and repair the damaged riverbank area. Ken hopes to have an estimate for the work from Morrill Construction in time for the next meeting.

Halleran reported that the town is seeking about $12,000 in FEMA reimbursement for debris clean up related to the April 15th windstorm. President George Bush declared nine counties in NH as eligible for disaster relief.

As part of the planning process for Willow Brook Road, the Selectboard will start at their June 20th meeting making site visits and work sessions to Willow Brook Road. The goal is to develop a scope of service document to be used to obtain bids for the work. The project could begin as early as next summer.

Police: Selectman Wilder inquired as to the status of the emergency generator project for the Meriden Town Hall. Halleran and Gillens updated the board on project research to date. The building had previously been fitted with a manual transfer switch. The Selectboard needs to decide whether the use of a portable unit is acceptable or whether the generator should be permanently located at the facility. Both Wilder and Taylor expressed a desire to see the generator be permanently located at the Meriden Town Hall and be propane fueled as opposed to gasoline. Halleran will get quotes for a propane unit.

Gordon noted that he has received several negative comments from motorists about the 30 mph sign relocation in the Plainfield Village area. The Planning Board, as a result of resident comments received at a community forum held last fall, spearheaded the sign relocation project.

Town Office: Halleran reported that Hillary Sundell, Sue Williams and he had a very positive meeting at the recycling shed with the NH Department of Environmental Services concerning the recycling shed permit status. Based on this meeting, Halleran is confident that the permitting and operational issues raised by the state concerning the recycling shed can be addressed. The most difficult part will be better policing of the scrap metal bin, which often has non metal items deposited in it.

The Selectmen authorized Halleran to apply for a grant from NHDES to fund a tank replacement for the used oil collection facility.
Monday is the deadline for the town to receive proposals for the 2008 assessment update. To date, two proposals have been received.

Appraiser George Hildum is in town working on pick up work. The goal is to have the major changes accounted for in time for first billing.

The May 2nd minutes were approved as amended.

The meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder

Robert W. Taylor
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
June 6th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor

The meeting opened at 6pm at the intersection of Old County Road and Beauty Hill Road.

Beauty Hill Road: In keeping with past practices, the Selectmen held a meeting with Road Agent Ken Stocker and interested abutters to discuss the details of this year's road reconstruction project. The project has now begun with the removal of the old pavement. The group walked along the roadway discussing drainage issues. Present at the meeting were Jennifer Fredrick, John Grout, Brian Keating, Wendy James, and Francis Torrey. Road Agent Stocker explained that the goal of the project is to rebuild the road with proper drainage and road base, no major changes to the roadway are expected. The new road will be 20’ wide and will have to be elevated about one foot on average over the current grade. Ditches will be cleaned and established, all existing culverts will be replaced and upsized. Resident Francis Torrey requested that if there is to be a ditch line along his lawn that it be constructed in a way that will allow it to be mowed. Brian Keating indicated that while he is willing to have trees removed from his land, he does not want a concentration of storm water onto his property. He is concerned that this could lead to erosion problems on his land away from the town road right of way.

The work on the roadway should be completed by mid summer with paving to follow before the winter season, likely in late September.

The Selectboard moved next to the River Road slide site that will need repair later this summer. The slide, which is located just to the south of the Moynihan residence on River Road, occurred in late March. Morrill Construction has prepared an estimate for the work of $45,000. The town has a stockpile of large ledge pieces that it hopes to be able to use to stabilize the bottom of the slide. The establishment of a vegetative cover on the slope will be a key part of the repair. The slide seems to have gotten worse since the April 15th storm that brought a lot of wind and rain to the region.

Meriden Town Hall: The Selectmen returned to the Meriden Town Hall where orders were signed, building permits approved and correspondence reviewed.

Resident Brian Chapman met with the Selectmen to express frustration about how a case against him was handled by the Police Department. Mr. Chapman faced several charges in connection with an incident involving his snowmobile. Due to an error in the town’s paperwork, the court did not allow two of the charges. Mr. Chapman was found guilty on the third and ordered to pay a fine. Mr. Chapman explained to the Selectmen that this whole matter, which cost him a lot of money to defend, was unnecessary and in his view should not ever have been allowed to go forward. The Selectboard agreed to talk with Chief Gillens about the case and to respond back to Brian about his stated concerns.

Based on the three proposals received (see attached) the Selectmen accepted the Avitar proposal for the 2008 assessment update. Halleran will notify Avitar and ask them to prepare the necessary contract documents.

