

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**August 24, 2023**  
**Minutes**

Present: Lee McClenny  
Bill Cleary  
Dave Baczewski  
John Roberts

Nanette Rogers  
Callie Hamdy  
Greg Barrows

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

Removed 5:30 p.m. Executive Session, added Minutes of August 14, removed Request to Use Town Trails.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**MINUTES**

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the July 31, 2023 minutes as written, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the August 10, 2023 minutes as written, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0.

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the August 14, 2023 minutes as written, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

**ROAD SCHEDULE**

John Roberts, Road Foreman, presented the road schedule from August 11, 2023 – August 24, 2023. Dave motioned to approve the road schedule. Bill seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

**ACCESS PERMIT**

Eric Henshaw was requesting an access permit for 337 Cambridge Road. This was to widen the access of his driveway temporarily to store vehicles and increase driveway safety. He already talked with John, Melissa, and Harmony. Lee asked if there is a ditch along Cambridge Road in that area. There is not. John thought the parking space would also be full of snow. The Town does not allow vehicles in the right of way due to snow plowing operations. John believes allowing it in this case could be a liability. Eric is not looking to store cars there long term, just for the purposes of plowing the driveway. John would like the Selectboard to view the area and get their thoughts. John believes other residents may take issue with allowing this as they have been asked to remove items from the right of way. Eric has repeatedly had to call a tow truck to his own driveway due to his issues. Bill asked what would happen if the parking was pushed back? Eric thought the parking could be pushed backwards. Bill had no objections as long as the parking area was constructed out of the right of way. Melissa Manka suggested the width of Cambridge Road be confirmed before construction begins.

Bill Cleary motioned to approve an access permit submitted by Eric Henshaw for 337 Cambridge Road provided Eric follows through with the recommendation made and researches the right of way so that vehicles are parked outside of the right of way, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

#### **FY'24 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the FY'24 Highway Budget Status Report.

#### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR POSITION TRANSITION & RECRUITMENT/HIRING PROCESS**

Vicky Ross, temporary business consultant for the Town, was present. She is helping the Town with forming a team of temporary volunteers to help with the Town Administrator tasks in Nanette's absence. The Town had held a staff meeting for all staff to tell them about the transition and take staff questions. Vicky intends to meet with each staff member one-on-one and is about halfway through at this point. Lori Johnson has been helping Vicky capture information from Nanette about the position. Lori has completed a town office map so volunteers can know where things are. They identified coverage gaps and produced recommendations to mitigate them. Seth Jensen had provided a list of retired town administrators and town managers who provide consulting services for helping with special projects or to serve as interim town administrators. Vicky had contacted those individuals and summarized their availability and rates.

One of the suggestions that had come out of Vicky's one-on-one meetings with staff, is that Harmony's working hours will increase in September. Now would be a good time for Harmony to take over the DRB Coordinator position. Maria Barden, Assistant Town Clerk, was willing to take on that role. Tina Scanlon, one of the Library Substitutes, has also offered several hours a week. The Town is still looking for several more people to take on the Town Administrator email inbox. Bill was excited about Maria taking the position. Lee explained that staff expressed in the staff meeting that they felt the Assistant Town Administrator position needed to be permanent. Bill would like to begin interviewing those that have applied for the Town Administrator role as soon as possible.

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT PAID ON CALL PROPOSAL, TANKER REPLACEMENT AND SHAPE OF DEPARTMENT**

Garrett Barlett, Fire Chief, and John Quinn from the Fire Department were present. For the past several years the Department has tried to stay level or below with their operating and capital budget. Unfortunately, their budget has not kept up with inflation and they are starting to feel it. They are having issues having enough funds to do all the annual testing they are required to do such as hose and ladder testing. Garrett thinks it comes down to the safety of the firefighters they are asking to run these calls. The purpose of the testing is to find equipment problems before they appear during an emergency. The testing is supposed to be done on an annual basis. Not being able to do their hose testing for the past four years Garrett is anticipating that some of the hoses will fail and need to be replaced. While the Department will be presenting their full budget on November 9<sup>th</sup>, during their budget request, Garrett warned the Board that they will be asking for an increase.

