



TOWN OF WARNER

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Select Board: Harry Seidel, Chairman
Alfred Hanson, Vice Chair
Michael J. Smith
Kathleen Frenette, Town Administrator

Select Board Public Meeting Minutes

July 31, 2025 4:00 PM

Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

Open the Public Meeting and Roll Call

Harry Seidel called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Select Board Present: Chairman Harry Seidel, Vice Chair Alfred Hanson, Mike Smith and Town Administrator Kathy Frenette.

Public attendance: James Gaffney, John Leavitt, Sarah McNeil, Nancy Martin, Ian Rogers, Steve Bridgewater, Karen Coyne, Mary Mead, James Sherman, Natalie Wells, Bill Hanson, Joanne (?), David Carle, Kathy Schoonmaker, Christine Frost via Zoom,

Harry Seidel stated that the purpose of this meeting is to go into non-public session. He stated that the Select Board will hear public comments but will not be responding to any questions or discussing the non-public meeting. Harry Seidel acknowledged that there was a large public presence.

Public Comment

James Gaffney distributed documents he obtained through a right to know request. He explained that the documents relate to a July 1, 2025, non-public Select Board meeting that discussed and voted on issues that were not appropriate for a non-public meeting. James Gaffney stated that in the documents there are emails that illustrate Harry Seidel's bias against Kathy Frenette.

Kathy Frenette stated that she is invoking her right pursuant to RSA 91-a, to have the non-public meeting held in public if the non-public meeting relates to her. She advised the Select Board that she emailed her request to the Board as well. Harry Seidel explained that the non-public meeting is a non-public subject. Kathy Frenette asked what would be discussed. Harry Seidel reiterated that the non-public meeting is a non-public subject.

A female audience member (name not stated) asked if Kathy is the subject of the non-public discussion because she is attempting to verify that the Select Board will not override Kathy Frenette's rights.

John Leavitt stated that it is not a violation to reveal if the Select Board will be discussing Kathy Frenette. He reiterated that Kathy Frenette has the right to request the meeting be open to the public.

Mike Smith explained that he was informed of this meeting yesterday while he was out of state. He stated that he requested the Chair reschedule the meeting from Thursday to Friday but was told the meeting would be held with or without his presence. Harry Seidel disputed saying that. Mike Smith concurred that Kathy Frenette has the right to request a public meeting pursuant to RSA 91-a, that states the meeting *shall be* open to the public.

1 Karen Coyne stressed the need for all speakers to be treated the same and afforded the full two minutes of
2 speaking time.

3
4 Mary Mead asked Harry Seidel to explain why he is not abiding by Kathy Frenette's request.

5
6 Harry Seidel reiterated that the Select Board will not be answering questions, this is for public comment
7 only.

8
9 Christine Frost via Zoom stated that any decisions made in the non-public will be made illegally and will be
10 non-binding.

11
12 James Gaffney stated that there is a pile of evidence that Harry Seidel cannot be objective. James Gaffney
13 expressed concern that the town will be vulnerable to a law suit due to a hostile work environment or
14 wrongful termination. He stated that Kathy Frenette has done a great job, and she has been upfront and
15 honest. James Gaffney stated that the auditor's reasoning for terminating the audit was due to the Finance
16 Director being uncooperative. He reiterated that the Town could be liable to a massive lawsuit because of
17 Harry Seidel's negligence.

18
19 James Sherman spoke about Harry Seidel's previous comments to him, indicating that Harry wanted this
20 situation to go forward without anyone losing their job but now Harry Seidel is looking to eliminate Kathy
21 Frenette's position.

22
23 Karen Coyne explained that New Hampshire whistleblowers laws protect employees and prohibit employers
24 from retaliating. She referenced RSA 170-e: 48 and RSA 75-e: 1-7. Karen Coyne stated that Kathy Frenette
25 is protected as she has been reporting the gross mismanagement of public funds.

26
27 Steve Bridgewater reminded the Select Board that Kathy Frenette was hired to do a job and clean up the
28 mess. He urged the Select Board to let her do her job.

29
30 Natalie Wells concurred with the previous comments. She stated that those responsible should be held
31 accountable. She encouraged the Select Board to listen to the public. She stated that most people in town are
32 happy with Kathy's performance.

33
34 Bill Hanson stated that he is aware of the issues in Town, some that have been recognized by the Select
35 Board, but some have not. Bill Hanson stated that there are only two circumstances that would prevent the
36 Select Board from addressing the issues; either the lack of management skills or they are a coward.

37
38 Ian Rogers stated that he and many others in the Town do have trust in the Select Board to make decisions in
39 the best interest of the Town.

40
41 John Leavitt referenced Alfred Hanson's comments on July 15th regarding working together and moving
42 forward to solve the Town's problems. John Leavitt stated that most who are in attendance tonight support
43 Kathy Frenette and he urged the Select Board to use this opportunity to work together with the residents.

44
45 Sarah McNeil stressed the need for an independent outside investigation. Sarah McNeil stated that she is
46 embarrassed how some are treating Harry Seidel.

47
48 Joanne (?) agreed with Ian Rogers and Sarah McNeil. She suggested contacting the NHMA for their
49 assistance or guidance. She stated that there needs to be a peaceful resolution.

1 David Carle inquired how many people are speculating on the topic of the non-public meeting. He stated that
2 he will trust the process.

3
4 Nancy Martin explained that she is terribly distressed about the current state of Warner. She has heard
5 different versions, and she is not sure what to believe. Nancy Martin supports an outside independent
6 investigation. Nancy Martin spoke about the loud voices in town, and the quiet voices are not heard because
7 they do not complain all the time.

8
9 James Gaffney stated that the issue is the Select Board is not following the law. He said they are undermining
10 the Town Administrator.

11
12 Kathy Schoonmaker spoke about the need for an independent investigation.

13
14 Mary Mead explained that she was concerned after reading the auditors' complaints and reasons for quitting.
15 She stressed that an audit should be transparent.

16
17 John Leavitt spoke about a conversation he had with the previous Town Administrator who at the end of his
18 time in Warner agreed that Warner has serious problems to resolve.

19
20 Steve Bridgewater spoke about his concerns regarding Clyde and Judy's job performances. He urged the
21 Select Board to allow Kathy Frenette to do her job.

22
23 **Motion by Seidel to go into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal,**
24 **promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the**
25 **investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public**
26 **meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.**

27
28 **a. Seconded by: Hanson**

29 **b. Roll call vote: Seidel YES Hanson YES Smith NO**

30 **c. Motion: PASSED**

31
32 Kathy Frenette advised Harry Seidel that he is obstructing her rights, and she warned that this could lead to a
33 lawsuit. Mike Smith stated that he would not participate in the non-public meeting, and he was leaving.

34
35 The Select Board moved to non-public session at 4:33 PM.

36
37 Respectfully submitted on 8/4/25 by Tracy Doherty

38 Edited by Darcie Buskey, Assistant Clerk