

SELECTBOARD MEETING TOWN OFFICE & ZOOM DECEMBER 4th, 2025, 6:15 P.M.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89394132350?pwd=FDaQST9rNC8CSpZNHTwoumhKvngUWs.1

Meeting ID: 893 9413 2350 - Passcode: 7tu4TW

OR dial +1 646 558 8656 – Meeting ID: 893 9413 2350 – Passcode: 341753 Please note that agenda times are approximate and are subject to change.

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. (6:15) Roll Call
- b. (6:20) Changes to the agenda
- 2. (6:25) PUBLIC COMMENT (Items not on the agenda)
- 3. (6:30) MINUTES: November 13th, 2025 & Edits to the October 9th SB Meeting (Review and Approve)
- 4. (6:40) CCRPC UPDATE (Ben Bornstein)

5. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

- a. (6:50) Review Road Schedule
- b. (6:55) Review FY'25 Highway budget status report

6. DISCUSSION

- a. (7:05) Summer Concert Series Budget Request
- b. (7:10) Change to Legal Fees Budget
- c. (7:15) Covered Bridge Update/Grant Agreement Cover Letter
- d. (7:20) Common Request Update Wedding
- e. (7:25) Authorize Town Administrator to handle Beaver Deceiver Installation directly with Skip

7. TREASURER

- a. (8:00) Review FY'25 General Fund budget status report
- b. (8:05) Review and approve accounts payable and payroll warrants

8. (8:10) - CORRESPONDENCE

- a. (8:10) Redistricting Task Force Response
- b. (8:15) Fire Department Gear Cleaning Process

COMMUNICATION

- 10. ANTICIPATED EXECUTIVE SESSION Legal Case
- 11. ADJOURN

The next regular Selectboard Meeting will be held on December 18th, 2025.

Disclaimer: If a quorum of the Board is attending in-person, the meeting will continue notwithstanding a disruption or disconnection in electronic participation. Therefore, in person attendance is recommended. The Vermont Department of Health recommends that each person decide if they want to take precautions, such as wearing a mask, based on their own personal level of risk. Please stay home if you are unwell. Any individual who believes that they need reasonable accommodation may submit a request to the Town Administrator. The Town will assess whether the request for reasonable accommodation is necessary to make the Town service, program, or activity available to an individual with a disability; whether there is an alternative accommodation which may provide an equivalent level of access and/or benefit; whether the requested reasonable accommodation would impose an undue financial or administrative burden; or whether the requested reasonable accommodation would require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the Town service, program or activity.

SELECTBOARD MEETING **OCTOBER 9, 2025 Draft Minutes**

Present:

Pat Haller

Julia Andrews Deb Jorschick Casey Mathieu Nick Nichols

Greg Barrows

Tommy O'Connor Callie Hamdy Sean Cushing

Guests: see attached.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Added Municipal Planning Grant under discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

MINUTES

J. Andrews motioned to accept the September 25, 2025 minutes as amended, D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

CCRPC UPDATE

Ben Bornstein, CCRPC Representative, was present. On October 15th there will be a board meeting, and it will also be an open forum for the public where they will discuss the regional plan and transportation. It is a chance to ask any and all questions the public may have.

ROAD SCHEDULE

S. Cushing, Road Foreman, was present and went over the Road Schedule from September 26, 2025 to October 9, 2025.

REVIEW FY'26 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT

G. Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'26 Highway Budget Status Report.

COMMON HALL BUDGET REQUEST

Kim Phinney from the Westford Common Hall (WCH) was present to present their budget request. She described some of the challenges the WCH has in funding their services. They do not have an ADA compliant bathroom. When there is a large event in warm weather they balance this by putting an accessible portalet on the back deck, but that is not possible most of the year. They are asking for \$4,500, which is an increase from their request last year.

Kim Guidry was present. She asked what fundraising opportunities the WCH has in mind to offset their increased monetary need. K. Phinney explained the town used to fund the WCH to \$4,500, but Covid and other restraints decreased the amount the town gives the WCH. They continue to look for foundation dollars. Some events are by donation only because they do not want to put most events for the community under a high pay ceiling. They often make \$200 per evening for movie showings and concerts.

Lori Johnson was present. She thought the allocation for the WCH had been decreased because the town had given the WCH a significant chunk of the ARPA money in the hopes they would become self-sufficient. **K. Phinney** noted that the ARPA money was infrastructure based, and it is a really different type of money than self-sufficiency. The funding did however allow them to weatherize the building, put in heat pumps, and replace the furnace. These are all different than long range stability.

Carol Winfield was present. She wondered if any grants had been pursued for the ADA bathroom. **K. Phinney** explained they have looked and had hoped to do it with the ARPA money, but with inflation that was not possible. Federal money is also gone. **Barb Peck** was present and asked how much money was left of what they were afforded in the past. **K. Phinney** responded their annual budget is around \$20,000. They have no paid staff. The distinction she wanted to make around the ARPA money is that it was restricted money for a specific use that needed to be spent in a specific time frame. The town is not aware of any organizations that were afforded ARPA money that still have any left. Many could not do all of their work because of cost increases.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION BUDGET REQUEST

The Westford Conservation Commission (WCC) asked to be level funded.