The board reviewed, amended and approved a letter to the Federal Marshall service asking for an update on the plans for dealing with convicted felons Edward and Elaine Brown.
The Selectboard appointed William Knight to the Conservation Commission replacing James Taylor who has decided not to seek reappointment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder

Robert W. Taylor
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN’S
June 20th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6pm at the intersection of Willow Brook Road and Main Street. The Selectboard met with Road Agent Ken Stocker and Assistant Road Agent Richard Collins to discuss the needed repairs to the first section of the Brook Road. The town has been awarded $159,000 in FEMA mitigation monies to assist with this difficult portion of the larger Willow Brook Road project. Board members viewed a slide area and several section of the road that have slumped. Ken hopes to use an existing road that was built to reach the old mill that was on the site to gain access to the bottom of the slide and to stabilize the bank in accordance with the adopted mitigation measures for the project. The Selectmen will revisit the site once the old access road has been opened up.

Meriden Town Office 6:30pm.

The Selectmen signed orders; building permits, approved minutes and reviewed correspondence. The board determined that it would meet next on Tuesday night July 3rd, rather than the July 4th date of the 1st Wednesday in July.

The Selectmen reviewed a new hand drawn map done by David Smith with research help from his wife Susan. The new map looks like the existing Vernon Hood map, but incorporates road name changes and other information since the last update of this local map. The new maps will be sold beginning early this fall. All proceeds will go to the town’s service memorial project.

The board reviewed and approved George Hildum’s recommendation for the 2006 abatements. Halleran will notify the four taxpayers of the results. Two abatements were granted two were rejected.

Avitar Associates has provided a contract for the 2008 update. DRA and town appraiser George Hildum are reviewing the draft document.

The Selectboard approved a request by the Meriden Library Trustees to have paintwork done on the library building. The established building reserve fund will be used to pay for the work.

Halleran reported that DRA has, after approving article 10 of last year’s warrant, now indicated that the $5,000 in donations cannot be transferred to the reserve as part of this article, see RSA 35:5. The Selectboard indicated their desire to see the $5,000 deposited into this fund in whatever manner is possible, either from existing or current funds. The donor and the voters of our community made it clear that this money is for the future maintenance of the Ira and Sarah Townsend Bridge. Halleran will work with the town’s professional auditor to complete the transaction.

Bernie Bastian and several other Ed Brown supporters met with the Selectboard to encourage the Selectmen to protect Ed Brown from federal authorities. Supporter Joe Haas had been scheduled to make a presentation to the Selectboard, however, he was arrested by the Plainfield Police on his way into the meeting on an outstanding warrant from Lebanon where he is accused of sending threatening electronic mail to a City Councilor.

Mr. Brown is convicted of tax evasion and is currently a fugitive from justice who has refused to leave his home. Randy Weaver from the Ruby Ridge incident in Idaho is now in town visiting the Brown’s. The entire incident is taking a lot of local police time and has developed into a serious matter involving Federal, State and local law enforcement. The Selectmen will look into the information provided by Mr. Bastian, see attached as well as RSA 123 and will respond back to him at their first meeting in July.
Police: Chief Gillens entered the meeting and informed the Selectboard that Mr. Haas was taken to the Lebanon Police Department for processing. The Chief thanked the county attorney’s office and the NH State Police, all assisted in the arrest to insure that all went smoothly.

The Selectboard indicated to Chief Gillens that he has their full support in dealing with the Brown situation and that he should increase officer and patrol time as he deems necessary. The main concern is that supporters of the militia movement and supporters of Mr. Weaver will come to Plainfield to participate in Ed and Elaine Brown’s showdown with the Federal Marshalls.

The Selectboard expressed their appreciation for the residents who also attended tonight’s meeting to show support for our local government and police department in the handling of the Brown situation.

They’re being no other business the meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
July 3rd 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6pm at the Meriden Town Hall.

Police: Chief Gillens reported that the calls for service to his department were up substantially in June. Gordon stressed that these are calls unrelated to the Brown’s situation on Center of Town Road. The Selectboard has asked the Town Administrator and the Chief to log all expenses related to the Brown’s case so that an invoice maybe submitted to the Federal Government to help cover the local cost of this federal issue. The Selectboard is in full support of seeking reimbursement. Senator Gregg and Senator Sununu’s offices have been asked to assist with this request.

The Selectboard approved the Chief’s request to provide one final opportunity to all owners of unregistered dog to, without substantial penalty, register their canines. After this the Police Department will go directly to issuing citations to appear in court. Gordon feels strongly that available officer hours are just too limited at this time to spend a lot of time chasing down unregistered dog owners.

Other Business: Bernie Bastian and three other supporters of Ed and Elaine Brown met with the Selectboard to learn the board’s reaction to RSA 123 and the lack of a required filing to do business in New Hampshire, by the Federal Government, with the Secretary of State’s Office. The Selectboard indicated that the provided information has not persuaded the board to direct the Police Chief to protect the Brown’s from the Federal Government. Mr. Bastian provided copies of a documentary “Freedom to Fascism” that he hopes would be persuasive to the board.

Highway Department: The Selectboard approved the acceptance of the Hazard Mitigation grant for Willow Brook Road. The Selectboard instructed Halleran to discuss the reporting requirements with the state, so that there is no confusion on what level of administrative work needs to be done to satisfy government accountability standards for the use of federal monies.

