



**SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OFFICE & ZOOM  
MARCH 12th, 2026, 6:15 P.M.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83574000385?pwd=Tvh8XBCUWOHkXDGP0G11J1KB3JB9Ba.1>

Meeting ID: 835 7400 0385 - Passcode: 8YYyvE

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) – SELECTBOARD REORGANIZATION
  - a. (6:25) – Selectboard Welcome & Points of Order
  - b. (6:35) – Election of Officers
    - i. Chair of Selectboard
    - ii. Vice-Chair Selectboard
  
3. (6:45) – PUBLIC COMMENT (Items not on the agenda)
  
4. MINUTES (review and approve)
  - a. (7:00) – February 26<sup>th</sup> Minutes
  
5. CCRPC UPDATE (Ben Borenstein)
  - a. (7:10) – General update from CCRPC
  
6. DISCUSSION
  - a. (7:20) – Set Meeting Schedule
  - b. (7:25) – Set Meeting Agenda Format/Year at-a-glance
  - c. (7:35) – Designate Three Public Posting Places
  - d. (7:45) – Designate Official Newspaper
  - e. (7:50) – Review Selectboard Rules of Procedure
  - f. (7:55) – Re-Adopt Conflict of Interest Policy
  - g. (8:05) – Review Municipal Ethics Policy
  - h. (8:10) – Municipal Ethics Policy & Training Review
  - i. (8:20) – Open Meeting Law Policy & Training Review
  - j. (8:30) - Tier 1 B Discussion
  
7. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
  - a. (9:00) – Review Road Schedule

- b. (9:05) – Review FY'25 highway budget status report

8. TREASURER

- a. (9:15) – Review FY'25 General Fund budget status report
- b. (9:25) – Review and approve accounts payable and payroll warrants

9. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. (9:35) – email about status of Trail Ordinance
- b. (9:40) – email about status of Town Moderator

10. COMMUNICATION

- a. Reminder of deadline to apply for volunteer positions on committees/commissions/etc.
- b. Postcards for EWSD Election have gone out.

11. ADJOURN

***The next regular Selectboard Meeting will be held on March 26, 2026.***

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  
FEBRUARY 26, 2026  
Draft Minutes**

Present:	Pat Haller	Greg Barrows
	Casey Mathieu	Tommy O'Connor
	Julia Andrews	Callie Hamdy
	Nick Nichols	
	Deb Jorschick	

Guests: see attached.

The meeting was called to order at 6:17 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Helen Sterling**, Library Trustee, was present. As trustee chair she was disappointed to be informed from outside sources that the Library will be level funded. She felt this was a breakdown of transparency and communication. She highlighted the many programs the library runs and the Library employees fiscal responsibility. Level funding means that services will have to be reduced and/or salaries of employees will have to be reduced. The trustees expect improved communication going forward. Becky Roy, another Trustee, also highlighted the benefits of the Library and the use of library funds to pay for the remediation. They felt the lack of communication was disrespectful.

**Dick Lavallee** was present. He wondered if the board would address the VAST trail vandalism and if there was any end result from that. What consequences were given to those that did the criminal act? **C. Mathieu** explained he reached out to Andy Doe from Saxon Hill Riders. He set up a meeting with Carol Winfield and Andy Doe. The board had not yet reported anything to the police and felt they did not want to pursue that at this point in time. They were looking to have a civil meeting between Carol and Andy to mend and apologize.

**Kim Guidry** was present. She asked for the agenda's to be posted in full on Front Porch Forum again. A link to the agendas were posted on Front Porch Forum already.

**MINUTES**

**D. Jorschick** moved to approve the February 12, 2026 minutes as amended. **J. Andrews** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

**CCRPC UPDATE**

**Ben Bornstein**, CCRPC Representative, was present. All the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) grant applications that had been forwarded by the municipality, including Westford, were received. When it was suggested that some of the applications were a little general, Ben took responsibility, thinking less was more, but he was willing to provide additional documentation and acknowledging we had been under time constraints.

### **ROAD SCHEDULE**

**S. Cushing**, Road Foreman, was not present. **P. Haller** went over the Road Schedule from February 13, 2026 to February 26, 2026.