HARDWARE LIFECYCLE (VTC TECH)

T. O'Connor noted that VTC Tech sent over the current hardware life cycle. The town usually extends their tech use by some time, which is a good thing. There are a few computers overdue for lifecycle services. They are going to go through and see what ones can continue to be used. **D. Jorschick** discussed replacing all the desktops with laptops to increase usability for town staff away from their desks and alleviate the use of staff using their personal laptops. C. Hamdy agreed with the spirit of what D. Jorschick was saying, but brought up that current space constraint, such as desk space, would be made more difficult through use of a laptop for some staff members, such as wanting an ergonomic keyboard and a larger monitor than a laptop could provide.

FALL TRAIL CLOSURES

Jim Anderson had communicated with the Selectboard that after the last Selectboard meeting he noticed that there was an increase of users on Schultz Trail after it was discussed. The Andersons are requesting that the board potentially, once the trail maintenance document is finalized, close it during hunting season to limit the traffic so the landowners can use the land for what they acquired it for. **C. Mathieu** does not think it is an issues for the landowners outside of the hunting season since it is a public trail and people are expected to be walking it.

The Andersons are asking for a one time closure for this year to alleviate any potential strain on the landowners. **J. Andrews** asked for clarification on what hunting season it would cover. Rifle and Muzzleloader. **P. Haller** thinks this would be a good gesture for the town to make. He thinks we should be careful about who the trails are closed to and if a motion is made the motion should include due access for all that have legal right of way through the trail. It should be closed to the public except for those who have legal right of way on the trail. **J. Andrews** recognized Ben Bornstein's right to use his legal right of way, which happens to be a trail. If the

residents of the properties are out hunting, the intersection of his use while they are closed to the public and the landowner hunting could be a dangerous. Would there be any way to mitigate this? **B. Bornstein** responded he wears bright yellow reflectors etc. and knows the first rule of hunting is that you identify what something is before you shoot. He also feels his neighbors are responsible.

Dick Lavallee was present. He does not know why we should be restricting the use hunting or not because the Andersons knew the trail was present when they bought the property. **P. Haller** suggested amending the closure dates to include archery season which started on October 1. **C. Winfield** asked if they were talking about closing all town trails, just ones through private property, or just one specific trail? **C. Mathieu** noted the request was just for the private property trails. **C. Winfield** asked if this meant all private property trails? **Yes. C. Mathieu** reminded all in attendance that this would just be a one off instance until the document is complete.

P. Haller motioned to close the trails for public access to the public but not to those who have legal right of way on all trails except for the trails at Misty Meadows and Maple Shade from the time of October 9, 2025 to December 14, 2025. **T. O'Connor** noted that from running trail networks the difference is that if you are stopped by a warden for hunting and you are on a closed trail if you can provide the written agreement from the landowner you do not get a charge of trespassing from the game warden. One of the things he had to deal with when he worked for VASA is written landowner permission on their person. **J. Andrews** thought this made sense because it puts it on the landowners who are requesting this in the first place. **P. Haller** thought that goes too far in the context policing if somebody can use their land as they like. **J. Andrews** does not know jurisdictionally if we have any enforcement right, the enforcement of this would be on the property owner. **N. Nichols** seconded.

Dick Lavallee asked how this would affect Covey Road since there are multiple homeowners who access Stoney Ridge from there. Those that have land on that trail would have access to the whole trail. **B. Peck** asked how this would be enforced. **P. Haller** thinks if the town agrees to the motion they will ask the Conservation Commission to put up signage saying Trail Closed. **B. Peck** understands that but how is it going to be enforced if people go on the trail anyways? **J. Andrews** thought if somebody goes on the trail it is up to the landowners to call a game warden or a sheriff. Westford has no law enforcement. **B. Bornstein** thought we should emphasized anybody that has a legal right to the using the trail on the signage because there is a right of way, a public right of way. **N. Nichols** is comfortable with the motion because it is what the landowners are asking us to do, they are not asking us to enforce it. Motion passed 5-0.

Additional Note to Minutes:

The members of the Selectboard agreed that any person(s) and their heirs, successors, and assigns to access of "legal" or public accessible trails not be a part of the temporary closure. References to this note can be found at the conclusion of the minutes.

BEAVER DECEIVER AGREEMENT

The town had asked for **C. Winfield** to go back to Protect Our Wildlife (POW), who are giving us the grant, asking them to tailor the agreement more to the town's needs. They have included the things we have asked. **P. Haller** motioned to accept the memo of understanding with POW for \$4,000. He also motioned that we shift from the volunteer work Carol has done to spearhead

the project to the Town Administrator. **N. Nichols** seconded. **K. Guidry** asked if it was a 3 year commitment.? That was true. How long do the deceivers last? **P. Haller** has heard they last indefinitely. With discussions with the town of Monkton they have seen ones operated for 10+ years. **K. Guidry** asked if it lasts for 2.5 years, is the MOU still that we cannot trap the beavers there? That was correct but only limited to the location of the deceiver.

S. Cushing, Road Foreman, understood that the installation was partially out of the Right of Way. If that is the case we would need permission from the landowners because water will get dammed up on their side of the property and if volunteers are cleaning it they need permission to do that. He thinks that needs to be looked at before it goes forward. He asked how long the resident led maintenance was occurring for? **P. Haller** thinks we should find out from Beaver Deceiver if this goes off the right of way and by how much. He would like to see the board accept the MOU given we can install it. Motion passed 5-0. **P. Haller** motioned to ask Tommy with figuring out the logistics of the project including access, possibly on private land for both installation and continued maintenance. Continued maintenance would be volunteers of the town. **J. Andrews** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

SAFETY/LIABILITY OF 1705 PROPERTY

We had received a few emails as well as in person requests asking for permission to go on the 1705 property. What are we allowing/not allowing on the property in the current space? In past events people have used the property for parking and seating. The safety near the building is mostly in question. **Maria Barden**, Assistant Town Clerk and Administrative Assistant, wanted language the office staff could use if asked.

