

East Berkshire Fire District 1 Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 26, 2026 @ 6:30 pm
2839 VT Route 105- "2 Rivers" Building
East Berkshire, VT 05447

Attendance: Olivia Savard, Diana Marrier, Kamar Simmons

Guests: Catherine Dimitruk, John Kiernan, John Little, Hildy Jamka

Zoom: no attendees

Olivia called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Adjustments to the Agenda

No adjustments to the agenda.

2. Opportunity for Public Comment

Hildy offered her opinion on the situation of the District. She thinks looking for a new water source should be tabled until the future. She hopes the grant can be used to do other things than seek a new water source. Hildy was in contact with the EPA person to ask about this but has not heard back yet. If possible she thinks the funds should be redirected to pay off USDA and the Bond Bank.

3. Past, Current Grants and Statewide Filing Requirements- John Kiernan, RCAP Solutions

John described the EPA WIN grant, noting that it can help with other items but it will always be required to help with compliance issues. It can't be used for past expense or debt as suggested in public comment. There is a one-year extension through this September 2026. He suggests it would be possible to request another extension. On paper, the state believes the source is not of acceptable capacity from a compliance perspective. Will need to find another source or do the testing to show that the source is adequate.

John also described a planning loan from the VT Bond Bank that covered the engineering costs. USDA gave a loan for the construction and gave district a check for \$100,000 extra to pay construction costs and the loan from the Bond Bank. There was a miscommunication and the Bond Bank was not paid.

VT Bond Bank is 0% loan for 5 years. The Bond Bank also has grant rounds the District might be able to apply for.

The group discussed the USDA mortgage noting it is about \$25,000 per year. Attempt to refinance with DEC failed because of the inability to comply with the one of the requirements of the State Revolving Fund.

4. Finalize Property Owner Outreach Letter

Olivia presented the draft owner outreach letter. Diana said it was a good letter and they talked about the language about the online payments. For now, they decided to amend the letter and deal with the online payments later. Once the letter is sent, the bills can be sent. The letter will talk about a normal bill for Q1 2026 consistent with the amount they were paying, then will move to monthly billing. Prudential committee members re-affirmed the importance of making sure the checks are sent to the Town Clerk's office, payable to EBFD#1.

Olivia moved to approve the outreach letter. Kamar seconded. Motion carried.

5. QuickBooks Online- Review options and authorize expense

The group discussed the need for QB online to manage the accounts. Olivia moved to adopt QB Small Business Plus. Kamar seconded. Motion carried.

Hildy explained where the EIN is saved for the EBFD#1 at the town office.

6. Review and Approve Payables and Deposits

Hildy updated the committee about the EBFD#1 owned property that is leased to BJ Deroucher. He pays per tap to the District. The lease is held at the Enosburgh Town Office. Hildy also described the Marcy Trust Fund which was an automatic deposit that was going to the Community National Bank. Diana noted that this might show up in the TD Bank information.

Kamar will deposit the checks from January 1 onward per the segregation of duties plan. Olivia will contact the other check writers prior to depositing as a courtesy.

Olivia worked with Lawyers to get the roads plowed with the payment made. Lawyers will bill monthly moving forward. The electric and property taxes were paid. Once QB is implemented then it will be easier to get a sense of the accounts payable. John K. was contacted by Hutchins to get a status report on their outstanding invoice.

Olivia noted that the previous treasurer made some deposits and payments that need to be documented.

The committee discussed aiming for user bills in March for the Q1 user payments.

The status of the contract with SOS was discussed and is unknown. Catherine will follow up with SOS to see the status of the contract and the account.

7. Identify Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The committee identified items for the next meeting including: Budget, QB update, user bills, annual meeting agenda. John K. offered to attend and help with budget and rate setting. They discussed asking SOS to attend at some point in the coming months.

8. Other Business

There is a question about when were the filters were last changed. John K. noted that there needs to be a compliance update at the state letting them know who is the authorized person. John K. offered to help do the online registration. John K. noted that the Craftsbury system has 62 users and has a prudential committee of 9 people and user committees.

9. Adjourn

Olivia moved to adjourn and Kamar seconded. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

