Town of Hawley, Massachusetts
Minutes of a
Selectboard / Board of Health / Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
October 6, 2026

Present: Will Cosby, Hussain Hamdan, and Robert MacLean – Selectboard
Tinky Weisblat, Gal Friday; Virginia Gabert, Treasurer and Financial Administrator, via Zoom
Gary Mitchell and Chris Tirone – Highway Department
Lloyd Crawford, Metok Hughes-Levine, and Paul Levine

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. The board approved minutes from a previous meeting and signed treasury warrants. A couple of warrant articles prompted discussion. First, Hussain reminded the group that it was not customary to pay ambulance services like Highland for calls; the non-primary services operated on a mutual-aid basis. Hussain reiterated his concern about paying for mutual-aid services and establishing a precedent. On a motion by Hussain, seconded by Bob, the group unanimously agreed to approve the warrant without that item. The group also signed an article to pay Northeast Paving for recent work, but it agreed with Virginia that she should wait to issue the check until Chapter 90 money arrived. Then:

1. **The board opened the three bids that had come in for winter sand.** Mitchell Materials had bid $20.55 per ton; Delta Sand and Gravel, $23.25; and Northeast Paving a.k.a. Cold River Materials, $16.25. Hussain moved to award the contract to Northeast Paving, Bob seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

2. **The group recognized Metok Hughes-Levine.** She explained that she had spent summers in Hawley as a child and called the town her favorite place. She noted that was hoping to build on land on East Road owned by her mother, Helena Hughes. Her mother wanted the rest of her land to be placed under Conservation Restriction with the Franklin Land Trust. Metok expressed her sympathy with the town's restricted tax base (to which the CR would add) but said she hoped her house would offset some of the tax funds lost. Will counseled her to make sure that her lot and building process followed the necessary procedures. Hussain said he wished her the best. He asked about a possible visit from the Land Trust, noting that he wanted to make sure that if the land were placed in a CR the town wouldn't be responsible for administering it. Lloyd said he believed the Selectmen just had to approve the deal. Virginia said the last similar situation she could remember had dealt with a parcel on Middle Road with multiple owners. Hussain said he wanted a narrative from the Land Trust explaining the reasons it wanted to meet with the town and what it was looking for in advance. The group discussed permutations if the land were currently in Chapter 61; in that case, the town might have first refusal of the land. Paul Levine, Metok's father, expressed the opinion that the land was indeed in Chapter 61. Virginia clarified that most but not all of it was in Chapter 61. Lloyd explained a few more details about the situation, noting that there were a number of factors to consider. Returning to the issue of the permits that would be needed, Hussain told Metok that the town and the county inspectors would be happy to help her however they could.

3. **The group looked at the Spectrum quotation for internet in the Town Office**. Hussain noted that the offer was for 60 months but (after looking at state law) reminded his colleagues that any agreement lasting more than three years required a town-meeting vote. He noted that there was a section of the law that might provide an exception if the town were dealing with fiber or internet service through a municipal light plant but added that the section wasn't entirely clear. Hawley's municipal light plant, if it still existed, might be able to enter into an agreement, but it was unclear who was directing that entity. Virginia explained that the MLP's board was currently vacant as far as she knew.

The group agreed that asking Spectrum to re-issue the quotation for three years would be the easiest way forward.

Speaking of internet, Will said that the Fire Station modem needed a digital bridge (ethernet switch) as it had only three ports, and the solar-panel report could not be read. Hussain observed that if the town opted to use Spectrum it would need a router with plenty of ethernet ports; Will suggested the town could get another switch. In the meantime, the consensus was to acquire a switch for the firehouse.

4. **Tinky reminded the Selectmen that they had talked earlier about installing a bulletin board near the ramp at the Town Office** so that it would be covered in the winter. She said the best price she had found for a lockable bulletin board was at Amazon.com. The town could order one, or it could move the existing board (in which case the building would need to be painted). Virginia suggested that if the town were to purchase a new board, the building maintenance fund could be used. Tinky noted that the road crew had already installed wood on which to hang the board. Hussain moved to purchase a new board using the maintenance fund, Bob seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

5. **Before proceeding further, Tinky said she wanted to check her email**. Representatives from the school sustainability study had been scheduled to come at seven, and an hour later they had not arrived. She found no email from them. Hussain made a telephone call to Superintendent Shery Stanton, who called him back and apologized, explaining that although she had been aware of the meeting, it had not been placed on the official calendar. The Selectmen agreed to host her and her colleagues on Monday, November 2.

6. **In road and grant news**, Will brought up the scheduled October 21 listening session with engineering firm VHB about the Dugway. He said a short invitation was needed to ask residents to come hear the scenarios the company had in mind so that the engineers could narrow their focus and prioritize important elements. Tinky was instructed to ask people to let the town know whether they were coming when she sent out the invitation. She asked about refreshments; the meeting was at six, she reminded the board, so people would be hungry … and in any case refreshments always attracted an audience. Lloyd suggested that part of the town's $2000 match for the state grant be used to pay for food. The group agreed that Hussain would bring bottled water, Tinky would purchase soda, and Tinky would call the pizzeria in Charlemont to reserve pizza the day before the meeting.

   Lloyd observed that one issue was the road's alignment versus its location. He stated that Scott and Ellen Purinton were transferring some of their land to Mass Audubon, which would in turn give the land to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. One possibility might be for Mass Audubon to give land around the Dugway to the town or at least to provide an easement before it transferred the land to the state.

   Virginia asked whether the group had signed the warrant article that awaited Chapter 90 funding. She was told that it had. She said she would bring checks to the Town Office the following morning. Hussain said he would send her a list of Fire Department personnel who would probably not be at the Wednesday department meeting so that she could send checks to those people by mail; he could pick up the others.

In other business, Tinky said she that Paul Mark had replied to the town's letter about the land behind the Fire Station. He had promised to file legislation to have the state transfer the land after the November election.

Tinky shared a request from National Grid for a pole hearing for poles on Hunt Road. The group agreed to hold the hearing on Tuesday, November 17, at 6:30 p.m.

Tinky brought up a note from the Seasonal Communities initiative and was reminded that it wasn't really relevant to Hawley.

Lloyd said that the Energy Facilities Group was looking for a local representative. He said he would be happy to serve if qualified. Hussain asked how many times the group would meet. Lloyd said that the representative would only be involved if the town received a proposal for a project. The group noted that the chief administrative officer could serve in the position or could appoint an employee. There was some discussion about what this role meant. Was it the chair? Hussain indicated that he felt it was the Selectboard as a whole. Will read the job description. Husain said he thought the town needed clarification. The group agreed to take the matter up again at the next meeting.

Gary reported that the paving work in East Hawley was finished. He asked whether the board wanted to spend Chapter 90 funds to work on the shoulders. This would coast either $66,000 or $88,000, depending on the materials used; one was of higher quality and lasted longer. Virginia said that the town had $263,000 left in Chapter 90. Bob opined that the shoulders needed to be addressed; the other two board members agreed. Will moved to spend $88,000 to do this with millings. Hussain seconded the motion. Virginia noted that there was still WRAP money left from FY26. Hussain and Bob suggested keeping that for road work during the coming winter. All voted in favor of the motion. Gary said he would get the work done in November. Will asked Gary to repair some signage at the hairpin turn on East Hawley Road.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tinky Weisblat
Gal Friday

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Williams Cosby	Hussain Hamdan	Robert MacLean