

JAMAICA SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Jamaica Town Office
Monday, July 13, 2026
7:00 P.M.

Board Members Present: Jessica Pollack, Greg Meulemans, Robert Brooks, Jason Kass, and Kate Ullman (remote).

Public Present: Matthew Barlow, Scott Gordon, Paul Fraser, Karen Ameden, Mike Disabato, Kelly Lavigne, Charles Miller, Megan Ooms, Eugene Alletto, and VTrans staff.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 P.M.

1. Late Additions to the Agenda

An executive session regarding an employment matter was added to the agenda.

2. Approval of Minutes

Jessica Pollack moved to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2026 regular meeting. Greg Meulemans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jessica Pollack moved to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2026 special meeting. Jason Kass seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Fire Warden and Deputy Fire Warden Appointments and Burn Permits

Scott Gordon, Jamaica Volunteer Fire and Rescue Chief, discussed changes under Act 162 regarding the appointment of fire wardens and deputy fire wardens and the issuance of burn permits. Under the new structure, the fire chief serves as fire warden. Dominic Mangano has been issuing permits and is expected to serve as deputy fire warden.

Residents may contact either the fire warden or deputy fire warden for burn permits. Chief Gordon requested that Dominic Mangano's number be listed first for permit inquiries.

4. Turning Point Windham County Presentation

Matthew Barlow, Rural Outreach Coordinator for Turning Point Windham County, presented information about recovery support services based in Brattleboro. He explained that Turning Point provides peer counseling and recovery support and is working to build a broader support network throughout Windham County.

Mr. Barlow said he would provide literature and leave cards with Tom Tolbert. The services are confidential and help connect people with available resources. Jessica Pollack requested a digital flyer and link for the Town website.

Mr. Barlow indicated that he would return with additional information. He noted that many services are free or covered by Medicare and Medicaid.

He also stated that Turning Point would consider establishing outreach hours in Jamaica.

5. VTrans Bridge 42 Design Presentation

VTrans staff presented the design for Bridge 42, located on Depot Street between Jamaica Village School and Jamaica State Park.

Gary Laroche and Kelly Lavigne reviewed the project planning and design status.

The project is currently in the design phase. Preliminary plans have been completed, with property contacts and permitting to follow.

Project is located on Depot Street between Jamaica Village School at the state park.

The existing bridge was built in 1926 and currently restricts vehicles over eight tons.

The project will involve environmental impacts in the project area and will include channel work.

The bridge will be replaced with a steel girder bridge.

During construction, a temporary bridge will be installed. Plans also include additional paving on Depot Street.

Traffic will alternate at the Town bridge during construction. The Board has provided aesthetic requirements to VTrans. The new bridge is expected to have an approximately 75-year service life. VTrans discussed paint versus metalizing and noted long-term cost considerations.

The temporary bridge will have the same HL-93 rating as the new bridge, accommodating a design truck or tandem axle configuration, including an 80,000-pound tractor-trailer.

The estimated project cost is \$7.55 million and is federally funded.

The anticipated schedule includes final planning in April 2027, contract plans and bids in fall 2029, and construction from 2030 to 2032, with an effort to reduce construction to two years.

The Town will be responsible for bridge upkeep, which has influenced design decisions.

In response to questions about contingency planning if the bridge fails, VTrans noted that the State inspects the bridge every two years and would send findings to the Town. Depending on the circumstances, a temporary bridge could be installed.

Motion: Jessica Pollack moved to approve proceeding into final design based on the presented design. Jason Kass seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. General Update from Tom Tolbert, Town Clerk and Town Administrator

a. Silktide Web Tool for ADA Compliance

Tom Tolbert will gather additional information.

b. **Status of Town Lot Sales**

Town lot sales were advertised on July 9.