P. Haller noted 1705 is a contaminated site and we still do not have a corrective action plan. It is mostly between the existing garage and what's known locally as the Hotel (1695 VT Route 128). It has not been remediated. He thinks the town should not want people on the property as there are potential health exposures. Regarding the request in Correspondence asking for permission to use a metal detector on the site he thinks we should refrain. It could bring people into contact with the contamination, and the town has yet to do the archaeological study required for the site. Metal detecting could put that in jeopardy. He does not think the town should let anybody on the property but does not think parking and seating roadside for 4th of July is a problem. **Dave Lavallee** has been maintaining around the house with permission, but the other uses are risky for the town. **J. Andrews** thinks if somebody got curious and poked around in the house it is unsafe. **D. Jorschick** wondered if we should post a no trespassing at the house and potentially the property. **P. Haller** thinks once we post it we should have the people we allowed on the site recorded somewhere for posterity.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING GRANT

Max Tyler, Planning Commission (PC), was present. As a result of ACT 181, he had followed up with CCRPC regarding municipal planning and what we would need to do to be prepared for the next land use map update, updating the town plan, public outreach, etc. A municipal planning grant (MPG) came up to fund those activities. We can get one municipal planning grant per year, and it would have to be for a specific project. The land use and town plan update are both far out, however. CCRPC cautioned that we would be early, but that we could apply, nonetheless. We have a month to get the application in.

In those discussions, 1705 came up as well as a potential municipal office update. Max has not done anything related to those topics, but it came up as a valid use for a MPG. The timing of that might be more compelling than the original public outreach use. The PC would like direction from the Selectboard. The max grant amount is \$30,000 and requires the town to have matching funds of 10% for any grant given. CCRPC gave an example for the MPG of cost estimations for preservation of the house on 1705 vs building a new office or public outreach for those projects. Do we want to do the application and what do we want to apply for?

- **N. Nichols** asked if those are the only two options or is there something in between. The conceptual plan of retrofitting the 1705 house is a very specific choice. Is there an option to do something more general? **M. Tyler** did not have a specific answer. He thinks the more specific the request the more likely it will be accepted. **N. Nichols** is very interested in helping the town figure out what they want to do with that property. **Harmony Cism**, Zoning Administrator and Planning Coordinator, had sent a document that describes the details of MPGs and what they require. It is a point based system. **P. Haller** noted they do have a plan. The board has talked about it, a wetland delineation has been done. The step toward holding a public forum was to assess the existing conditions of the 1705 building and potential cost for it to be used as an office on the first floor. Once we had that information, Pat suggests we would be able to plan outreach to residents. He thought we would hire an architect to research the office fit up . **H. Cism** noted that CCRPC wanted an answer tomorrow morning so they could start writing the grant.
- **B. Peck** is in agreement with Max. Why don't we have some sort of a procedure to do this? Where is the process to carry out what Max is saying? Is it the Planning Commission? Is it the Selectboard? She looks at it like the PC's duties. **H. Cism** noted that this sort of process is usually done by the Town Planner, of which Westford has not had for two years. **B. Bornstein** appreciated Max coordinating this with him, he volunteered to assist. **N. Nichols** was reminded of the earlier question about hiring a Town Planner. We had previously looked at sharing a town planner with another town. **M. Tyler** noted this subject was the initial purpose of his, Harmony, and Holly's meeting with CCRPC some time ago. In CCRPC's opinion if it was zoning administrator sharing that is something that seems doable, however with town planners that is not the case. If we can find a sister town that with or without the CCRPC's help they should try that. **H Cism** suggested reaching out to the planning and zoning listservs.
- **T. O'Connor** had met with the architecture firm. No estimate yet, however they understood the last structural report. Their main concern is that in its current state the house would be fairly large investment to make it a commercial or office space based on the HVAC and the required insulation requirements. It would come with a very large price tag.
- **P. Haller** motioned to empower Harmony Cism to spearhead the MPG with CCRPC focused on 1705 with creating a plan that includes the assessment and cost estimate from an architect to bring the building to an ability to use it as a commercial office space on the first floor. Further as an outreach component in 2026 we are looking for assistance on hiring somebody to do outreach in 2026 to facilitate the public engagement with this information. **M. Tyler** thinks we need at least some gross estimate of what it would be to replace the building so it can be compared against the renovation cost. It was **H. Cism's** understanding is if we receive the full amount of the grant it would only cover part of the estimate so she does not know if it will cover

both items. **M. Tyler** asked cannot we organize the project as we are getting \$30,000 and within that we have three deliverables. Whoever we hire would have to work within those numbers. **L. Johnson** brought up the Town Office Feasibility Study done in 2023 and wondered if the town even needed a new design.

J. Andrews moved to empower Harmony Cism and the PC to develop a MPG application to continue an assessment of cost to convert the 1705 property to municipal usage and solicit input form the town. **C. Mathieu** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

REVIEW FY'26 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

- **G. Barrows**, Treasurer, went over the FY'26 General Fund Budget Status Report.
- **J. Andrews** moved to authorize the treasurer to access the contingency fund to pay town expenses as needed during FY'26. **C. Mathieu** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

REVIEW & APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Covey Road/Old #11 Road 3 Way Stop Survey was now available. We had also gotten correspondence regarding using a metal detector on 1705 which had already been addressed.