The Department is also proposing to go to a paid-on call form of management instead of entirely volunteer. This would compensate people for their time. They have been having trouble recruiting and keeping firefighters. This is not a problem unique to Westford, it is state and nationwide. They are still very capable of providing the town with fire protection, however the more people they can retain the better. The Department currently has seven people, but

at least three people show up for every single call. Bill said that if they are going to ask for an increase in one area of their budget to please be creative with the rest of their budget.

The 7 Tanker 12 Truck needed to be replaced. The truck was built in 1995 and is 28 years old. Parts are getting difficult to find. With that being said, the Department has been working with a dealer to draw up preliminary plans and get a price of what a new truck will cost. There is money in the Capital Reserve for firetruck replacement, about \$60,000. Firetrucks are big ticket items so the rest would need to be bonded for. They would like the bond for this truck to be on the ballot for Town Meeting 2024. In 2027 the Environmental Protection Agency is due to release new regulations on emissions for these kinds of vehicles. That alone will drive up the price. Current build times for the truck are 20 months out. The estimate for the vehicle is \$531,876. The Town can pre-order the truck, but it comes at a gamble which Garrett is not willing to take. If the Town pre-ordered and the bond is not approved by the voters, it is a minimum of \$40,000 fee to get out of the contract. Bill asked if a used truck would cost less. Garrett explained we do not know what sort of issues we would get with a used truck. They could run into similar problems that they have with the current tanker. They do not want the Town to purchase a truck only to find out it has issues down the line. The other reason is that the four-wheel drive chassis we have gotten a quote for is an extremely rare tanker combination. The Department built it with the expectation that their trucks could get out to whatever they are called for in any weather conditions. Two-wheel drive trucks have issues getting up our dirt roads in the winter, especially once they unload their water. The Fire Department did not take the decision to bring this to the Selectboard lightly.

### **COMMUNITY WASTEWATER PROJECT**

This was a continued discussion about the Community Wastewater Project.

#### **Updated Plans & Cost Estimates Received from Consultants**

Amy Macrellis from Stone Environmental provided memos of the revised project costs and construction cost estimates. The cost of everything has gone up since the last cost estimate. The engineering cost has increased from 10% to 30%. It is about \$700,000 cost increase from the \$2.3 million total project costs in February 2022, to \$3.04 million total project costs estimated in August of 2023. \$494,000 of that was in the contingency. The ledge probes revealed that they need less ledge removal than anticipated. However, the cost of that removal went up, so it did not really save any money. The control building and drip disposal system went up about \$159,000, most of which is in the increased costs of concrete and labor. The good news is despite a total project cost of \$3.87 million it is still less than \$4 million project cost which was the upper limit set for the project.

Many of the costs in Amy's memos are in the past such as the preliminary, Step 1 and part of Step 2. Bill thought there were a lot of engineering costs, but Amy explained it is well within what the Agency of Natural Resources expects a community of this size to spend for a project of this scope.

George Lamphere was present and pointed out that the funding stack secured to date exceeds this preliminary design number. It also exceeds the project cost number. He wanted to recognize the people that worked on all those grants. He would hate for the community to think we are asking for a bond for \$4 million. We are not. The total funding stack is \$4,020,000.

Amy mentioned the updated OEM cost estimate is included and was a long time coming. Lastly, she has a preliminary plan set which she provided to the Board in physical and .PDF form. This includes title, cover sheet, general notes, and three sheets of existing conditions plans based on present information. Folks that are looking to see what the survey on their property says should take a look. The remaining sheets are the proposed design project, layout plans and depths to bedrock, etc.

There is a meeting for potential users next Wednesday at the Brick Meeting House at 5:30 p.m. This will be an opportunity for potential users to ask questions, get answers, and make suggestions. Pat Haller clarified that the meeting on Wednesday is only for those in the user area. There are other outreach meetings for anybody to attend at the Westford School on September 13<sup>th</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Lee asked if the Planning Commission will post the plans somewhere so interested parties can access them. The information will be available at the Town Office and is already posted on the project website: <https://www.westfordsfuture.com/>.