Motion: Jessica Pollack moved to hold the sale on Wednesday, July 15, at 8:00 A.M. Robert Brooks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. **Transfer Station Construction Activities**

Work began to repair the wall at the transfer station.

d. **Other Matters**

i. Rawsonville School House Ramp

1. **Motion:** Jessica Pollack moved to approve the Rawsonville School House ramp. Greg Meulemans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Tom Tolbert met with Karoline Wallace, the new Town Administrator for Winhall.

f. JCAC plans to hold a 5K run, and the school union has agreed to allow use of the school and parking lot.

g. Early voting ballots are now available at the Town Office.

h. **Motion:** Jessica Pollack moved to sell a box of bags labeled "Town of Phillipston." Jason Kass seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

i. Pikes Falls parking concerns were discussed, including reports of 40 to 50 vehicles and more than 100 people, along with water quality and trash concerns. The Board will contact the Sheriff regarding parking enforcement and will consider additional signage.

7. **Proposed Changes to the Sign Ordinance**

The Board discussed proposed changes to the Sign Ordinance. Jessica Pollack expressed concerns about the ordinance, and Greg Meulemans suggested forming a Sign Ordinance subcommittee.

Motion: Jessica Pollack moved to form a Sign Ordinance subcommittee consisting of Greg Meulemans, Kate Ullman, and Tom Tolbert. Greg Meulemans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. **Transfer Station Phase 2 Scope**

The Board discussed revisiting the scope of Phase 2 of the Jamaica Transfer Station project, particularly reconstruction of the commercial waste area. Phase 2 does not include replacement canopies. The Board discussed whether to continue accepting construction waste and whether the proposal could be redesigned.

Kate Ullman stated that she hesitates to stop accepting construction waste.

The Board requested cost information from Sara in order to evaluate the financial impact.

Jessica Pollack will ask Sara for additional information. The Board noted that it needs to determine the desired direction before Hunter returns.

The Board also discussed dumpster options and agreed to review how other towns handle construction waste.

9. Review and Approval of Time Sheets

Motion: Jessica Pollack moved to approve time sheets for the Town Office, Listers, Highway Department, and Transfer Station. Greg Meulemans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Review and Approval of Pay Orders

Motion: Jessica Pollack moved to approve the pay orders. Jason Kass seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Public Concerns and Announcements

A concern was raised regarding the metal guardrail at the bridge on West Jamaica Road. The suggestion was made to consider placing the guardrail on concrete blocks so it could be more reusable.

Karen Ameden provided a school board update. She noted that WRMUD structural committee meetings are being held and posted on the Facebook page. Meetings are held Wednesdays at 8:00 A.M. and may be attended by Zoom or at the central office. She also referenced discussion by State Representative Emily Long regarding declining enrollment, and comments from Michael Pelson of Windham regarding increased enrollment following tuitioning.

Additional comments were made regarding Leland & Gray's rating and superintendent compensation.

Comments were also made regarding a July 8 meeting and state engagement with communities concerning Leland & Gray and funding for new building projects.

The Town's two FEMA buyout properties were discussed, including a request for a parking spot on Water Street and potential use of the five-acre site near Smith Road. Robert Brooks suggested limiting access. Karen Ameden noted that JAMBA has trails near the Route 100 site.

Food for children is available on Thursday afternoons at Jamaica Village School.

Mountain Bike Mondays meet at Ball Mountain Dam.

Wednesday night socials are held from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.

JAMBA trail work is scheduled for Thursday at 5:30 P.M. at Ball Mountain Dam.

Jamaica Run Club meets at 5:30 P.M. at WRP.

Craft Cart is held Friday from 10:00 A.M. to noon at the Library.

Bingo is held Friday at 6:00 P.M., with games starting at 7:00 P.M.

Yoga and acupuncture are offered Saturday at BeeWell from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.

Fun at Jamaica State Park, including primitive fire building and Spin Top Revolution, is scheduled from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

Sunday yoga is held at Town Hall at 11:00 A.M.

Food pantry donations may be brought to the Church.

Jamaica Village Local Artists events continue on the first Friday of the month through August. Jamaica Day is scheduled for August 15. A planning meeting will be held Wednesday at 6:00 P.M. at the Town Office.

Pikes Falls Chamber Music is scheduled for August 18 through August 21.

Tommyfest and the Watchfire concert at Town Hall were noted as successful recent events.

12. **Executive Session**

No motions were needed following executive session.

13. **Adjournment**

Motion: Jessica Pollack moved to adjourn. Greg Meulemans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 P.M.