Town of Pownal
Select Board Agenda
September 8, 2025
6:30 pm Regular Meeting

I. <u>Call to Order</u> by Chair Morris at 6:30 pm.
Members Present: Jon Morris, Kate Day, George Pottle (arrived at 6:38 pm)
Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase
Fire Chief: Jesse Peters

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Accounts Payable Warrant & Payroll Journal

- **FY26 AP Warrant #8 in the amount of $45,621.13.**

Selectperson Day motioned to approve FY26 AP Warrant #8 in the amount of $45,621.13. Chair Morris seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 2; No 0

- **Payroll Journal #94 the amount of $9,440.60.**

Selectperson Day motioned to approve Payroll Journal #94 in the amount of $9,440.60. Chair Morris seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 2; No 0

IV. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- **August 11, 2025 Regular Meeting**

Selectperson Day motioned to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2025 meeting as written. Chair Morris seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 2; No 2

V. Public Comment – Non- Agenda Items

Kathy Hogue, Loring Lane. So, I'm following up on the Mallet Hall Building and Grounds because I'm not a person who leaves things undone. I left the committee for personal reasons, but I want to see success with maintaining this building and keeping it up to grade. So, a while back we talked about this and Jon you thought there was a letter or some sort of memo from the Grange. I've talked with Doris Blackstone, and she talked with Arnold who was also part of the Grange and Redman and a Select Person. There's no letter. She says she is 95% sure there's no such letter. So, we've kind of crossed that bridge unless someone can produce a letter. And I just wanted to also say that I think that there's an opportunity for the town to have a more comprehensive town maintenance person to take care of the building, work with our Town Administrator, and take some of that burden from her to keep the building running. I know that I submitted just a rough track of everything I could think of that needed to happen to take care of it. Another thing which will have to be under this purview but it should apply and so I just wanted to reiterate that I'd really like to see something positive happen with how we maintain this building in the future. I do know that three of the four remaining board members are not interested in chairing that committee. The one person who's interested in keeping the committee going said he would call a meeting, but nothing's been called and so it's sort of in hiatus right now. I just wanted to open up the conversation again and nothing has to happen now but I just wanted to be the person to keep this conversation going because I think it's important that we oversee this building in the future.

VI. Department Head Reports

(Department head reports can be viewed on their respective website page(s))

- Select Board

Nothing new to report.

VII. <u>New Business</u>

- **<u>Credit Enhancement Agreement Amendment – Estabrooks</u>**

The Town Administrator stated I'm going to talk about two specific dates just for definition on here and for the minutes. There is what's called the commitment date which runs from April 1st to March 31st. The commitment date then starts getting collected on July 1st, three months later and that is our fiscal tax year which we name in the year that it ends. So, the commitment year is always named in one year and then the collection is always named in the year after. We were reviewing the credit enhancement agreement. We noticed on page eight in the chart that the commitment date of 2024 would be taxes collected towards the credit enhancement agreement in 2025. But we did not have any TIF collection in that year because that was the year of the base establishment of the valuation. And then this year in commitment 2025 with collection in tax year 2026 is when we're actually collecting our first amount of money. So, the edits are just moving the chart one year down to reflect the actual collection and give the full 15 years to the tax payer and the town. I have run this by the town attorney, and they had no questions, red flags or anything. It goes along with the original application binder and falls under all the suits of the credit enhancement agreement we applied for at the time of establishing the TIF district. Chair Morris asked if there were any questions for Becky. Selectperson Day stated you said that gives the full 15 years to the resident of the town. Yes, the taxpayer Chandler Brook. Selectperson Day motioned that we approve the amendment to the credit enhancement agreement between the Town of Pownal and Chandler Brook LLC originally dated May 28th, 2024 but amended on September 8th, 2025. Chair Morris seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