The Selectboard determined that they would meet with Ted Moynihan on July 18th at 6pm to discuss the relocation of a small section of River Road, near the spring slide. The plan is to move the road to the east. The town was deeded some land for this purpose back in 1968.

Town Office: Halleran reported that Ruth Wheeler has been very busy over the last week collecting first half taxes for 2007. Per usual the vast majority of taxpayers have paid on time.

The Board acknowledged the delivery of the new Welcome to Plainfield signs as well as the various new signs to designate, Plainfield, Meriden and E. Plainfield villages. The board will, over the next few days, be working to determine exact locations for the
new signs. Once the Selectboard and affected landowners have approved the locations
the final step will be a permit from the DOT.

The Selectboard reviewed, amended and approved the distribution of the
additional monies voted at the 2007 town meeting, for employee raises starting July 1st.
As directed by the meeting the majority of the money was used to address pay rates in the
town’s Police Department.

The meeting adjourned at 8pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
July 18th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

River Road: The meeting opened at 6pm at the River Road slide (449 River Road) with landowner Ted Moynihan. The Board is considering using a piece of land deeded to the town in 1968 from Clarence King to move the road in this area to the east, away from the River bank. The deeded parcel was specifically for this purpose. Given the location of the most recent (April ’07) slide some additional land may be required from the Moynihan property to allow the new section to properly transition with the old road to the north. Ted noted that he is not opposed to assisting with this project but is concerned that as many of the existing trees, that buffer his home from River Road, be left as possible. He asked that the town stake out the proposed transition so that he and his family are able to better visualize the impact. Selectman Wilder stated that he feels the proper steps for the project are to first repair the slide and second determine if moving the road over is necessary. He stressed that without the slide repair he does not feel the road relocation is a solution. Selectmen Belyea and Taylor agreed with this approach. As the slide repair will be on his property as well, Ted asked that he be provided with some details of the proposed work so that he can better understand the finished product. Ted noted that he believes the same ice jam that created the slide also removed much of the gravel bar that had been building in the middle of the river and is credited with having contributed to the slide. This development may help reduce future bank damage at this site. As the gravel bar grows over the years, it diverts water into the riverbank. The town’s proposed repair involves placing large rocks at the bottom, keyed into the existing bank. Once the bottom and resulting slope are stabilized organic material can be used to cover the rock and achieve a vegetative cover for added stability. Ken hopes that the repair can be done in August, but certainly before the winter season. The moving and repaving of the road would then follow, likely in 2008.

The meeting moved to the Meriden Town Hall

Police Department: The Selectboard spent a significant amount of time talking with Chief Gillens about how best the town can stress to the federal authorities that a resolution to the Ed and Elaine Brown case is needed. Gordon indicated that he believes the best approach is to allow his department to work with various assisting agencies to insure the safety of the other neighborhood residents and allow the Federal authorities to deal with the Brown’s. Gordon feels that the Federal Government is actively working on a peaceful resolution to the situation.

The Chief thanked the area law enforcement agencies that assisted with the coverage for the concert held at the Brown’s home this weekend. In particular the assistance of the Sullivan County Sheriff’s Department was noted for being particularly helpful to the local policing effort. About 200 people attended the gathering; Mr. Brown had hoped for several thousand supporters. The Selectboard will continue to discuss this ongoing issue with our congressional delegation. The board remains frustrated, that a convicted felon is able to hold concerts for the public at large.
**Town Office:** Halleran reported that he is comfortable with the reporting requirements for the FEMA portion of Willow Brook Road will not be a problem. He has spoken with Richard Verville at the Department of Safety and has been informed that the town will have to maintain financial records of how the money was expended and provide the state with a quarterly progress report on the work.

The Selectboard reviewed the town map that has been created by local artist David Smith. The revised map is now ready for printing and distribution. The Selectboard is committed to the idea of using the proceeds from the map for the planned town service memorial.

The permit request for the Welcome to Plainfield signs has been submitted to the state and the signs should be installed as soon as the permit is approved.

Karl Klinges who donated about 10 acres of land to the town last year, wishes to lease the remaining land to the town for use in conjunction with its municipal grave pit. The land includes a shop style structure. The Selectboard supports the idea of a lease and approved having a draft document drawn up for the board’s consideration. Mr. Klinges is considering donating the remaining land to the town in the future.

The Selectboard was informed of the Claremont District Court’s finding that the town did not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a new section of stonewall built at the end of the road is located within the town right of way. The Selectmen indicated that they continue to believe the structure poses a risk to the public at large and the section of stonewall should be relocated. Halleran noted that the burden of proof is much harder in a criminal case than a civil and that the weakness in this case is the town records that support the stated right of way for Farnum Road are difficult to interpret. The Board will consider whether or not clarifying the right of way for Center of Town/Farnum Road is necessary.