New Library Director

The Library had hired the new Library Director. Bree has already started onboarding her and will continue next week.

Naked Individual at Milton Town Forest

From what **P. Haller** understands the person that does the streaking avoids towns that have ordinances that would bear them a fine. We do not have an ordinance regarding being naked publicly in Westford, but other towns do. This person strategically finds the communities that would provide the least amount of consequence. **J. Andrews** does not think this needed to be addressed urgently but could be a good thing for Tommy to do when he is not busy.

Brookside Pigs

This was an ongoing issue where pigs, goats, and fowl all owned by Brittany Sweet occupy Brookside Road and create safety issues for drivers and pedestrians. Last time we had spoken to Brittany we did not have the livestock ordinance. Now we do. The enforcement individual of that is Sheriff. J. Andrews noted that the enforcement officer can give a civil penalty. If it were her she would interpret that as the enforcement officer. J. Andrews moved to make T. O'Connor an enforcement officer and ask them to send a letter to Brittany sweet for a first-time offense. D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate about closed trails. FPF, ask the Conservation Commission closure signs, newsletter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

C. Mathieu moved that premature public knowledge that we are about to discuss will put the town at a significant disadvantage. **J. Andrews** seconded. Moton passed 5-0. C. Mathieu motioned to go into executive session and to invite Tommy and Callie to the meeting. **P. Haller** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Casey Mathieu Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Dave Gauthier
Max Tyler
Carol Winfield
Lynn Gauthier
Dick Lavallee
Harmony Cism
Kim Guidry
Ira Allen
Lori Johnson
Ben Bornstein
Barb Peck
Kim Phinney
Kati Anderson
Jim Anderson

Additional information for reference about Trail Closure Policy and the express knowledge that the closure does not and should not interfere with any landowner, their successors, heirs, or assignees to proper access or egress.

The first decision is Joseph Bornstein vs. Town of Westford, Chittenden County Court, Docket No. C28-73 CnM (March 8, 1974), the second: The A. Johnson Company and Joseph Bornstein v. Town of Westford and Town of Underhill, Chittenden Superior Court, Docket No. S1201-00 CnC (September 26, 2001) (Westford Town Land Records Book 93, pages 331-335), and the third, Timothy W. Budell and Della J. Budell v. Town of Westford, Chittenden Superior Court, Docket No. S1149-00 CnC (July 7, 2003) (Westford Town Land Records Book 107, pages 433-435)

Please note, it must be made clear that any such moratorium or any such restrictions regarding the use and/or access/egress to and of the Goodrich Trail, whether with respect to time, place, purpose, use, extent, type of vehicle, etc., shall not and do not apply to the Bornstein family, our heirs, successors, and/or assigns, and that, per the final stipulated court order of 2001 and affirmed in the final court decision in 2003,"run with the land."

P:\Court Cases All cases can be found here

SELECTBOARD MEETING **NOVEMBER 13, 2025** Draft Minutes

Present:

Casey Mathieu

Julia Andrews Deb Jorschick Nick Nichols

Pat Haller

Greg Barrows

Tommy O'Connor Callie Hamdy Sean Cushing

Guests: see attached.

The meeting was called to order at 6:25 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Added Access Permit and Trailer Quotes to Highway Department. Added VT Trails and Greenways Council, GBIC, and TRIPLE H (Home Health Hospice) to Budget Requests under Discussion. Added Recreation Update to Correspondences, Letter to the School Redistricting Task Force to Discussion. Added Executive Session.

J. Andrews motioned to approve changes. N. Nichols seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lori Johnson read some details from the 2025 Groundwater Monitoring report in regards to 1705 to the meeting. The contamination from the underground tank has greatly reduced and the trend is expected to continue.

MINUTES

J. Andrews motioned to bump the October 23, 2025 minutes to the next meeting which will be December 4th. P. Haller seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

CCRPC UPDATE

Ben Bornstein, CCRPC Representative, was present. The CCRPC dues were increased by 4% because there is a requirement for the federal government to provide funding that 20% of all the funds comes from nonfederal sources. It is Ben's understanding that the December 10th is the date for the legislative breakfast. P. Haller had attended the October CCRPC event for Selectboards and City Council members as a groups discussion. His thoughts were that clearly the towns of Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski are dealing a lot with crime and housing issues. P. Haller thinks we are lucky that when we were going around talking about what is more trying for the town both Jericho and Westford joked we have goats in our roads. With perspective we are in good shape. Richmond was nervous about future federal grants if they were to flood again.

ROAD SCHEDULE

S. Cushing, Road Foreman, was present and went over the Road Schedule from October 24, 2025 to November 13, 2025.

REVIEW FY'26 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT

G. Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'26 Highway Budget Status Report.

ACCESS PERMIT

Tony and Jessica Pouliot were requesting an Access Permit off Osgood Hill Road. Sean had looked at the proposed access and had no issues with it. **P. Haller** motioned to approve the access permit. **N. Nichols** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

TRAILER QUOTES

Sean had provided three quotes for a trailer to the board. It is in the capital budget for replacement this year. The quotes were Perfection Trailer Sales: \$16,500. Rainy Jay Fournier \$20,000 and North Country Repair \$22,686. Sean was looking for the one from Perfection. **P. Haller** asked when the trailer was needed by? Before mud season.