Vicky Ross asked if the Selectboard had been invited to the event at the Red Brick Meeting House. They were not, because it would be a quorum if more than one attended. Lee, Selectboard Chair, and Bree Drapa, Library Director, were invited. Pat Haller commented on how fabulous it has been that we have been targeting to get to this number by mid-August so we can go to a November vote, and we have accomplished that. He thanked Amy and Stone Environmental.

### **Ordinance/Policy Resolution**

#### *Basis for User Charges*

Will the Selectboard choose to allocate a portion of the bonded debt to the grand list? Juli Beth Hinds was present and clarified that the Selectboard must decide if they are going to pay a portion of the debt service/cost of the system out of grand list revenue rather than user fees alone. All along that has been their intention. Is the Town going to pay a share of fees allocated to reserved capacity? Regardless we would have to pay our bills for existing town buildings. The unallocated capacity figures in regarding how we figure out our rate. Leaving this in gives us the option to do so. Does not mean we have to.

#### *Allocation*

Bill was wondering how much allocation we need to put in reserve as this question has come up several times in past discussions. We could not produce an answer because we did not have those numbers yet, however Amy expects them very soon. There are a few different wastewater capacity scenarios on the sheet. The municipal and civic buildings are lumped together, and the remaining private connections are below that. Then there is what remains. The allocation for the store also needs to be updated because the new owners may want more capacity. These sorts of scenarios are all in the summary. This is one potential allocation scenario. They will learn more from the potential users next week. We are going to be in the ballpark of 10,000 gallons unallocated per day if everybody connects. So even if we maximize potential users, we have substantial flexibility. Dave does not feel a need to reserve any in this instance because there is plenty. Lee mentioned we may still want to strategically reserve capacity for the Town.

One of the things that will be an advantage about the system if constructed will be the emergency storage and reserve to help alleviate problems. John Doane asked if the

limitations present are from getting it up into the field or the soils in the fields. They are not really limitations; it is just what they have proved at the field site.

Bill thought the bigger question is who pays for the unallocated capacity. If we reserve that capacity, the Town pays for it. The ordinance can be changed at any point. We could be safe and reserve a little bit. That only makes sense to Dave if the reserve is minimal, but it is not. Seth Jensen was present. This is a policy decision for the Selectboard. The 18 questions had a question about this, and the Planning Commission had provided a suggestion to reserve 20% of the capacity for items listed in the Town Plan. Ten thousand (10,000) gallons sounds like a lot, but it is less than the capacity of some individual pump stations for large sewage treatment plants. A small market in Jericho, for example, has a septic permit for a little under 1,000 gallons per day. One or two uses like that in an existing building and the 10,000 per day would be reduced quite quickly. It is a policy decision, but some of the things the Planning Commission listed were wants identified by past surveys such as increased use of the Town Center, childcare, senior and affordable housing, etc. If we reserved capacity we would know there was capacity available for those uses in the future.

Lee asked when and where we make the decision on allocation and how people pay. Taxpayers want to know this question. Juli Beth explained it would be entirely appropriate to write the Board's intention into the ordinance. The ordinance can be amended in the future, but this is the governing document for the system. The ordinance can be adopted before the vote.

Vicky Ross asked Seth if the 20% is 20% of total capacity or unallocated. It was the total. She observed from the numbers sent to her that if the Town does not pay for 100% of the unallocated capacity the system would be cost prohibitive for users to sign up if they must bear those costs. Additionally, she observed the unallocated is an asset of the Town. That helps her accept the fact the Town is paying for it until it is used.

Melissa explained we needed to get the Board's direction figured out as the Planning Commission needs this information for the informational meetings in September and October. Because the Town is sending ballots to all active registered voters, people will need that information weeks in advance of that November 7<sup>th</sup> bond vote date.