The 2008 appraisal work is now complete; George Hildum finished his work earlier in the week.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN’S
August 1st 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6pm

Willow Brook Road

The Selectboard conducted a site visit to the slide on Willow Brook Road just north of the covered bridge. The slide occurred over last winter and will be repaired as part of the Brook Road reconstruction. At issue was the various repair options. The Selectboard encouraged Ken to investigate using steel beams, pinned to the existing ledge to stabilize the bank.

At the Meriden Town Hall the board met with the following individuals:

Karla Chaffee, volunteer with the Upper Valley Housing Coalition asked the board to complete a questionnaire concerning a planning conference the group is considering for this fall.

Riley Lewis of Mascoma Health Initiative and Chris Christopholus, Lebanon Fire Chief updated the board on the Region #4 Pandemic Planning efforts. The town was encouraged to continue to participate in some of the upcoming meetings and training opportunities.

Police Department: Chief Gillens updated the Board on the Edward and Elaine Brown matter. The Brown’s reported being under attack last Saturday evening. Chief Gillens indicated that this was not the case, there was absolutely no local, state, county of federal action against the Browns.

The Board noted that none of the materials that have been provided to the town by supporters of Ed and Elaine Brown has convinced them to change their position. In the board’s view the Browns should be held accountable to the same local, state and federal laws as the rest of the residents.

Halleran will set up a hearing to accept unanticipated funds from the state and federal government concerning the FEMA snow emergency, FEMA repair work to River Road, Willow Brook Road and the federal assistance with the Edward and Elaine Brown matter.

The Chief has been working the Plainfield School Administrative staff to make sure that all of the school’s established safety policies and procedures are up to date for the upcoming school year. This type of review is done each and every year.

Town Office: Halleran forwarded to the Selectboard a letter, from the Historical Society, inviting the Board to a celebration for Plainfield’s oldest resident, Carrie Tibbets.

The Selectboard reviewed the results of the 2007 assessing work. The grandlist increased by about 2% this past year. Halleran indicated that depending on how the Plainfield School does with Lebanon High tuition students, the 2007 tax rate looks to be established at about $25.50/$1,000.

The abatement related lawsuit with New England Power centered on the valuation of the large powerline that runs through Plainfield, has been settled. The utility accepted the abatement offered by the town last year. This offer was originally rejected but has now been accepted.
The Board reviewed the now complete Plainfield Town map. Printer Jerry Doolittle has provided several paper stock options for having the map printed on. The Selectboard continues to consider offering framed versions of the map, in a limited run, for those that make significant donations to the Service Memorial project.

The August 1st meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
August 15th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Representative Matt Houde: Responding to the passage of article 19 at this year’s town meeting, Matt Houde met with the Selectboard to discuss possible options for enabling legislation that would permit town’s wider discretion in granting tax relief for those residents with the least ability to pay local property taxes. Creating additional exemptions, modifying the criteria for existing exemptions and better publicizing the state’s existing relief program were suggested.

Ken Stocker: Road Agent Ken Stocker updated the Selectboard on the Beauty Hill Road project. The project has been slowed by the need to excavate more material from the base than was originally planned. However, the end product should be more durable because of the extra work. Ken hopes to be ready for paving early in September.

Roadside mowing will resume in the next few days. Electrical problems with the tractor and the highway crewmembers cycling through summer vacations, have slowed this annual project down.

Ken feels that the town should once again consider the use of calcium chloride on town gravel roads. Ken feels treating the roads would result in less environmental damage and would save time and material costs on repairs.

The Board and Road Agent will meet on Friday morning with Ted Moynihan concerning the River Road repair. The town’s wetland application has now been submitted to the state and the hope is to have the repairs made in late September.

Police Department: Gordon updated the Selectboard on the department’s activities over the last two weeks. The department has been catching up on some of its pending investigations and traffic detail work. Gordon noted, that in particular, the morning commute seems to be a time that additional traffic work is needed.

Town Office: The Selectboard signed the contract for the 2008 assessment update. Avitar Associates will do the work later this year into early 2008.

The 2007 tax rate setting paperwork was signed and will be forwarded to the DRA. The rate should be established in early Octobers.
The board continued its work on pulling together a capital campaign for the Service Memorial. The newly updated town map will be used in this effort to generate revenue for the memorial project. Printer Jerry Doolittle is doing the necessary work to be able to print various sizes of the map.

The meeting was recessed at 8:50pm until 7:00am on Friday August 18th at the River Road slide, directly across the former site of the largest elm in NH.