MAILBOX CONCERN - SANCTUARY ROAD

This had been spoken on previously in the year. The HOA on Sanctuary Road had put up mailboxes 10-12 mailboxes along Plains Road. Ditching was done behind them, and the mailboxes are now leaning. The water from the culvert hits the remaining dirt that the mailboxes are set in and has been deteriorating them. The HOA's concern with fixing the mailboxes is they cannot pull it upright because of the solid dirt, they are going to have to dirt down and put it upright. After that there will be a lot of space behind them. They are not going to be able to stabilize them. They had spoken to USPS wanting an alternative location to put the boxes, but this was vetoed by USPS. The members of the HOA would like the culvert behind the boxes extended another 7-8 feet. They would also like drainage stone put behind the boxes. The HOA felt the lean degree was 10-15 degrees. When it rains water gets in the mailboxes. They feel it will only get worse over time and are worried about USPS deeming the boxes unsuitable for delivery.

C. Mathieu asked if the mailbox structure was put in for the development? That was correct. D. Jorschick had driven by the boxes and concurred the material behind the boxes is deteriorating. C. Mathieu wanted to touch base with Sean over the boxes on Monday. P. Haller agreed, but he wanted to be careful that we are not setting a president. We have the road crew is working in good faith to do the work to keep the roads open and safe. Mailboxes do tip occasionally. He does not want this to be the beginning that every time the road crew does some work that somebody comes to the town wanting work done on their mailboxes. He feels this is very specific to the way the road is shifting. He does not want the road crew fixing mailboxes. P. Haller thinks that we might get storms upon storms, and we do not know what the weather will do. We can hope to fix it after discussion with Sean, but the HOA should be prepared that it might not happen quickly as road crew priorities shift with weather.

BUDGET REQUESTS

Age Well

Last year's allocation was \$1,500. They are requesting \$1,800 this year.

COTS

Request of \$250.

Howard Center

Requested \$2,000.

Steps to End DV

Requesting \$300. Represents 50 Cents per resident in town.

VT Family Network

Requesting \$250.

VT Trails and Greenways Council

Requesting \$250.

Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC)

Requesting \$200.

TRIPLE H (Home Health Hospice)

Requesting \$6,500.

Winterfest

Carol Winfield was present. Winterfest is requesting an increased donation of \$1500. She would like to hire more artists/performers with that money. Currently it is a lot of volunteer work, so they are not in Winterfest budget right now. **P. Haller** asked if there is a Winterfest budget. There is not one. It usually costs about \$4,000 to run. Key elements include the horses and music.

CCRPC

B. Bornstein was present. 4% increase. \$377 more from last year.

Fairfax Rescue

Fairfax Rescue had provided their annual report and are requesting level funding.

Fire Department

Garrett Bartlett, Fire Chief, was present. They are asking for a 3.46% increase from last year. Most of the increase was equipment for personal safety and maintenance. They are trying to be more proactive with gear washing and their memberships. During the course of a house fire, they are exposed to all sorts of chemical and PFAs etc. The cost is to have a company come in from NH and professionally wash and get the chemicals out of their gear. The reason they have had to go with a company is that we are unable to put those PFAs etc. into our limited wastewater system. With a company it is disposed of properly. **P. Haller** noted the state is progressing towards having regional wastewater plants being destroyers of PFAs. In the future those plants might be able to take the collective water from our own system but that's years away.

B. Bornstein was present. He had looked into other funding for this and believes that to date a lot of the cleaning of the gear was done with Essex Junction. Is that option no longer available? **G. Bartlett** explained they have a gear extractor hooked into their municipal system that ships it to their sewer system. They have been more generous letting us borrow it in the past but is not sure what they would do in regards to charging for a service.

Recreation Committee

Nobody was present from the rec committee, but they are requesting level funding. **T. O'Connor** noted that it is mostly stipends for event managers and rink manager.

Center for Independence Living

Request of \$100.

Planning & Zoning Department

Harmony Cism, Zoning Administrator and Planning Coordinator was present. She is requesting a modest cost of living increase, decrease for travel and estimated overtime. More importantly she is hoping they will budget for a Town Planner and start the hiring process for a Town Planner. She has been filling in that position for the past two years but there are more projects on the horizon, a town plan update, 1705. This is all going to require a lot of planning and she does not have the education or experience to do that. It is not the job the town hired Harmony to do. C. Mathieu asks how much of Harmony's current time would be freed up by a Planner. It would help staff the Planning Commission, which right now they only meet once a month, but not a lot. She spends a total of 10-12 hours of her week preparing for meetings, but she is just doing the bare minimum. A planner would be doing a lot more than what she is doing.

Town Clerk

C. Hamdy, Town Clerk, was present. She is requesting a modest increase. She explained that the Town Clerk and Board of Civil Authority requests are a little different than other departments because of the fluctuating nature of elections which is why the increase might look larger than expected. This is because during FY'27 There will be 4 elections run. The salaries were a cost of living adjustment.

Treasurer

G. Barrows, Treasurer, was present. He was requesting a cost of living increase but did not yet add in the additional hours in he does each year to accommodate the auditors.

Library

They are maintaining the salary of the former library director for the new library director as the new librarian is highly qualified. The trustees felt it was beholden to the candidate to maintain the same salary level. **J. Andrews** asked if they still have the trustee fund and how much its offsetting the town's contribution. The trustees noted there were three very hard years with the budget and they used the trustee fund for operational expenses during that time, but that is not its intended use. It comes about from fundraising and donations, and it should not be looked at as a fund for such.

TOWN COMMON USE REQUESTS

There were requests to use the Common for a Wedding and for Winterfest. Normally the requests are for simple things and 90% can be approved by the Town Administrator/Common Committee chair. There are certain considerations when it needs to be a Selectboard decision, especially if alcohol and/or food is involved. The alcohol vendors carry their own insurance.