### **REVIEW FY'26 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT**

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

### **INTERNET PROVIDER & POTENTIAL UPGRADE/PHONE UPGRADE**

**T. O'Connor** explained that we have been in discussions about a phone upgrade due to age of the current equipment. In the most recent round of testing that the phone group did there were issues because these are Wi-Fi backup phones, but we need bare minimum five phones, and our Wi-Fi can only currently handle three. The phone company suggested the town do a fiber upgrade. This will also become relevant for other future tech upgrades.

**J. Andrews** asked if we needed to have that fiber upgrade, is that the responsibility of the provider or is that the town's responsibility to pay for it? The provider is doing the connection, but they could not yet provided the difference in cost, which would be the town's responsibility.

**C. Mathieu** asked who the new phone system using? Spectrum Voip would be the new phones, but everything right now is through consolidated communication. We currently have Comcast business internet. Casey thought we should talk to Comcast and see if we can get phone through them.

### **VTC TECH UPGRADE QUOTE**

In talking with Vermont Tech Company (VTC), this upgrade device is not a requirement but it makes things easier on VTC tech's end so they do not have to physically come to the office but can go in remotely more easily. The town had talked about having a different IT provider.

**T. O'Connor** noted we can either stay as is with VTC tech, if we did not stay with them we would have to pay out the remainder of the contract which would be approximately \$40,000. **J. Andrews** thought until we get the budget under control we should not spend any extra money unless absolutely necessary. **D. Jorschick** thought it was odd to pay for something that VTC needs to work. If they want to do their software work from somewhere else underneath our contract that is on them. **C. Mathieu** wondered if VTC's current request is a breach of contract.

### **2026 TOWN AND BRIDGE STANDARDS APPROVAL**

This was an annual item. It states that when Sean does any work with respect to town maintenance or brings in a contractor we are beholden to state bridge and road standards. The state has not made any changes to the standards since last year and things are very much the same.

### **CHITTENDEN COUNTY CLERK BUDGET**

We wanted to know as we were budgeting, what the basis of the cost for Westford. **T. O'Connor** had reached out, and the County had provided an answer. The budget is decreasing this year.

### **UVM CAPSTONE PROJECT**

At the last meeting **P. Haller** had suggested he could attend a 1705 site visit on Feb 13<sup>th</sup>. He, Tommy, Harmony Cim, and Kirsten Tyler, Conservation Commission, met with University of

Vermont (UVM) students. The students are working towards an environmental consulting capstone project. This provided the town with free environmental consulting work. Beyond this semester's work, the professor was interested in developing a relationship with Westford and continue putting forth these kinds of services in the future. They walked the property and Pat did a rundown, describing the existing conditions including the potential for river access. He expressed that they needed the site's septic area for the Library and Town Office and that we are behind since we have limited resources in terms of budget and are lacking a town planner, so it has been hard to find and apply for grants. The professor and students noted that is what they are there for. They can help us with outreach, help us create a master map of the existing conditions, all for free. They can also look into grants for us and as far as the maps, they are well versed on our website from the 1705 information and will be able to look at most if not all documentation related to the site on the town website. They will also help scoping out landscaping depiction of a pathway to the river, especially to shield the public area from the private residences near the covered bridge. They could help us with a public outreach event in late April. Pat was excited about this opportunity.

**Vicky Ross** was present. She asked if they were licensed engineers or students? They were students, we will not be using their designs for the actual engineering, it would be used as conceptual visuals for public outreach. **J. Andrews** thinks its sounds awesome. Directing a group of students to do work on the behalf of the Selectboard is also work, she does not want people to think that we are absolved of responsibility and time. We should prepare to direct them as needed. **P. Haller** suggested that the board allow him to be the point person for the project. The board agreed and assigned Pat to do this.

**K. Tyler** wanted to add about the public outreach event the students were interested in. They mentioned something about Earth Day, which is 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026.. She does not know if this is possible. The course is led by a professor at UVM that worked at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) until recently and his job was to map and understand vulnerabilities of communities. He now leads this class in learning how to do those sorts of things, understanding vulnerabilities of towns, how to educate the public on those issues. The mapping comes with it. It is not a solution but is help led by a professional we are getting at no cost.