Friday August 18th 7:00am

Selectmen Taylor and Wilder, Road Agent Stocker met with property owners Ted and Brenda Moynihan concerning the planned repairs to a section of the River Bank on the Moynihan’s property. Mr. Moynihan indicated that if any repair work was going to be done to the slope he would prefer a more benched approach than a continuous slope from river level to top of the bank. He noted that the flat “benched” area would provide the best possible location for growing trees and other deciduous plants to hold the bank. Selectman Wilder noted that if a benched approach were used, the sloped areas become necessarily steeper and less stable than they otherwise would have to be and for that reason he prefers the continuous slope approach. Road Agent Stocker noted that for a long-term fix, keying large rock into the toe of the slope, below the water level was critical. All repair options include covering as much exposed rock as possible with vegetation. Mr. Moynihan will create a map detailing a stabilization option that he thinks is reasonable but also in his view gives the best chance of lasting for many years and blending into the existing bank. This option will be considered against the proposed plan of a single slope from top of bank to the river.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
September 5th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

Correspondence was reviewed and orders for the week approved.

Highway Department: Ken Stocker reported that paving for Beauty Hill Road has now been scheduled for September 18th. He believes, that even with the additional excavation work, the road will be ready by the 18th.

Roadside mowing is continuing and should be completed within the next week to ten days.
Gravel crushing should being in the town pit by the end of next week.

The Board discussed the status of the River Road repair project. Halleran noted that he continues to provide the NHDES with requested information for the town’s wetland application. Halleran will attend a Connecticut River Joint Commission subcommittee meeting next week where the permit application will be discussed. FEMA monies for the repair are in hand and once the permit is issued the work can begin.

Police Department: Chief Gillens updated the board on efforts he and other law enforcement agencies have been making to slow traffic on Route 120 and Route 12A. Last week some 34 traffic stops were made on Route 120 on Thursday, the first day of school. Gordon made it clear slowing commuting traffic down through both villages is a top priority.

Federal Monies Hearing: In accordance with RSA 31:95 B the Selectboard held a hearing as to whether or not the town should accept Federal Monies from unanticipated sources. In this case FEMA money for Willow Brook Road, River Road and a snow emergency along with funds from the Federal Marshall’s service were discussed. In total, the funds represent $230,000 to be used locally. It was noted that Gilford resident Joe Haas, a supporter of Edward Brown, had provided the board information on why he feels the Federal Money should not be accepted. Mr. Haas was not in attendance at the hearing. There being no members of the public wishing to speak, Selectwoman Belyea moved to accepted the various funding sources. The motion was seconded and voted in the affirmative.

Town Office: The Selectboard reviewed a letter from Pam Kimball to her neighbor Ronald Tetreault expressing concern over a large tree on his property that is leaning toward her home. As the tree is not in the right of way for Willow Brook Road the Selectboard was unclear as to what if any role that the town has in this matter which is viewed as a civil issue between the two landowners.
Halleran noted that the Planning and Zoning Boards will be holding a joint meeting next week to
discuss the town’s zoning ordinance.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Correspondence was reviewed and orders for the week approved.

Police Department: Chief Gordon Gillens updated the board on the Edward and Elaine Brown matter. The gathering to be held at their residence did not occur. Federal Marshals arrested four of the most active supporters of Ed and Elaine Brown and on the day of the gathering those wishing to visit the Browns were turned back or arrested. The Selectboard supported this work by the Federal Government and feels they are steps that should have been taken even sooner.

Gordon hopes to be able to purchase a speed check trailer to help assist with the continued concerns about vehicle speeds in both villages.

Highway Department: On behalf of Road Agent Stocker Halleran reported that Beauty Hill will be paved on Monday the 24th. As is typical in these matters, the paving date has been moved back twice already by Pike Industries. The close proximity to the paving plant earns the town favorable pricing, but also makes the dates subject to change with little notice.

Fall road grading will begin early next week.

The Selectmen will visit the town gravel pit and adjacent town owned land early next week. The purpose of the meeting will be to view the new property acquired last year.

Halleran reported that Ted Moynihan would like to do a similar bank stabilization project on his land to the north of the River Road slide at the same time as the town’s project. The Selectboard did not object to this, but would like to see some of the details of Ted’s planned work.

Service Memorial: The Selectboard reviewed, edited and approved a brochure to me used for the Service Memorial project. Halleran is waiting for comments from the Memorial Committee after which the brochures will be printed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
October 3rd 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

Correspondence was reviewed and orders for the week approved.

The Selectboard discussed how to respond to a violation of the town’s employee substance abuse policy. Using the procedures outlined in the 1996 policy as a guide, the board determined a course of action that could result in an employee, who has violated the policy, being allowed to return to work. This would only occur if the employee satisfied all conditions within sixty days and all costs associated with returning to work would be at the employee’s expense.

Highway Department: Ken asked that the Selectboard include in its upcoming budgetary discussions a possible lease or purchase of a small excavator for the use of the highway department. The town is annual spending significant dollars on rentals of a small machine for short periods of time. In addition, the excavator would make annual roadside ditching far more efficient. The board agreed to give the proposal consideration during the upcoming budgeting process.

The board also determined that if the River Road slide cannot be repaired this year, the town will utilize the work slot with Daniels Construction to repair the slide at the Covered Bridge in Meriden Village. The River Road slide requires a difficult to obtain wetland permit, while the Covered Bridge slide does not. Both failures must be repaired.