Lori Johnson thinks, looking at the ordinance, that the Board should be careful in deciding things later. She thinks some of the language in looks too permanent for them to do this. Regarding calculations and if the users would pay for the unallocated, she did some calculations based on a \$400,000 bond. If the taxpayers pick up 100% of the unallocated, users fees are about \$1,000 per year. If they take 20% of the unallocated then the user fees jump to \$1,854 per year. Juli Beth clarified that \$400,000 is not the lowest possible bond. It may be less than that with the grants that have come in, but it does make a substantial difference with how the unallocated is charged for.

Maureen Wilcox asked how the annual cost for capital replacement has been determined? Amy responded that the amount set aside is part of the estimated annual OEM fee. Bill observed that if we are looking at the revised OEM cost, we are looking at half of the system being unallocated right now. Is it too simplistic to divide that in half and produce \$40,000 as the Town's portion of OEM? The OEM is one part of the user fee, the tricky part is the debt repayment. Dave thought that if we do not take it on that the user costs would be unreasonable. At some point we have to make a decision on this and then everybody gets to

decide during the bond vote. Melissa noted that as people connect in and expand their use of the system the Town's use would decrease and the permit fees and purchase of capacity would bring some funds back to the Town. However, the portion paid would not be repaid 100%. Juli Beth reiterated that it is an investment. Depending on how the non-profit buildings are addressed we are spending half that OEM plus the capital costs. What else costs \$50-\$60 thousand a year?

Garett Bartlett does excavation for his day job. Is there any kind of safeguard in place to catch or stop people from putting stuff down the system? There is and was discussed at the last Planning Commission meeting. There is also a section in the ordinance in what can and cannot go down the system.

Dave brought the conversation back to the unallocated capacity and how it was going to be paid. It is the same amount to be paid, but it is a question of who picks up the cost: the Town taxpayers or the limited users. Vicky believes the Town has concluded they have to pay for the unallocated capacity. Bill made a motion that the Town pick up the cost of the unallocated capacity. Lee stopped Bill, this needs to be in the ordinance for people to read and understand. He is not opposed to making a decision, but there are other things associated with it. Bill thought it could go under User Charges and Fees section of the ordinance. Dave suggested stating their intent like they have done for other items. Dave has an intent to go with the Planning Commission's 20% capacity for reserve suggestion. It does not change how much the Town is obligated to pay; it is to govern how we do things. It falls in line with the purpose of use according to the Town Plan. The intent gives the engineers, etc., the ability to crunch numbers and get more information out for voters. Juli Beth believes they had provided sufficient direction to revise the ordinance to include what the Selectboard discussed.

### **User Fees**

There are still questions regarding user fees. Representatives from the Red Brick Meeting House (RBMH) and the Westford Common Hall (WCH) were present. The Selectboard anticipates these organizations will make pitches to have the user fees waived or reduced. Amber Haller from the WCH stated that one of the things the WCH wanted to stress is that WCH is not a municipal building, but they are a civic building. Amber read several definitions of what makes a building a civic building. Julia Andrews also from the WCH advised they define themselves as a civic building, but the community has also spoken on this because they had gone through a process with VCRD and the outcome was to agree that those third, non-municipal spaces are vital to our community's wellbeing. Amber added that the WCH is a non-profit with an all-volunteer board of directors. Amber explained that they had been in a period of transition even before COVID. The WCH is trying to find an end to transition at some point. ARPA funding was a huge help, and they are utilizing those funds currently. They are hoping to soon have a stable income and be self-sustaining. They are asking for the operating costs for the wastewater system to be covered going forward. Dave reiterated his support of the WCH. His question is that yes, he wants to support, but is it more appropriate to put it in an annual budget request or is it more appropriate to codify support in the wastewater ordinance? He would hope that as the non-profits improve the cost would be less. Amber agreed. Dave thinks the budget system is more flexible. Julia explained that not only could the board on the WCH change hands, but so could the Selectboard and support is not guaranteed in the budget request. She wondered if there is a way to codify the supportive attitude in the ordinance.