It occurred to **J. Andrews** that the students aims and dreams for the project and the town's hopes and dreams for 1705 outreach might be different. She wanted to make sure that even if it is not aligned, she just wanted to make sure that is understood. **K. Tyler** explained that the class also works on projects mapping flood risk in town. Those are separate projects. The professor has worked at the EPA mapping vulnerabilities of communities. For VT and Westford, he wanted to focus on flood risk. What the students want to focus with on 1705 is the recreation path and how to bring the community on board on what that would look like and what that would mean for additional educational opportunities.

**Dick Lavalley** was present. He felt like this was a win for both the students and town.

**TOWN MEETING POWERPOINT (BUDGET PRESENTATION)**

The Selectboard went over the Town Meeting Day budget PowerPoint.

**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**

Email from Lori Johnson regarding the budget.

Email from Dick Lavallee asking about the VAST trail.

Email from Pat regarding Tier 1B.

Resident Seth Jensen sent a Tier 1B email also.

**J. Andrews** had been reflecting by the comments by the library trustees earlier in the meeting. She agrees the board needs to do a better job communicating with the library. She thinks communication goes both ways and she does not think it is fair to place the entire burden on the Selectboard. She appreciates that when employees are in a budget that is a sensitive topic. Unfortunately for the people in that position those salaries are paid with taxpayer dollars, and it is within the Selectboard's jurisdiction to ask questions about that. The library trustees had a request in to the Selectboard to help pay for the remediation and that had been withdrawn.

**COMMUNICATION**

Town Meeting

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Casey Mathieu  
Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy  
Minute Clerk

**GUEST LIST**

Becky Roy  
Dave Gauthier  
Ben Bornstein  
Dick Lavallee  
Helen Sterling

Lori Johnson  
Greg Bemis  
  
Kim Guidry  
Ira Allen  
Maureen Wilcox

Selectboard Meeting  
February 26, 2026  
Page 2

Dave Lavalley  
Harmony Cism  
Vicky Ross  
Lynn Gauthier

Barb Peck  
Max Tyler



2026 Town of Westford Selectboard

Re-organization Document

Set meeting schedule:

Current meeting schedule is the Second and Fourth Thursdays of the month

Current meeting time is to begin at 6:15PM

Set meeting agenda:

A new agenda format has been submitted for adoption. Example attached later

Highlights of the change include:

Combining the treasurer's report (highway budget status and town budget status)

Town Administrator report – includes discussion and correspondence as necessary, with the possibility of separating out those discussion and correspondence and communication sections

Designate Public Posting Places:

**1 V.S.A. § 312 states:** All agendas shall be made available in the following manner:

(A) posted to a website, if one exists, that the public body maintains or designates as the official website of the body; and

(B) in the case of a municipal public body, posted in or near the municipal office and in at least two other designated public places in the municipality or a neighboring municipality.

Currently the agendas are posted to the Town's website and three physical locations.

Currently the Town of Westford has identified the three locations as:

Town Office

Library

Post Office



Timeline: Agendas shall be warned within the following timeframes

- **Regular Meetings:** The agenda must be posted at least **48 hours** in advance.
- **Special Meetings:** The meeting must be warned, and the agenda posted at least **24 hours** in advance.
- **Emergency Meetings:** No specific advance warning period is required, but the board must provide some public notice as soon as possible and notify all board members.
  - *The meeting must address a specific, urgent issue that cannot wait for the standard 24-hour warning period required for a "special meeting".*
  - **Public Safety Threats:** Immediate response to a "clear and imminent peril to public safety".
  - **Natural Disasters or Local Incidents:** Coordination for floods, severe storms, or sudden infrastructure failures (e.g., a bridge collapse or major water main break).
  - **Emergency Declarations:** Formal voting to declare a state of public emergency to activate the Town's Emergency Management Plan.
  - **Urgent Legal or Personnel Issues:** While rare in an emergency context, the board may discuss items that qualify for Executive Session (closed to the public) if premature knowledge would place the town at a substantial disadvantage.