Police Department: Chief Gillens reported that his is working with Hanover Dispatch to get more information about a surcharge that might be applied to our dispatching costs for next year, based on the increased use of the dispatch service during key times concerning the Ed and Elaine Brown situation. If this is the case, the town will ask the Federal Marshal’s service to cover the increased cost.

Halleran informed the Board that he and Chief Gillens will be working with Attorney Dona Feeney on the town’s response to the Yates v. Cornish Rescue case. The town has been named in this suit and is hoping to be released from it very quickly. Attorney Feeney has been hired by our insurance carrier to represent us in this matter.

Chief Gillens reported to the board that if calls for service to assist Cornish with otherwise routine matters continue at the current rate, some billing for service to the Town of Cornish should be considered. Each department will gladly help the other in an emergency; however, lately our department has been covering a lot of Cornish non-emergency calls a situation that Gordon feels needs monitoring. The Town of Cornish has no full time police department.

Town Office: The Selectboard determined that if it will help in eliminating the two utility poles on Route 12A that have caused so much concern the town will commit to keeping an access way open during winter months to an existing pole that will be used as part of the under Route 12A drilling solution to the problem. PSNH will allow the boring to come to this existing pole if bucket truck access to the pole is available.
Once a signature is obtained from Selectboard Chairman Mark Wilder the cover letter and brochures for the Service Memorial fund raising project officially starting the capital campaign for this project.

The “Welcome to Plainfield” signs should begin to be installed next week as well.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
October 10th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

The Board of Selectmen heard, in public session, from co-workers concerning an employee who had violated the town’s substance abuse policy. Chairman Wilder noted that he was unable to attend the previous meeting, but has strong feelings on the issue of how the current policy is implemented and wants to participate in the board’s decision on how to react to a violation of the policy.

All those that spoke requested that the board allow the employee an opportunity to, at his expense, earn his job back with town. This portion of the meeting was conducted with the consent of the employee who had violated the policy.

Next the board met privately with that employee.

Returning to public session the board continued its discussions from October 3rd concerning the violation of the town’s employee substance abuse policy. The existing 1996 policy allows the Board of Selectmen wide latitude on how to handle a given violation. The board discussed the message that is sent to employees from a decision of leniency and the message that is sent from a decision of immediate termination. Acknowledging that until now the town has not ever had a documented violation of the policy, the majority of the board determined that in the case of a federally controlled substances a message of zero tolerance would be sent.

Following a brief update on other town business the special meeting was adjourned.

Submitted,
Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair
Robert W. Taylor
Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
October 17th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Town Office: The 2007 tax rate setting will take place on Friday at 2:30pm at the Meriden Town Hall. The Board discussed how to react to the just announced Sullivan County deficit that will have to be addressed in the coming months and fiscal years. Plainfield’s apportionment of the 2.5 million dollar shortfall is $143,000. Halleran is in the process of discussing the matter with both the county manager and the state department of revenue. Accepting that the decision will result in higher taxes this year, there was wide support on the board for dealing with at least a portion of Plainfield’s share in this tax rate rather than pushing the entire impact into the future.

Police: Chief Gillens reported that since the capture, by Federal authorities, of Ed and Elaine Brown the Police Department has been particularly vigilant, but that all indications are that the couple’s few supporters are more occupied with their own potential legal troubles than retaliating for the Brown’s capture. The Brown’s property is in the process of being secured. Once federal authorities complete that work the US Treasury Department will take over the management of the property.

In attempt to further address traffic speed concerns the Chief requested approval to purchase a “speed trailer” for the exclusive use of the town. The town currently has access to a unit owned by Sullivan County. Response to our use of that trailer has been so positive that Gordon would like to have one available all the time. The unit has a digital display that shows oncoming vehicles their speed as compared to the posted speed. Moved periodically from location to location the units are very effective at slowing traffic down. The board approved the $5,000 request, but asked that the chief look into also purchasing a module that includes traffic log data so that the unit can help convey to residents the number and speeds of vehicles. Often residents are surprised to learn that traffic speeds that appear to be excessive are actually within the posted speed limits. This is particularly true in the town’s three village areas.

Other Business: The Selectboard continued their discussions about the possible lease of the remaining property owned by Karl Klinges on Ferry Hill Road. Mr. Klinges has indicated a desire to donate the remaining land to the town, but the donation is dependent on the tax implications of such a gift. Current tax law likely prohibits this second gift before 2011.

The meeting was recessed at 9:00pm until Friday the 19th at 2:30pm when the 2007 tax rate will be established.