- **<u>Pole Permit – Lawrence Road</u>**

Chair Morris asked the other Select Board members if they had the information. The Town Administrator stated they have draft copies, and you have the original. The Road Commissioner has gone down and looked at it and didn't see any concerns or issues and gave it the all clear. Chair Morris stated it's confusing to me. Are we calling this pole number 55 on the Lawrence Road or is it at the address of 55 Lawrence Road? This form is totally incorrect. So, let's try to figure this out. Where is the poll? I do not know where the poll is so we can send this back to CMP or we can approve it, but it really gives no location of where it is. So, it would not be in the town's best interest from my perspective to approve it. I realize that the Road Commissioner has looked at it but the Select Board really needs an address. It's up to the Select Board to decide. That's only my opinion and I'm one of three. Selectperson Day suggested that if they want to resubmit, then they send in the correct address. Selectperson Pottle stated having known that the Road Commissioner went down and looked at the pole, I feel that the Town's had good representation that we know where it's at. I do agree that they should submit the proper documentation so it's clear. Chair Morris motioned to deny the pole permit until proper addressing. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

Chair Morris motioned upon receipt of the address by the Town Administrator, I move that we approve the pole permit because I do not want to penalize the homeowner. Selectperson Pottle seconded the motion.
Discussion: Chair Morris stated this would mean we approve an abstentia when Becky gets the right address.
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

The Town Administrator asked if it was okay to annotate the address on the existing permit or do they want a resubmission. Annotation was fine.

- **Municipal Valuation Return**

Chair Morris stated we need to approve this and asked if there were any questions. Selectperson Pottle stated he read through it earlier in the day. He has a lot of questions mostly due to inexperience with the document. Selectperson Day stated I don't want to create a delay, but I wouldn't mind having more time to look through it. Chair Morris suggested that we approve it just to move it forward, but we have a workshop before the next Select Board meeting, and we invite Becky and Donna. Donna may not be able to come but it's important that the Select Board understands this. I've gone through this with Donna. There are important numbers here and that really gives the Select Board an idea on how much money the town is worth and what kind of taxation we need to raise to value. Also, if you look at page two, you could see there's information here about any business that takes the bete exemption which is probably the store. It also gives you information on how much value we have in our tax incremental finance district, which is the Estabrooks Greenhouse. It also states how much excise tax we've collected. Under the electrical generation and distribution property, it gives the CMP value which is a big one. Why is this important for the Select Board to know. We're currently valued at 78% of state valuation. So, not only do we lose the valuation of individual property real estate tax, we lose 22% of CMP's valuation by not being at 100%. Which if you can do the math, it's a fairly big chunk of money. So that is the reason we need to do a revaluation as quickly as possible. I think we can do one more issue of factoring, which is what we did for this particular tax year where the assessing agent bumped everybody up by 30%. That only got us to 78% ratio with the State. Underneath the electrical CMP's line is the tree growth line. It tells you how many acres are in tree growth and the value of that. On the next page, there's continuation of tree growth and then comes farm and open space. That's another state program. We have 442 acres under farm and open space for a total value of $150,000. Then we have open space which we have 19 parcels under open space. Next on page four, there's nothing under working waterfront. The exempt properties are $3 million. That would be the school and any state property. Churches are on the next page, page five. On page six, we have the veteran's exemption, which also gets hurt by our lack of 100% valuation. On page seven you'll see total value of all property exempted by law. That's 8 million and change and then the auditor's information. So, there you have it, a quick review, but we will invite on your approval of this municipal value return, Donna. The Town Administrator stated George is not going to be at the next meeting, so I don't know if you want to put it to the first meeting in October. This is due by a certain time for the state. Chair Morris motioned to approve the Municipal Valuation Return. Selectperson Pottle seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

- **Sales Ratio and Transfer Analysis Report**

The Town Administrator stated this is just for your information. I did not print the transfer report because it was 488 pages. All Select Board members received an email copy. This is just another document that goes along with the Municipal Valuation Return. Chair Morris asked if she compares our sales with other towns. The Town Administrator stated she wrote some information in the memo "I have not done a preliminary calculation but as you can clearly see the current market value continues to increase significantly since 2016 and the 20% factor applied to all values last year and the additional 30% this year. I anticipate our audit by Maine Revenue will be conducted early. We'll have a better idea of what our final ratio will be once it's completed."