C. Mathieu does not recall a wedding ever being held on the Common. He understands the bar has their liability license. What about if somebody not drinking at the bar trips and falls? D. Jorschick noted that they can ask the person holding the event to rider an insurance rider for that. P. Haller was conflicted because part of their hope is the civic buildings have the ability to have their events paid for as ways to sustain those buildings. J. Andrews appreciated Pat's thoughts but had a different conflict. 75 people on the Common for 6-8 hours? She has concerns on how the neighbors are going to feel about that, the residents that live directly on the Common. We do not get to decide or control the behaviors of the group, 8 hours plus alcohol in what is essentially people's front yards, it could go very well, but it could not. Lori Johnson noted that they had reserved the Common Hall as a weather fallback, L. Johnson also pointed out that as part of the Common use it cannot go past dark and they do need to respect the residents. They would have to be off the Common by 8pm. She mentioned there are a lot of other events/private gatherings that the Common is used for, but it is much smaller and less time than this wedding. C. Mathieu asked if there is a DJ involved. They had not mentioned anything about music. The board agreed there needed to be more guardrails around this event before approval. J. Andrews also wanted them to pay for a portalet clean out. Lori will communicate with them. D. Jorschick asked if out of courtesy should we post on FPF this is happening? She does not' want the neighbors to be taken by surprise. G. Bartlett asked where they are going to park 75 vehicles. We do not want them to hinder an emergency response in the surrounding area. L. Johnson had already suggested that they park at the school and organize a shuttle system. T. O'Connor asked if the alcohol would conflict with the school's no alcohol zone.

P. Haller motioned to approve the Winterfest use of the Common. **J. Andrews** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

WINTERFEST PARKING

They wanted permission to put up the no parking signs on brookside for the safety of traffic and of the horses. **J. Andrews** moved to allow this. **N. Nichols** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

ADD TOWN ADMIN TO CEMETERY BANK ACCOUNTS

J. Andrews moved to add Tommy O'Connor to the Cemetery Commission Bank account. **P. Haller** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

HOLIDAY TREE

The Westford Conservation Commission (WCC) is suggesting they would love to take over the Westford Christmas Tree on the Common. Previously this was a tree in the gazebo, but the WCC would like to plant a tree with the intention of using it as a Christmas tree each year. **D.**Jorschick, her family, and another family had been doing the tree the last couple of years. She is in favor of planting a tree, but she thinks the Common Committee needs to be involved in the conversation. Secondly it is too late in the season to plant a tree, so she would like to see us get a tree from the woman that had donated the tree last year but to do something in conjunction and get a plan in place for planting. Kirsten Tyler from the WCC agreed. When they suggested the planting it would be the beginning stages of planning as the tree would not be planted until next fall at earliest. If we do the WCC would be happy to lead the project. As far as tree for this year they are also happy to take over the duties to make sure it happens, they also suggested that other town entities help out in future years.

LETTER TO THE SCHOOL REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE

- **K. Tyler** and **J. Andrews** had met and drafted a letter to send to the task force based on the discussion from the previous meeting. It tries to ride the line between asking the task force to be considerate to rural communities and dives a bit into Westford specific details around our cost per pupil which has increased significantly since the loss of the middle schoolers and that whole situation of which we had no control over.
- **J. Andrews** noted that they specifically wanted the signature to not just be the chair, but all selectboard members because she felt this lands different than just the chair alone. **K. Tyler** added that the last meeting of the task force is on November 20th and they will have their last discussions and provide the legislature with their recommendations on December 1st. She urged the board be prudent. Other districts, towns, and the public have already sent in information. Most recently the task force has rejected the county based map which is the one in which we would be in a district with over 20,000 students. On Monday they decided to reject/stop focusing on the CTE based map yet another one where we would be in a massive district and they have talked about the fact that they are leaning towards/interested in more of an incentive plan where districts are incentivized to merge with a focus on regional high schools, but we should keep pushing them.
- **P.** Haller motioned that we take the letter drafted by Julia and Kirsten for the redistricting task force verbatim to be sent to the task force with all the selectboard member's signatures. **N. Nichols** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

REVIEW FY'26 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

G. Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'26 General Fund Budget Status Report.

REVIEW & APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

CORRESPONDENCE

Bridge Update

After the request for the attorney to reach out we finally made contact and said all the material is in for the smaller repairs and they are awaiting a certain type of oak for the larger repairs. That is why there has been limited communication. We are looking to see if there is any restriction on the grant time wise.

Update from Rec Committee

At their last meeting they had a new person join the committee, Bayley Greer. They are stretched thin without a coordinator; the old coordinator still has all the coordinator supplies.

