

Jamaica Select Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting of November 12, 2025

Meeting Details

Date: 11/12/2025

Board Members Present: Jessica Pollack (Chair), Kate Ullman (Vice Chair), Greg Meulemans, Christina Robinson

Public Attendees: Paul Fraser, David Forrester, Meg Staloff, Jack Spanierman, Kia Cating, Margaret Miller (remote)

Call to Order

Jessica Pollack called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Late Additions

Jessica informed the board that item #6 would involve selecting a new date and would not require a vote.

Approval of Minutes

Jessica made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 27 meeting. Kate seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and all members were in favor.

IT Network Update

Tom Tolbert reported that the IT network work was completed the previous Tuesday. Minor issues had arisen due to outdated CAT5 wiring, and Tom recommended replacing these with Cat 6 patch cables. Additionally, there were connection problems with Patriot following the upgrade, which were resolved by Patriot on Tuesday. Tom also noted that the server software is outdated and needs to be upgraded. He will contact Sam Woods or other providers to obtain bids for completing the software upgrade.

Discuss Date for Information Session and Vote to Buy Back JVS

Jessica raised the point about buying back the school, which she wanted to discuss. A citizen expressed concern about moving forward with a vote too soon. The Legislature will be discussing this matter in early January, and the board is awaiting a map to determine if the building could potentially be used as a school for younger children. Kate mentioned

that it was suggested by the Legislature, but it did not work out. Jessica said she saw a map that showed the six districts, but not an actual map of the districts; it was a map of the new school boards. Jamaica fell into the east southeast district. She felt this would cut the town off from some neighboring towns. The general belief was that no direction would be received prior to the legislative session. The current School Board does not seem to be considering any action regarding Jamaica Village School. Jessica feels the vote should happen before the town meeting to allow the town to act before any laws change. The vote would require a 30-day warning, with an information session about 10 days prior to the vote. WCSU is open to holding a vote when the board is ready. The School Board can make a resolution to close the school, after which a vote can occur and an article can be added to buy back the property for \$1. The Board will make a decision by December.

Kia asked what the town would use the building for if it was bought back. The property includes the building and approximately five acres. Board members had met with the head of operations. The town has options regarding the building, including selling it or repurposing it. Possible uses include moving the library and town office to the building. By buying it, the town would control its future. While some work is needed, the building's infrastructure is solid. The HVAC system has three zones, so the entire building would not need to be used at once. The property also includes a playground and a bike park.

The board wants this to be a community discussion. The vote will be addressed at the next meeting.

Presentation from Southeast Vermont Economic Development Strategy (SeVEDS)

Meg Staloff and Jack Spanierman attended to report and follow up on a funding request made during the summer. SeVEDS is a nonprofit focused on original economic development, with BDCC staff running the programs. The organization has a board but no staff and works in schools on career education and job-related initiatives, such as the Fearless Futures Fair and budgeting education.

Meg explained that many towns are considering building projects and that SeVEDS works to bring towns together and build capacity. They aim to improve tax values by making important improvements and offer business support in development and retirement strategies. SeVEDS works with entrepreneurs and provides loans to startups, focusing on business, community, and workforce development.

Jack focuses on workforce development for adults looking to upskill and high school students, including soft skill development. SeVEDS also works with refugees and new

Americans, offering programs for digital literacy and healthcare career exposure. The organization also runs programs related to municipal planning.

Funding is needed, and SeVEDS typically receives a 1:1 match with federal funding. However, this year federal funding is not guaranteed, so they are requesting flexible funding from the town to allow them to adapt and work with multiple communities. The request has been formally made, and Meg will resend it with a town impact report.

Discussion to Adopt Town Plan

Jessica made a motion to set the date for the informational meeting to 6:00 p.m. on December 8, with a board vote to adopt the plan at 7:00 p.m. Greg seconded, and all were in favor.

When asked why the meeting was postponed, Jessica explained that it was because the meeting was not warned in time. Dave expressed concerns about the Rural Resource Area near Forrester Pond, noting that if the Green Mountain Land and Gravel company continues to dig, the spring-fed pond may change.

Open and Review Bids for W Jamaica Road Streambank Stabilization

There are areas on West Jamaica Road that still need work after the 2023 storm. Four bids were received:

- AS Clark: \$39,000
- Hunter: \$14,300
- Ameden: \$36,000
- Fitzpatrick: \$23,435

Jessica asked if funds were available, and Greg confirmed that money from FEMA is available but must be used for mitigation. Greg made a motion to accept the Hunter bid. Kate seconded, and all were in favor.

Open and Review Bids for 30 Water Street Demolition

The demolition of 30 Water Street, a property purchased with a grant from the Flood Resilient Community Fund, was discussed. The building is uninhabitable and lacks a septic system. Demolition must be completed by the end of December, after asbestos mitigation if needed. Bids received:

- AS Clark: \$37,200
- Hunter: \$16,400
- Ameden: \$34,000

- Fitzpatrick: \$16,950
- LG Ferno: \$27,830

Greg made a motion to accept the Hunter bid. Jessica seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Review and Approve Timesheets

Jessica made a motion to approve timesheets. Kate seconded, and all were in favor.

Review and Approve Pay Orders

Jessica made a motion to approve pay orders. Kate seconded, and all were in favor.

Public Concerns

Margaret expressed appreciation for the board's concern about Forrester Pond, as it is in her backyard. She also asked about the status of the sign on West Jamaica Road and suggested a speed limit of 25 mph instead of 35 mph.

The board is considering traffic slowing signs with speed indicators. Changing the speed limit would require a traffic study and a change to the ordinance. Greg will follow up with Keith. Margaret is open to alternative signs. Changing the speed limit and ordinance would require a 60-day warning.

Executive Session

N/A

Adjournment

Jessica made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Christina seconded, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Tom Tolbert, Town Clerk