Designate the official Newspaper:

Currently the Town posts warnings of meetings or items of high importance with:

- The Essex Reporter- meeting agendas and alike
- Seven Days – job postings, Requests for Proposals (RFPs), etc...

Rules of Procedure Document:

Suggested changes to document

- 1) Time should be changed to reflect 6:15PM



SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OFFICE & ZOOM  
AGENDA  
Date and Time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83677614523?pwd=CoYiP9lRkRdVp7jJySzyApgbQbgZ9.1>

Meeting ID: 836 7761 4523 - Passcode: 943MWX  
OR dial +1 646 931 3860 – Meeting ID: 836 7761 4523 – Passcode: 668077  
Please note that agenda times are approximate and are subject to change.

- 6:15 CALL TO ORDER  
Roll Call  
Changes to the agenda  
Casey Mathieu
- 6:25 Minutes Approval  
January 8th, 2026, SB Meeting
- 6:30 Public Comment (2 mins per speaker)
- 6:40 CCRPC Update  
Ben Bornstein, CCRPC Representative
- 6:50 Highway Department  
Review Road Schedule  
Review FY'25 Highway budget status report  
Sean Cushing, Road Forman  
Greg Barrows, Town Treasurer
- 7:05 Treasurer Report  
Review FY'25 General Fund budget status report  
Review and approve accounts payable and payroll warrants  
Budget Forecast  
Action Items from previous meeting  
Why is the General Fund at a -\$32,815.83  
Greg Barrows, Town Treasurer  
*Treasurer's Report  
Then Hwy/Rds Sched*
- 7:15 Town Administrator Report  
Westford/Milton Rd. Paving Bids  
Tier 1B  
Childcare Tax Credit  
Town Meeting/Childcare  
No Open Appeals – Signature page  
Action Items from previous meeting  
Port-o-let for skating rink  
Volunteer Policy for town  
VAST follow up  
Tommy O'Connor
- 7:45 Planning and Zoning Report  
Harmony Cism
- 7:55 Correspondence
- 8:05 Anticipated Executive Session  
Legal

Adjourn

The next regular Selectboard Meeting will be held on February 12th, 2026

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT For those requesting special accommodations for this meeting please notify the Fairfax Town Office more than 24 hours prior to the meeting at (802)849-6111. Please use 1-800-253-0191 (TEXT/TELEPHONE) or 1-800-253-0195 (VOICE).

**SELECTBOARD ANNUAL TASK LIST**  
*(please note that there may be other tasks not listed)*

January

- Submit Selectboard report for Annual Town Report
- Hold budget informational meeting
- Finalize proposed budget for vote at Town Meeting
- Sign Town Meeting warning

February

- Sign Certificate of Highway Mileage to AOT (by the 20<sup>th</sup>)
- Sign Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending for Grand List

March

- Reorganization meeting (first meeting in March)
- Review and adopt Selectboard Rules of Procedure
- Appoint residents to positions (PC, DRB, CC, Rec, Tree Warden, Fence Viewers, etc.) *DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS USUALLY THE 15<sup>th</sup> of MARCH*
- Approve Annual Financial Plan for Highways (after Town Meeting, due to AOT by April 1<sup>st</sup>)

April

- Local Emergency Management Plan (due by May 1<sup>st</sup>)
- Review quotes for trash & recycling collection services (if contract is expiring in June)

May

- Employee evaluations

June

- Employee evaluations
- Dog Warrant
- Set salaries (last meeting in June)
- Law Enforcement Contract
- Dispatching contract with St. Albans (for Fairfax Rescue)

July

- Set tax rate
- Review (and approve) Financial Management Questionnaire prepared by Treasurer (due by July 31)
- Begin Capital Budget process

August

- End of fiscal year reporting review

September

- Public Hearing for Capital Budget

### October

- Meet with boards, commissions, and organizations to receive proposals for town budget to be voted on in March

### November

- Meet with auditors to review audit findings (report due to Town by Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>)
- Meet with boards, commissions, organizations to receive proposals for budget to be voted on in March
- Budget workshops

### December

- Budget workshops – *suggested to make one of these during a regular meeting of the SB*
- Errors & Omissions Grand List Report
- Schedule informational meeting to present draft budget
- *Create draft of Selectboard annual report for the Town Report*

**TOWN OF WESTFORD  
SELECTBOARD RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**A. PURPOSE**

The Selectboard of The Town of Westford, is required by law to conduct its meetings in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law. 1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314. Meetings of the Selectboard of the Town of Westford must be open to the public at all times, except as provided in 1 V.S.A. § 313.