COMMUNICATION

A dog in need in Westford was recently in need and a groomer in St. Albans had groomed the dog for free, Allie's Comfort Clips in St. Albans.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

C. Mathieu made a motion that premature public knowledge of a letter from a lawyer would put the town at significant disadvantage. **J. Andrews** seconded. Motion passed 5-0. **C. Mathieu** moved to enter executive session, inviting Tommy. **P. Haller** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:25PM

Respectfully Submitted, Casey Mathieu Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Dave Gauthier **Garrett Barlett** Kim Guidry Ira Allen Harmony Cism Lori Johnson Dave Lavallee Ben Bornstein Dick Lavallee Keith Simpson Jennifer Simpson Carol Winfield Lee McClenny Lynn Gauthier Kirsten Tyler Erin Ramsey John Quinn Elizabeth Wermuth Nichols Thayer Nichols Marge Hamrell Bree Drapa Maryann Bassford Kelsey Cross

Summer concert budget

Dear select board,

I was disappointed to see that the latest published town budget did not include anything for the summer concert series. I had thought that since the conversion to a line item budget funding from the town was effected that Westford would continue to offer this program to the townsfolk. In speaking with Nanette briefly about the budget, she mentioned that the town was anticipating on adopting a "level spending" platform for most items. I had mentioned to her that I was hoping to get a slight increase to the past budget since I actually got additional sponsorship from 3 other sources around town to get the specific bands that I (and they) wanted to present for everyone. So I've already been supplementing the budget when I can.

Then the library sent me a brief memo in December indicating that they were going to contribute a one time grant of \$2,000 to help supplement future concert shows. I was going to use this funding source as an independent supplemental fund for additional support for the town allotted budget. This independent fund would also allow future contributing "sponsors" to contribute to it as an aid to band procurement. Greg Barrows will be setting up this funding access/program and I have yet to speak with him concerning the particulars of deposits/withdrawals/records, etc.

I suspect that Select Board found out about this and saw my windfall as a substitute for the town's share, rather than as a supplement that would help keep my requested line item amount lower in the future. Anyway, I am now petitioning you to consider reinstating a summer concert budget at a level spending item (most desirable), but would appreciate anything contributory from the board. Maybe \$1,000 is a compromise for this year (lesser desirable but still appreciated). Either way, I will strive to present the best concerts I can given the means and limitations of my funds.

Westforders(?) Westfordites(?) Westfordians(?) have been very responsive to these events, the audience participation has been growing, and it has been bringing a positive spotlight on the community and especially the Town Common and new Country Store. Supporting the arts is important in these critical and difficult times, both for the artists whose livelihoods have taken a beating through lack of performing options due to covid restrictions, and also to the patrons who also have been struggling with the life altering covid-cultural environment we live in. Having a pleasant musical event for friends and family in a safe outdoor setting is a vital tonic for our covid weary world. Having the town sponsor this makes the town a patron of the arts as well and offering these as free events makes it accessible to one and all.

Thank you for considering my petition, and I will accept whatever is decided.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Kirick.



John H. Klesch Esq. Shareholder

jklesch@firmspf.com (802)660-2555

November 7, 2025

Tommy O'Connor, Town Administrator Town of Westford 1713 VT Route 128 Westford, VT 05494

Re: Increase in Professional Service Rates

Dear Tommy,

We are writing to advise you of an increase to our rates for professional services. Our new rates, set out below, continue to be competitive and reasonable while addressing increased operating costs. Accordingly, beginning July 1, 2026, our hourly rates for standard professional services will change to:

Shareholders/ Of Counsel:

\$220.00 per hour

Associates:

\$195.00 per hour

Paralegals:

\$100.00 per hour

The Shareholder/Of Counsel rate for specialized services or those involving increased complexity will be \$250.00 per hour. These services are Public Finance and Bond Issues, Collective Bargaining, and Trial Litigation (rate becomes effective for the pre-trial conference and any subsequent time for the matter).

We will continue to charge for mileage at the then-current rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. Our copying charges will remain fifteen cents (\$.15) per page unless the copying is done by an outside service (i.e. high volume copying or special presentation requirements). Other reimbursable expenses will be at cost.

Our aim is that, by communicating these changes now, you will be able to take these adjusted rates into account for FY2027 budgeting purposes.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns about this rate increase. If there is anything we can do to improve our service or our service delivery, please let us know. We are thankful for the continuing opportunity to provide you with legal services and counsel, and greatly appreciate your trust and confidence.

Sincerely,

SP&F Attorneys, P.C.

John H. Klesch, Esq.

25-11-07 Rate Increase 2026

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PHONE: (802) 828-3047				PHONE: (802) 878-4587						
EMAIL: cattlin corkins@vermont.gov				#20 FVI						
OURINI CONSTITUTING YOU				EMAIL: townadmin@westfordvt us						

From: lkjohnson4625@gmail.com

Subject: Fwd: Common Use Application

Date: December 1, 2025 at 8:48:35 AM EST

To: selectboard < selectboard@westfordvt.us>

Hi!

Here is the agreement from Zander to the conditions the SB decided on at the 11/13/2025 meeting for the wedding in May. Hopefully at the next meeting the SB will feel comfortable approving the application contingent on the insurance documents etc being provided by 4/15/2026 as requested. If you need something else, please let Tommy and me know. Please note that we set a deadline of 4/15/2026 for them to provide the insurance documents.

Best.

Lori Johnson, Chair Common Committee

Begin forwarded message:

From: Z Goodwin < zgoodwin 33 at gmail com xjrp22ecnr2nde 02270186@icloud.com>

Subject: Re: Common Use Application

Date: November 18, 2025 at 1:35:46 PM EST

To: Common Committee <westfordcommoncommittee@gmail.com>, TownAdmin <townadmin@westfordvt.us>

Hey Lori & Tommy,

Thanks again for working with us on this! We agree to abide by all of those conditions.

The insurance, portalet, and noise conditions should be pretty easy to follow. We will provide proof of insurance! Stone Corral should start working on things over the winter and I will direct them to send things to you, Tommy.

I don't anticipate anything getting too noisy, and we will make sure to move to another location at 8 (either the common hall or up the road to our house).