John Doane, from the RBMH thought Amber expressed the general perspective of both organizations well. He thinks it is helpful to go with the intent perspective on the ordinance

and that the budgetary process would be workable. He added that when they get support from the Selectboard they consider it support from the Town and in return they feel an obligation to make the building available to the Town. As such, they do not charge town organizations such as the Recreation Department to use the building. Lee explained that Essex Rescue provides a service for the community, the board provides them with a budget and subsequently Essex Rescue also charges for services. John explained the RBMH has paying members that use the building on a regular basis and they try to have representatives from those organizations on their board. Andy Fulton from the WCH pointed out that in the Town Plan it is written that the Town is committed to preserving these historic buildings.

Bill appreciates Dave's creative thinking but disagrees. This is a wastewater issue, it is a wastewater expense, and it should show up to the taxpayers as a wastewater expense, not a budgetary one. Dave feels having it as a wastewater cost only applies for this year and would not be relevant for future years. It could also negatively sway the votes. Julia expressed there has been a concern about the expenses of the WCH in the past, but over the last year they have been able to generate revenue and while they are not self-sustaining yet, the ARPA projects take a huge relief off their maintenance issues. She feels they will get there; they are only asking for some grace. Andy reiterated this. The WCH just wanted assurance of support. Seth Jensen thought it seems like there is a tradition in Westford in municipal support of these buildings because of their functions and explained there might be a middle ground between budget support and ordinance support. A renewable, but not transferable, agreement between the non-profits and the Town could be made. They could do that for three to five years and then check in with the organizations. This way, nothing is baked into the ordinance. A clause could be included that if the building is sold the Town will take the fee the Town gave to the organizations back in the sale price. George Lamphere thinks that, from his personal perspective, he would want to know the number about which they are talking. What are they asking for? For him to make an educated decision, he needs to understand what the cost is. Amy believes those numbers can be provided.

Juli Beth explained that the decision on this does not affect the per gallon rate. What it affects is how much the taxpayers see on their bills per year. It is a difference of about \$50.00 per \$100,000 of assessed value per year to pay the bills for WCH and BMH. They are in operation and maintenance only: \$4,200 for WCH and \$4,600 for the RBMH. Dave's intent is to support those organizations through either ordinance or the budget. He thinks budget is easier, but he will do either. Lee believes the Town's budgetary process is incredibly transparent. Juli Beth clarified that this should not go in the ordinance. It would be, as Seth outlined, a memorandum of agreement. In all her practice she has never seen something like that go in an ordinance.

Vicky Ross liked the memorandum of agreement idea. She thinks that what Bill is suggesting gives the voters the total number regardless of if we intend to pay it through budget process or annual memorandum of agreement. The risk is that it could be their intent today, but in the budget process people can be competing for those monies and those organizations suddenly do not have the ability to be self-sustaining anymore. Dave's nuance is that if he has it in the budget, it adjusts because of cooperation and because of how those organizations are faring, compared to if they have a windfall when it comes to paying the first bill and they do not need assistance.

**Selectboard's Role/Attendance at 9/13 and 10/18 Informational Meetings**

Gordon Gebauer from the Planning Commission thinks that the discussion has been extremely helpful. He thinks it is important for the Selectboard to be at these meetings because of the very things that have been discussed tonight. The Planning Commission can say this is what the Selectboard has decided but that is different from having the Selectboard actually there. He also thinks it is important to be there to hear what the community has to say. If more than one board member attends it will need to be warned.

**Financial Decisions/Info for Inclusion in the Information Booklet to be Published.**

Ultimately the Selectboard has to produce the bond amount and that would be the last bit needed to publish this information booklet. Nanette explained that a suggestion was made to the Selectboard that a special meeting be held next Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, to talk about that information so the Outreach Committee has that information for their publication. If the Board waits until their September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, that is after the first public informational meeting. Juli Beth would like to work with the Committee on Monday and get further review. Vicky believes the numbers should include an estimate of a line of credit the Town might need and the expected interest that might cost.

