

**MERP Grant Meeting
January 8, 2026 – 8:30 AM
Orange Town Office**

In Attendance: Steve Simpson, Lee Cattaneo, Emily Ruff, Diane Hallenbeck, Gregory Colling, Sam Lash

1. Call to Order

Emily Ruff called the meeting to order at **8:30 AM**.

2. Agenda Revisions

Emily Ruff requested review of **HSIP, PACIF, Better Roads, Grants in Aid, and Park and Ride** to be added to the agenda under Other Business.

Steve Simpson requested discussion of **grader repairs** be added.

3. Approve Minutes

On a motion made by Steve Simpson and seconded by Lee Cattaneo, the **December 18, 2025** minutes were approved with all committee members in favor.

4. Review MERP Project Status

a. Greg Colling's scope of work was reviewed and confirmed. The committee agreed to the scope as outlined, including a full thermal envelope upgrade for the Town Clerk's office and an energy consultant to retest the buildings (subcontracted under Greg). The goal is to finalize the MERP scope to enable RFPs and secure construction bids for the 2026 season. A conservative six-month construction window (**June–November 2026**) is proposed.

b. Greg Colling will subcontract with Green Mountain Enclosure Consulting to provide practical energy analysis. Their approach is preferred over the previous consultant's overly complex report to conduct a new blower door test. The initial test was conducted in summer 2024; conducting one in winter as a pre-test measurement will show more accurate results. This will include post-construction blower door tests.

c. Lee Cattaneo inquired about the status of existing equipment regarding scope of work. Greg explained that the existing clerk office is hydronic; a new heat pump will not impact it and the existing system will serve as a backup. Additional discussion was held around existing Town Hall systems; the forced-air furnaces should be removed with the possibility of keeping one as a backup.

d. A full thermal upgrade is planned for the Town Office including removing and replacing damaged vinyl siding with a sustainable material. The grant covers window and door replacement for the Town Hall; the Town will be responsible for the full exterior paint job which is not grant-eligible. The committee discussed recruiting town residents to volunteer for this project.

e. Occupancy during construction was discussed. Town Office operations must be relocated. The Town Hall upstairs meeting room is a potential temporary, accessible location. The Town Hall basement will be inaccessible for insulation work. The upstairs meeting room can remain occupied during window replacement. This should be discussed further by staff and Selectboard, and costs should be estimated and added in.

f. Sam Lash recommended coordinating a BGS site visit to review the building envelope and recommended the blower door test be conducted prior to the BGS visit. Sam Lash will work to schedule this meeting (after the blower door test is conducted) with BGS to secure approval for the proposed scope to ensure no issues arise once work begins.

g. The Park and Ride grant was discussed. Greg confirmed the Town does not need to submit historic site permits as past modifications to the building have removed the Town Hall from historic status. Greg emphasized that a civil engineer needs to prepare a plan for the parking lot with lighting and signage. Steve Simpson will initiate an RFP for a civil engineer for review at the next meeting. Steve Simpson will file an extension for the Park and Ride grant and review any additional requisite forms.

h. Steve Simpson will call the Fire Marshal for a preliminary review of the scope of work summary to clarify what work notices or permits are required.

5. Review Grant Tracking

a. Diane obtained a Certificate of Insurance for MERP and Emily submitted it to BGS.

6. Review Financials

No additional discussion.

7. Other Business

- a. Emily Ruff requested that the Road Crew schedule meetings with Ashley Andrews for Grants in Aid to develop scope of work and schedule work for spring.
 - b. Emily Ruff requested the Road Crew review the Better Roads / George Street grant specifications, then schedule a meeting with Daniel Judkins to understand reporting requirements so the work can be scheduled for spring.
 - c. Lee Cattaneo reported on the HSIP grant and his meeting with Keith. Additional information was obtained to complete the application.
 - d. Emily Ruff reported that the PACIF grant restarted on January 1 and applications are rolling. Diane Hallenbeck will review this application.
 - e. Steve Simpson provided Darlene / NEMRC's report of current grant activity.
 - f. Steve Simpson reported about the grader and outlined urgent repairs or replacement needs. He will send specifics to Sam Lash, who will contact VTrans to explore potential funding sources.
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8. Confirm Next Meeting Date and Agenda

Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 8:30 AM

Diane will provide a Town Zoom link; Steve will chair and Lee will take notes.

9. Adjourn

On a motion made by Steve Simpson and seconded by Lee Cattaneo, the meeting was adjourned with all members in favor at **10:25 AM**.

ACTION ITEMS

Steve

- Send Sam Lash details about grader
- Review Better Roads scope of work and maps with Road Crew (sent in email) and schedule discussion with Dan Judkins (work must be completed by **9/30/26**)
- Schedule discussion with Ashley Andrews and Road Crew to determine scope of work for Grants in Aid (work must be completed by **9/30/26**)
- Call Fire Marshal for a preliminary informal meeting to discuss scope of work and ensure requisite work notices are filed
- Budget Request Numbers:
 - **Park and Ride:** Grant Revenue \$17,600 / Town Match \$4,400 / 12/30/26 deadline (likely extended)
 - **Better Roads FY26:** Grant Revenue \$16,400 / Town Match \$4,100 / 9/30/26 deadline
 - **Grants in Aid FY26:** Grant Revenue \$11,500 / Town Match \$2,875 / 9/30/26 deadline
 - **MERP:** Grant Revenue \$402,731.13 / Town Match \$6,000 for asbestos testing and security camera relocation + 10% contingency (~\$40,000) + funding for office relocation and exterior paint

Lee

- Prepare HSIP grant application (deadline **2/2/26**)

Diane

- Research and apply for PACIF grant
- Prepare Zoom link for next grant meeting agenda (January 22) to post and circulate

Sam

- Contact VTrans regarding grader opportunities
- Email committee members and Greg BGS framing sheet