As for parking... A lot of folks will be driving together. My preliminary math is that there would be around 35 cars maximum, but likely less. I am not the most spatially aware human, but that feels like a number that is similar to other events that are hosted at the common (i.e. farmer's market). We are hoping to utilize the common hall parking area and the pulloff right over the bridge on 128 as well. Are folks allowed to park in the Library & Town Office lot? I'm hoping between all of those options fitting 35 cars shouldn't be too hard!

Let me know if you have any other questions or concerns, Zander



Communication and Correspondence Request

As the Town Administrator, I am asking the Selectboard to give full authority going forward in regard to all communication and correspondence to Skip Lisle and the installation of the Beaver Deceiver.

The request will allow for one point of contact, as well as expedite the process of installation and the beginning of maintenance.

With full authority the Selectboard will not need to be convened for a vote or update should any minor changes or edits occur. If and only if major changes to the device, installation, or already agreed upon terms change then the Town Administrator shall communicate those changes immediately with the members of the selectboard.

Tommy O'Connor

From:

Jay Nichols <jnichols@vpaonline.org>

Sent:

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 9:28 AM

To:

Tommy O'Connor

Subject:

Written Comments to Commission

Dear Tommy and Westford Selectboard Members,

Thank you for sharing your perspective with the members of the Commission on the Future of Public Education in Vermont. The Commission has released a preliminary report with a final report due to the General Assembly in mid-December.

As we finalize our report, we will be considering public comment and survey results from across Vermont. In addition, we encourage all Vermonters to share their thinking with their local representatives and senators. Thank you again for your participation in this important process.

Jay Nichols, Chair



The Vermont Principals' Association supports school leaders to improve the equity and quality of educational opportunities for all students

Tommy O'Connor

From:

iquinninvt@aol.com

Sent:

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 9:30 PM

To: Cc: Tommy O'Connor Garrett Bartlett

Subject:

Follow up information requested regarding the treatment of wastewater resulting from the cleaning

of firefighting gear

Hello Tommy,

I am following up with a reply from the vendor we have been talking with to arrange for the cleaning of our turnout gear concerning the Selectboard's questions regarding the vendor's treatment of the wastewater resulting from the cleaning process. Please see his reply below. He mentions he can provide additional information if needed.

One additional point we did not discuss last week. In addition to cleaning the turnout coats, pants, gloves, and hoods, the vendor also cleans the helmets as well using an ultrasonic cleaning process.

I would appreciate it if you could please share this follow up information with the Selectboard members for their consideration.

Thank you,

John Quinn

---- Forwarded Message -----

From: Michael Matros <mike@redlinegearcleaning.com>

To: jquinninvt@aol.com <jquinninvt@aol.com>

Cc: Garrett Bartlett <gbartlett13@hotmail.com>; Steve Willard <willard.steve@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 at 09:28:05 AM EST

Subject: Re: Gear cleaning

John,

Happy to answer your questions the best I can.

As for the waste water It is treated through 7 filters before being dumped. This includes a PFAS filter in the last stage of the filtration before the settlement tank. We have had our waste water tested by a number of different department and has been approved across the board including on Nantucket, and on military bases who are extremely strict with the waste water guidelines. We manage our waste water more than any other ISP and fire department in the country. I am happy to provide additional testing requirements if needed, just let me know what your town's local MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level) guidelines are.

As for the ultrasonic tank, it's very simple. its an 80-gallon tank of water and a degreasing/sanitizer soap. It allows us to clean helmets, and hard items without taking them apart. its a very soft cleaning system that uses, water and soap with sound waves to scrub items cleaned. This process is often used in medical

equipment, guns, shop tools, and parts washers. Items are cleaned for 10 minutes then lightly whipped down and rinsed, then dried.

hopefully this helps answer some of your questions



MIKE MA

PRESIDENT & FC

Phone: (844)773

Email: mike@rec

Web: www.redli

From: jquinninvt@aol.com <jquinninvt@aol.com> Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 12:28 AM

To: Michael Matros <mike@redlinegearcleaning.com>

Cc: Garrett Bartlett <gbartlett13@hotmail.com>; Steve Willard <willard.steve@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Gear cleaning

Hello Mike,

We met with our town Selectboard tonight to present our budget proposal for the coming fiscal year and among other things advised them that we wanted to request budget funds to get our gear cleaned by Redline. One of the board members asked us to get information about what Redline does with the contaminated water after cleaning the gear.

I looked through your website again after our meeting and saw your process includes treating the wastewater with ozone, which I assume results in in eliminating PFAS, PAH, etc. to an acceptable standard level. Do you have any additional information on the ozone treatment process you are using that we could share with our Selectboard that enables you to achieve an acceptable level of decontamination of the wastewater (and what the "standard" is that you attempt to meet) enabling the MEU to properly dispose of the water?

I would also appreciate it if you could share any additional information you may have available to enable us to better understand how the ultrasonic-cleaning unit works.

Appreciate you help with these follow-up questions!

Thank you,

John

Self-Contained Water Supply and Storage

The MEU is equipped with two water tanks for storage of clean water and wastewater, eliminating environmental issues and need for onsite permits and improperly disposing decontaminated materials.

Ultrasonic-Cleaning Unit

Portable ultrasonic cleaner is designed specifically for turnout gear, the unit processes multiple helmets and boots to meet all NFPA 1851 requirements.

O-Zone Cleaning Station

Our first-of-its-kind Ozone station treats and processes the waste water extracted from contaminated turnout gear and allows the MEU to properly dispose the water and run 100% green.