**DISCUSS AND APPROVE RENEWAL OF VILLAGE CENTER & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS (Agency of Commerce and Community Development)**

The Village Center & Neighborhood Development Area designations were up for renewal. This is a program through ACCD. The Town was first approved in 2015 and the requirements are that the area be an existing village. Two hundred thirty (230) villages in Vermont are enrolled in this program. It is to support the revitalization of historic town centers and improvements for historic buildings, sod improvement, town priority and consideration for grants and programs from VTRAINS grants to planning grants, to building grants. It also makes Westford eligible for a Neighborhood Development Designation which helps individuals revitalize town centers.

Lee asked what these designations do for Westford. Melissa explained there are no downfalls which is why a vast majority of town centers have this designation. Adding to that, in 2019 we got the Neighborhood Development Designation (NDA). It is a different designation because there are different levels. For the NDA, the requirement is it has to be within a quarter mile of the village center and that the Town preserve waterways, wildlife, and traditional building patterns. This asks us to consider if the massing of buildings are in conformation with the traditional massing, setbacks conform to traditional setbacks, etc. The benefits are an Act 250 exemption for mixed income developments, 50% discounts on Act 250 projects, reduced state fees. exemption from land gain tax, and priority considerations for state grants and programs. There is no dictation for how a town meets the requirements. The town truly makes that determination themselves. Generally speaking, you conserve natural areas, have a pedestrian friendly village, and maintain traditional development patterns. George added that some of the grants the Town has received, not directly related to wastewater, but just in general, e would not have received if we had not had this designation.

Sheila Franz had written in and asked the Board to consider delaying the renewal of the designations. She feels the development these designations add is happening too quickly and needs to be reevaluated. Most of Sheila's issues were with the Form Based Code and Town Plan, both of which are not related to the designations. She was concerned with preserving the rural character of the common and believed these designations would erode such, but that



was not the case. These designations are in place to help preserve the rural character. Sheila believes this is a one way path for the State taking over our zoning.

Seth Jensen wanted to make two factual corrections. The first is that the Planning Commission does not adopt zoning bylaws or the Town Plan. The Selectboard does that after an open public process. The Selectboard is elected by the people. The other thing is Sheila's issue with the state taking over zoning. In terms of land use the state already decides what municipalities do or not do regardless of this designation. In reality, this designation gives us more autonomy in certain areas. As somebody who grew up in Westford, he has a lot of respect for people's ability to make decisions for how they use their property. These tax credits allow people more freedoms to do so, such as fire safety improvements, more flexibility building near the river while still making sure buildings fit our community character, etc. He agrees it is a good time to take a pause and one of the times he believes this is when kids are crossing from the Town Common and the Town Library. The Town wanted to put a crosswalk on Route 128 as early as the 1970s but were not able to because of state standards. Because of towns like Westford, the state revised their standards to make it easier to establish crosswalks in village center areas. Westford was the first community in the state to use that freedom to build a crosswalk. Seth asked the Selectboard to renew the designation so that we can show to the State of Vermont what can be accomplished in small towns under these designations.

Vicky thought hearing Melissa explain it seems that there are inconsistencies between the designations and the Form Based Code. Melissa explained there are no inconsistencies. Prior to the NDA designation and prior to the Village Center designation, the Town, after approving two town plans ago, received a planning grant and hired a consultant to look at what development was currently in existence and help us draft form-based code to have new development conform to the current traditional pattern. Now with regard to the setback, that could have been 10-15 feet from the right of way, but it just so happens that along the northern and eastern part of Route 128, the existing buildings are in the ROW. If you take an average of what the setbacks currently are, you do get a setback that is closer to the right of way. The Planning Commission has heard everyone over the past few years that it should be re-evaluated and that is on the docket during the next round of amendments. Pat Haller observed that he has attended most of the public hearings regarding the Town Plan and zoning and although he understands Sheila's nervousness, he does look at the two buildings that have been built under the form-based code, the new Historical Society and the Westford Country Store and Café buildings, and he thinks they are beautiful and fit well within the neighborhood.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to authorize Melissa Manka to submit a renewal application on behalf of the Town of Westford for the Village Center & Neighborhood Development designations, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0.