- **Abatement – Account 442**

Chair Morris stated this is a request by Robert Payson for his home where there was a 28 square foot error on the size of his house. This results in an abatement of $12,000 in value and $183.60 in tax. Selectperson Day motioned that we approve the abatement between Robert Payson and the Town. Selectperson Pottle seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

- **Responsibility of Repairs to Salt/Sand Shed**

Selectperson Pottle stated there was some discussion at the last Future Facilites Meeting regarding the sand and salt shed. The report from AE Hodsdon specifies a 5-year replacement. The committee is just looking for direction from the Select Board if we want them to start working on that. Five years can go by very quickly. He also reached out to AE Hodsdon regarding the report and the report we received 3 months ago was not the final report. It was a draft and that is why the name is incorrect. There was a 3rd bullet item for immediate repairs which is to reinforce the fractured steel columns. He asked the owner if we replaced the steel I-beams that are fractured and possibly make some improvement to the foundation if needed, if that would buy us a longer window than 5 years. He felt it would easily do that. So now we have a few avenues to pursue. He also informed the Road Commissioner of the updated report so he will probably have a few questions. Chair Morris stated there are a few questions to answer here. The initial question is do we want the Future Facilites Committee to shoulder this. He felt it may not be fair to add this burden to them. However, the office and the new Road Commissioner cannot shoulder the burden either. Selectperson Day asked where we are getting the money to do the plans. Chair Morris stated that it is a great question and it will have to go to a town meeting vote. We would have to see if the Future Facilites Committee had any planning money left to deal with this immediately. It feels like the salt shed was initially part of the whole project. We would have to wait and see if there was any money left from their RFP and then we would have to go to town meeting. The Town Administrator stated we have some money in the budget that can take care of the siding and the roof sections but not that third bullet point. The audit is happening on Thursday so we will have the audited amount of the unassigned fund balance in the next couple of weeks. If there is any available money, we may have to consider a special town meeting because we are going to need to remedy this for insurance purposes. It's not something we can wait 5 years on. Chair Morris asked when the remedy is due by. She answered they have been notified we are working on it right now. We've been reaching out for estimates but that was based on the first report. I think they are expecting the repairs to be done by the next inspection next spring. Potentially they could drop the building off the insurance. We can ask for an extension based on this new report and we need town meeting approval for the money. I think they would be understanding as long as we continue to communicate with them on the process. Chair Morris asked if Selectperson Pottle could give a ballpark estimate. We will need to RFP this. That is movement towards repair. Selectperson Pottle looked at the building today and stated there is a lot to repair. He doesn't feel it will be in the millions. He is hoping the low hundreds. We will need to put out an RFI, this will impact the town. The Board may need to consider using funds from the unassigned fund balance. The Town Administrator stated there is a public works fund balance that could be used. She is unsure of the balance. Selectperson Day asked if there are any kind of environmental emergency grants. Chair Morris stated the danger is we can't continue to use the building if it's uninsured. This is high priority. The Town Administrator stated she would work on an RFP draft this week. She asked for clarification. Should the RFP be just for an initial assessment or assessment and cost to fix? Chair Morris stated it should be for both.

The Town Administrator stated it was that time of year where we need to adopt the maximum for general assistance. I would like to set a public hearing for the beginning of the next scheduled meeting. We do not need to start earlier. The new maximums would go into effect on October 1st. Chair Morris asked what the reimbursement rate is. It is at 70%.

VIII. Old Business

Chair Morris commented that related to general assistance, the property on Allen Road, the remains were not claimed, and the Town was asked to pay for the cremation and burial through the general assistance program. The Deputy Clerk worked on this and when talking to the state, they suggested the funeral home place a lien on the property for the cost.

The Town Administrator stated Ben, from North Star Planning, reached out last week to me, the Town Planning Facilitator and the Code Enforcement Officer about the impact fee ordinances to make sure that he understood the right direction. So, I reviewed our workshop, and he is going to start working on the methodology and the equation or the calculation. The question he asked is if we want to keep them as standalone ordinances or incorporate them in the land use. I sat with Tim, our Code Enforcement Officer, and we talked about how each option had value. One thing Tim said to me was if it's coming across his desk or going before the Planning Board, he felt it should be in the Land Use Ordinances and impact fees are tied to a building permit. Therefore, they go across his desk, however, ultimately it really is a decision for the Select Board. I have not given Ben an answer and he can at least work on the methodology and calculation. Chair Morris stated there are implications further down the line whether we keep it a stand-alone ordinance or incorporate it into the Land Use Ordinance because it is tied to calculations done by the CEO. I would feel better informed if I could talk to Tim and maybe Ben. We will table this to the next meeting.