**B. APPLICATION**

This policy setting forth rules of procedure shall apply to the Selectboard of the Town of Westford, which is referred to below as "the body." These rules shall apply to all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the body.

**C. ORGANIZATION**

1. The body shall annually elect a chair and a vice-chair. The chair of the body or, in the chair's absence, the vice-chair shall preside over all meetings. If both the chair and the vice-chair are absent, a member selected by the body shall act as chair for that meeting.
2. The chair shall preserve order in the meeting and shall regulate its proceedings by applying these rules and making determinations about all questions of order or procedure.
3. A majority of the members of the body shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum of the members of the body is not present at a meeting, no meeting shall take place.
4. No single member of the body shall have authority to represent or act on behalf of the body unless, by majority vote, the body has delegated such authority for a specific matter at a duly-noticed meeting and such delegation is recorded in the meeting minutes.
5. Motions made by members of the body do require a second. The chair of the body may make motions and may vote on all questions before the body. A motion will only pass if it receives the votes of a majority of the total membership of the body.
6. There is no limit to the number of times a member of the body may speak to a question. A member may speak or make a motion without being recognized by the chair. Motions to close or limit debate will be entertained with safe and due regard to the intent of public and fair discussion.
7. Any member of the body may request a roll call vote. Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(2), when one or more members attend a meeting electronically, a roll call vote is required for votes that are not unanimous.
8. Meetings may be recessed to a time and place certain. Recesses within a meeting to accommodate "personal privilege" (bathroom breaks, collection of one's self etc.) shall be reasonably honored/promoted for members of the body and supporting staff.
9. These rules may be amended by majority vote of the body and must be readopted annually within one month of a new body member taking their place on the Select Board.

**D. AGENDAS**

1. Each regular and special meeting of the body shall have an agenda, with time allotted for each item of business to be considered by the body. Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact the Town Administrator to request inclusion on the agenda. The chair shall determine the final content of the agenda. It is to be understood that agenda timelines are for guidance only and do not necessarily restrict agenda item discussion times.
2. At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be posted in or near the municipal office and at the following designated public places in the municipality: town office, library and post office. At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be posted on the Town's website (<https://westfordvt.us/>). The agenda must also be made available to any person who requests such agenda prior to the meeting.
3. All business, as may best serve the town's business as determined by the chair, shall be conducted in the same order as it appears on the noticed agenda, except that any addition to or deletion from the noticed agenda must be made as the first act of business at the meeting. No additions to or deletions from the agenda shall be considered once the first act of business at the meeting has commenced. Any other adjustment to the noticed agenda, for example, changing the order of business, postponing or tabling actions, may be made by majority vote of the body.

**E. MEETINGS**

1. Regular meetings shall take place on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Thursday of the month at ~~6:00 p.m.~~ 6:15PM at the town office.
2. Special meetings shall be publicly announced at least 24 hours in advance by giving notice to all members of the body unless previously waived; to an editor, publisher or news director, or radio station serving the area; and to any person who has requested notice of such meetings. In addition, notices shall be posted in the municipal clerk's office and at the following designated places in the municipality: library and post office.
3. Emergency meetings may be held without public announcement, without posting of notices, and without 24-hour notice to members, provided some public notice thereof is given as soon as possible before any such meeting. Emergency meetings may be held only when necessary to respond to an unforeseen occurrence or condition requiring immediate attention by the public body.
4. A member of the body may attend a regular, special, or emergency meeting by electronic or other means without being physically present at a designated meeting location, so long as the member identifies him or herself when the meeting is convened and is able to hear and be heard throughout the meeting. Whenever one or more members attend electronically, voting that is not unanimous must be done by roll call. If a quorum or more of the body attend a meeting (regular, special, or emergency) without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the agenda for the meeting shall designate at least one physical location where a member of the public can attend and participate in the meeting. At least one member of the body, or at least one staff or designee of the body, shall be physically present at each designated meeting location.