Friday October 19th at 2:30pm

Selectmen Belyea, Taylor met with municipal auditor Robert Anderson for the setting of the 2007 tax rate. Also in attendance were Town Administrator Steve Halleran, School Superintendent Russ Collins and School Business Administrator Beth Birwirth. All required reports were determined by DRA to be in order and the rate setting resulted in a tax rate of $25.45. Reacting to the just announced 2.5 million dollar county deficit of which Plainfield share is $143,000, the Selectboard determined that, rather than use the $40,000 set aside last year to offset this rate, this money should be held and an additional $75,000 raised in overlay in anticipation of dealing with
the county deficit next year. Auditor Anderson indicated while this was technically allowed as
part of the Selectmen’s duties. The board needs to understand that these changes will be reflected
in the town’s portion of the tax rate, not the counties. The Selectboard acknowledged this, but
indicated that they feel strongly that their primary responsibility is the overall financial health of
the town. While somewhat unorthodox, this decision will, in their view, put the town on the
strongest possible financial footing for dealing with our share of the county shortfall. This being
the case the rate was set at $25.75. The tax rate will not be released until the required math check
has been completed by the DRA.

The meeting adjourned at about 3:15pm.

Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea

26
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
November 7th Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

**Highway Department:** The board held a brief discussion concerning an upcoming meeting with the school’s facility committee about plans to expand the school parking lot. Based on the recommendation from Road Agent Stocker the board determined that the town highway crew should have a very limited role in the parking lot expansion project. The town’s municipal gravel pit will be made available for needed material over what can be mined from the existing gravel pit on the school property. Road Agent Stocker expressed concern over maintaining the lot once it is built. He feels that the school should hire a contractor to perform snow removal from the lot. At a minimum if the town were to continue to plow the lot a snow bucket would have to be purchased for the front-end loader.

River Road Slide-based on a site meeting with the NHDES, Road Agent Stocker and Halleran have been informed that the state strongly recommends, and will likely only permit, a very minor repair to the slide area. The environmental officials want the slumped earth to be left undisturbed and only the voids around the slide filled. This work can likely be done with town forces. Repaving the section will be delayed until the town is satisfied that the prescribed repair will suffice.

**Klinges Land:** As agreed to last fall, Wolfgang Kannler of Hartland Vt will conduct a limited timber harvest on the former Klinges land. A town appointed forester will monitor the harvest.

**Police Department:** Chief Gillens reported that the radar trailer should be in service later in the week. The unit is intended to assist with reducing speeds in and around the town’s populated areas.

Resident Anne Donaghy met with the Selectboard and Chief Gillens to discuss what can be done to reduce the annual damage to the town’s class VI roads from heavy four wheeled vehicles. Ann made it clear she does not object to the use of the roads by ATV’s, but that full sized vehicles often operated by nonresidents continue to damage these valuable community resources. She has discussed the matter with the town’s Conservation Commission and believes she has strong support on this issue from this group.

Mrs. Donaghy and the board discussed various options to reduce damage on the class VI roads these included updated signs, expanding the months that the roads are not available to motorized wheeled vehicles and the possible use of weight limits to reduce damage.

**Town Office:** Halleran reported that tax bills have been issued and that Collector Ruth Wheeler has been busy logging in tax payments.

All of the welcome to Plainfield signs are now installed. While not everyone is happy with all the locations, heights and sign choices the vast majority of the comments received have been positive.

Donations are coming in for the town’s Service Memorial project, to date about $8,000 has been pledged and $7,000 collected.

The Selectboard will meet next on 11/28 and this meeting will feature the first session with the town’s finance committee.
Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
Nodes of the Selectmen’s
November 28th Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:
Mark Wilder
Robert Taylor
Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Town Office: Orders were approved and correspondence reviewed. The Selectmen approved moving forward with a project that could result in the updating of street lighting in Plainfield Village. As part of the program, new more energy efficient fixtures that will satisfy the dark sky standards used by the Planning Board would be installed. The cost of the project is fully funded from the initial energy savings. The payback period for the new fixtures would be about 5 years. As part of the project a committee would used to evaluate the existing 27 lights in the village to see if these locations are still appropriate. Police Chief Gillens would be heavily involved in the determination of where any new lights would be located and where old lights might be discontinued.

Halleran updated the Selectboard on the first meeting of the KUA Study Committee. Currently, there are 32 Plainfield students (non-faculty children) attending the school. Six of these are seniors. At this early date a dozen eighth graders have expressed an interest in attending the school next year. The value of last year’s discretionary tax exemption to the school was $126,000. The school has returned $130,000 in Plainfield Grant monies to local students with an additional $104,000 from KUA financial aid resources also going to Plainfield students. As in the recent past, this year’s grant was distributed on a 70% need basis, with all students receiving at least a $1,300 tuition credit.

Police Department: Gordon updated the board on his work on the 2008 budget. He is looking into ways to reduce the department’s fuel expenses. Currently, the department purchases fuel from a bulk distributor and budgets for a usage of on average 15 gallons per day.

The recent start of winter has resulted in several accidents around town. Gordon noted that if vehicle speeds were just reduced most of these icy road accidents could be avoided.