IX. Correspondence

Selectperson Pottle met with the Economic Development Committee last week. He sent them an email that Chief Peters received regarding some possible economic grant funding for them. He also mentioned to them about contacting Ben for some guidance about village districts. They were excited for the information.

Selectperson Day stated the Solid Waste Committee has set up a tour of the EcoMaine facility for Wednesday, November 12th. They have 25 spots available. The Town Administrator stated she is going on the tour.

Chair Morris stated the Town has received a letter from Mr. Shane Brady. It is a public record. It went to the Code Enforcement Officer and Planning Facilitator. It registered complaints about the operation of the Planning Board and implied, from my perspective, that if things didn't change, he would see us in court. So that needs to be on public record that an applicant to the Planning Board has threatened with court action for issues. Also, under correspondence there have been three signs stolen from the North Pownal side. One was the "Welcome to Pownal", another was a speed limit sign and the last one was a curve sign. That's just one stretch of road from the Durham Road to the Fickett Road. The Cumberland County Sheriff's Office has been informed, and license plates have been passed on. There's been an incredible amount of what I would call rough housing and "ramrodding" on Allen Road near the substation. The welcome sign was donated by the Order of the Redmen. I will let Mr. Blackstone know.

The Town Administrator stated that we received a letter from the Maine Municipal Association Risk Management Service. "The Town of Pownal is pleased to announce it has received a $1,934

dividend check from the Maine Municipal Association because of it's good performance in loss prevention efforts." Good job everyone.
Chair Morris attended the North Pownal Community Outreach Center. They have become a non-profit entity and the response they had to an event up there. I think they are looking for town involvement in the buildings, so I wanted to report that out in a public meeting. I will continue to meet with them. It's a beautiful building and it's historic. Whether or not the Town would consider involving itself financially in that set of buildings as a community center is a question. I wanted to be transparent and disclose in a public meeting that I was at the meeting and part of that discussion. Kathy Hogue commented that they are looking into grants to update the kitchen because they can't use the kitchen publicly. It's not up to standards. They also need to make the building accessible by adding a handicap entrance.

X. Any Other Business

The Town Administrator wanted to report that after some shopping she has ordered the TV. It is coming October 8th. Our Planning Facilitator has a couple of wall mounts so once the tv comes we will see if they are compatible. We will then need to get it mounted so we should have dual screens running sometime in October or November if all goes well.

Chair Morris commented on the courses that the Town Administrator enrolled employees in; the Road Commissioner has passed five of them. The Code Enforcement Officer has already passed six of them so thank you for getting them enrolled. These are courses that MMA offers for free and the Road Commissioner is taking some leadership courses. The Town Administrator stated she has sent the links to Kate and George. Our Road Commissioner has also signed up for the Road Scholar classes. Our Planning Facilitator did all four required classes. I've got three of my four done. The Deputy Clerks have gotten theirs done. The part-time clerk has enrolled in several other classes. People are really taking advantage of this tool. Chief Peters completed three of the courses on the day I sent the email out.

Chair Morris talked to Peter about the Civics 101 class. He is excited about incorporating the fifth-grade class. We will collaborate with Ms. Winkler, and we need to look at dates.

Chair Morris asked if we had set a date with our attorney. The Town Administrator stated yes, it's October 27th at 5 pm. She will be sending a 'save the date" email out. She requested to close the office at 4:45 so the clerks can attend the FOIA training. The Select Board agreed to the closure. Chair Morris stated the Select Board should discuss offering food as a small gesture for the attendees.

XI. Executive Session per 1 M.R.S.A 406 (6)(C) Real Estate

Chair Morris motioned to enter into the executive session per 1 M.R.S.A 406 (6)(C) Real Estate. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0
Chair Morris motioned to exit the executive session at 8:02 pm Selectperson Day seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

XII. Adjournment

Chair Morris motioned to adjourn the meeting. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.
Discussion: None
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Taylor-Chase
Town Administrator

Jon Morris **Kate Day** **George Pottle**