### **POSSIBLE RESTRUCTURE OF TOWN MANAGEMENT**

Lee wanted to put this on the agenda to keep it floating. They potentially have a decision to make. The Board would like the possibility of expanding from three to five members. They could potentially do that in November, it would be a floor vote. There was also the question of whether the Town needs an Assistant Town Administrator.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Dick Lavalley had written in regarding the mowing on the Town Common. He and others thought the quality of the mowing was poor and the length too long compared to previous years. Bill talked with Dick and then talked with our representative at Robert & Sons. It has been very wet this summer, so they have a list of contracts they have to mow in very limited days. Michelle leant on the weather as why it is this way. Bill believes they are trying the best they can.

Betty Ann Morse had written in requesting that the Town look into additional ways or variances the Town could use to help the Westford Country Store & Cafe overcome their limited septic capacity and the damages those limitations have placed on the potential of the business. Lee responded to Betty Ann and explained that the Town is unable to grant variances because the state regulations on septic systems are very strict, but that the Town has been working with the store to figure out the best configuration for their current capacity. George mentioned that it is important to take pause, listen to this, and realize that it is sad that is how it is felt in the community (re: store being a pawn), the Town is trying to help the store and the Town has bent over backwards to assist them in the interim. He thinks everybody has made a good faith effort to provide them options.

The Agency of Transportation (AOT) had done a speed study on Route 15 as requested and believe the current speed is correct. They are adding signage to help alert motorists. Lee felt this was not satisfactory, but it is clear the AOT won't do more.

CCRPC completed their analysis of the intersection of Woods Hollow Road with Maple Tree Lane and Phelps Road. This was forwarded to Michael Hechmer and Joe and Sheila Franz.

Nanette also provided an informational sheet about municipal policies and ordinance and the process for adopting ordinances.

Melissa had sent a communication for Nanette to continue to be the point person with Melissa for wastewater even after her departure. They did not believe putting this project in the hands of somebody new would be fair.

Lori Johnson had written in with her thoughts on wastewater.

Ben Bornstein was present to talk about MERP. They have submitted their application for the Level 2 Energy Audit of the town garage. The mini grant application is just about to be put in. The one thing with this is every step forward there is another item alerted to us to do. He will be working with John Roberts because new formatting is needed. Bill asked Ben if he could use his experience with his ARPA project to help with fire fighter recruitment. Ben was amenable to that.

## **COMMUNICATION**

There was no communication.

## **FY'24 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the FY'24 General Fund Budget Status Report.

## **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PAYROLL WARRANTS**

The Board reviewed and signed the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 9:57 p.m., Dave Baczewski made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel and to invite Vicky Ross to the discussion, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0. Those in attendance were Lee McClenny, Dave Baczewski, Bill Cleary, and Vicky Ross. The Board exited Executive Session at 11:03 p.m. Bill Cleary made a motion to approve offer letters for two temporary part-time employees for the purpose of providing assistance during the Town Administrator transition, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee McClenny, Chair  
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy  
Minute Clerk

**GUEST LIST**

Melissa Manka  
Eric Henshaw  
Stacy Lavaile  
Garrett Bartlett  
Sheila Franz  
Dave Lavallee  
Vicky Ross  
Amy Macrellis  
George Lamphere  
Lori Johnson  
Juli Beth Hinds  
Kim Guidry  
Ira Allen  
Amber Haller  
Pat Haller  
Maureen Wilcox  
Susan Larson  
Emily Hackett  
John Quinn  
Gordon Gebauer  
Barb Peck  
Seth Jensen  
Ben Bornstein  
Tina Scanlon  
Bob Schipper  
John Doane  
Andy Fulton  
Maura O'Brien  
Mark Letorney  
Julia Andrews

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.  
ROAD SCHEDULE  
August 11, 2023 – August 24, 2023**

Work to be done.

- Grade roads.
- Haul in winter sand.
- Start Phelps Road project.

Work completed

- Hauled in winter sand.
- Graded Brookside Road, Cambridge Road, Plains Road, a section of Old #11 Road, Allen Irish Road, and a section of Seymoure Road.
- Had some work done on the 2020 International.
- Finished ditching a section on Osgood Hill Road.

Approved at the 8/24/23 Selectboard Meeting.