Finance Committee: The remainder of the meeting was on a far ranging discussion with the town’s finance committee on the overall management of the town and the various departments. See attached handout for topic information. The Selectboard will next meet with the committee on December 19th at which time a preliminary budget will be presented. At this time, the Selectboard is in the process of working through department requests for 2008.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Submitted,
Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair
Robert W. Taylor
Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
December 5th Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:  Mark Wilder
                     Robert Taylor
                     Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:00pm

The Selectboard reviewed correspondence and signed orders.

Town Office: The Selectmen discussed a house renovation project at 116 Freeman Road. The remodel has used the existing foundation and house structure, however, a new “farmers porch” on the structure has, on one corner, increased the building’s nonconformity with the town’s front yard setback. Because of an existing row of mature trees located between the porch and the roadway, the encroachment does not create a maintenance problem for the highway department. There is about 20’ from the edge of the roadway to the corner of the porch, and 27’ from the corner of the existing house foundation to the road. The owner has been notified of the issue and has provided a letter that will be placed on file and recorded at the registry that indicates if the corner of the porch is an issue for a future road projects the owner is responsible for making any necessary modifications.

Police Department: Chief Gillens updated the Selectboard on his department’s activities over the last week. There were virtually no storm related accidents from Monday’s snowstorm. The group discussed some recommendations from the town’s safety committee concerning the updating of outside lights at the town office.

Highway Department: Halleran updated the board on the department’s work over the last week. The Selectboard engaged in a discussion about the Highway Department’s effort to reduce winter road salt usage. Currently, Ken Stocker is using a mixture of road salt and manufactured sand. Selectman Wilder noted that he likes the practice and as long as the resulting slush build up on the sides of the road is winged away from the traveled surface the roads remain safe and usable. Selectwoman Belyea agreed that using less salt is in keeping with direction provided by Plainfield Voters at various town meetings, however, she also expressed concern that if too little salt is used road conditions may lead to more accidents. If a significant change in maintenance practices is made, she feels strongly that this should be advertised to the town’s residents.

The Board spent the rest of the meeting discussing the first draft of the 2008 Budget. A 7% operating budget increase is proposed with increases mainly due to employee salary benefits and fuel product related increases. Overall all spending is proposed to increase 2.22% from the total approved in 2006 and the change in dollars from taxation would be about $.50 on the tax rate. Halleran stressed that it is too early in the process to make definitive judgments on the budget. Much work remains as the current year is completed and the new year’s priorities become clearer. The Board will meet with the finance committee on December 19th to go over the first draft.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm

Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea
MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S
December 19th 2007 Meeting
Meriden Town Hall

Selectmen present:  Mark Wilder
                    Robert Taylor
                    Judy Belyea

The meeting opened at 6:30pm

Highway: Road Agent Stocker reviewed with the Selectboard the initial proposal he has received for the replacement of truck #1, the one ton truck used to spread salt and plow the asphalt roads during the initial period of dealing with storm events. A complete replacement of the truck with related plowing and sanding equipment could cost as much as $88,000. The funds will come from the existing reserve fund for highway vehicles; however, an expenditure of closer to $70,000 was anticipated.

Ken also discussed with the board his continued desire to have the town consider a lease purchase of a small excavator for road ditching and road reconstruction projects. While open to the idea the Selectboard continues to be concerned about adding another piece of heavy equipment to the department’s inventory.

Police Department: Gordon discussed with the Selectboard some of the department’s budgetary numbers for both the current and upcoming year. Gordon is concerned about the rising costs of providing a like level of police coverage for the town, but without a reduction in service its unclear where substantial cost savings can be realized over and above those that are already utilized in building the proposed budget.

Town Office: The Selectboard continued its discussions about establishing exemptions for solar, wind and wood energy systems. Halleran has researched the issue, currently there are a handful of town’s in Sullivan and Grafton County who offer these discretionary exemptions. Most offer relief by either exempting the entire system or capping the exemption at some finite amount, usually less than $20,000. These systems are not typically significant contributors to assessed value for tax purposes. In the case of Plainfield’s current assessing system, a solar electric system that might cost $30,000 to install would likely impact a residential assessment for tax purposes by about $5,000. The board remained firm in its position that to move forward with placing an exemption option for wood, solar and wood systems on the 2008 warrant. Halleran will, with the assistance of DRA, draft some possible warrant language for the board to consider.

Finance Committee: The group spent the remainder of the meeting reviewing the initial draft of the 2008 budget and warrant articles with the town’s finance committee. Currently the proposed plan calls for an additional $96,000 to be raised from the taxes. Energy costs and personnel related items are the two most significant factors in the proposed increase. Very little new program is included in the budget. T

The finance committee also suggested that the town might want to look into managing its forested land for an income stream. The town owns a fair amount of land and good stewardship often means a timber harvest, which could also result in a positive cash flow.

The group will meet next on January 16th to continue these budget discussions.

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The December 19th Selectboard meeting adjourned at 9:15pm

Submitted,

Stephen Halleran

Mark H. Wilder, Chair

Robert W. Taylor

Judy A. Belyea