5. Executive sessions may be part of any meeting duly warned by the Selectboard, provided the topic to be discussed falls within the exemptions stated in 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1) through 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(10). A motion must be made during the open portion of a meeting and must indicate the nature of the business to be discussed. The motion requires a majority vote in the affirmative to pass.

When a topic is deemed that premature general public knowledge would place the Selectboard or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage, two motions are required. The first motion is to find that discussion of a topic creates a substantial disadvantage. The second motion is to enter executive session for discussion of the topic. Both motions require a majority vote in the affirmative. The first motion requires passage in order for the second motion to occur.

Attendance in executive session is limited to the members of the Selectboard and, at its discretion, staff, legal counsel and persons who are subjects of the discussion or whose information is needed.

#### **F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

1. With the exception of Executive Session, all meetings of the body are meetings in the public, not of the public. Members of the public shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to express related topical opinions or other related testimony, about matters considered by the body, so long as order is maintained according to these rules.
2. At the initial discussion of each agenda item, but before any action is taken by the public body at each meeting, there may be time afforded for open public comment for items not on the agenda. The body may increase, decrease, or cease the time for open public comment and its place on the agenda.
3. Comment by the public or members of the body must be addressed to the body as a whole, and not to any individual member of the body or public.
4. Members of the public must be acknowledged by the chair before speaking.
5. If a member of the public has already spoken on a topic, he or she may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.
6. Order and decorum shall be observed by all persons present at the meeting. Neither members of the body, nor the members of the public, shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting or interrupt or disturb any member while speaking. Members of the body and members of the public are prohibited from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.
7. Members of the body and members of the public shall obey the orders of the chair or other presiding member. The chair should adhere to the following process to restore order and decorum of a meeting, but may bypass any or all steps when he or she determines in his or her sole discretion that deviation from the process is warranted:
  - a. Call the meeting to order and remind the members of the applicable rules of procedure.
  - b. Declare a recess or table the issue.
  - c. Adjourn the meeting until a time and date certain.
  - d. Call the Vermont State Police or Chittenden County Sheriff to assist with removing disorderly person(s) from the meeting.

**G. MEETING CONDUCT**

1. Treat each other respectfully as peers.
2. Refrain from interrupting others.
3. Refrain from personal conversations while there is a "public" conversation going on.
4. Reveal individual interests but work toward the common good.
5. Demonstrate mutual respect: Treat each other with dignity; be courteous; respect diversity and individuality.
6. Listen respectfully and actively for understanding. Facilitate the participation of all.
7. Set aside judgment. Be aware of tone; use non-judgmental words and actions.

Adopted this ~~14<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024.~~ 12<sup>th</sup> day of March 2026

WESTFORD SELECTBOARD

---

Julia Andrews

---

Patrick Haller

---

Casey Mathieu

---

Deb Sawyer Jorschick

---

Nick Nichols

## Town of Westford

### Policy Regarding Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Conduct

---

#### **Article 1. Authority**

Under the authority granted in 24 V.S.A. § 2291(20), the Town of Westford hereby adopts the following policy concerning conflicts of interest and ethical conduct.

#### **Article 2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the business of this municipality will be conducted in such a way that no public officer of the municipality will gain a personal or financial advantage from his or her work for the municipality and so that the public trust in its officers will be preserved. It is also the intent of this policy to ensure that all decisions made by public officers are based on the best interests of the municipality.

#### **Article 3. Application**

This policy applies to all individuals elected or statutorily-appointed to perform executive, administrative, legislative, or quasi-judicial functions of the Town of Westford.

#### **Article 4. Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

**A. Conflict of interest** means any of the following:

1. A real or seeming incompatibility between a public officer's private interests and his or her public or fiduciary interests to the municipality he or she serves. A conflict of interest arises when there is a direct or indirect personal or financial interest of a public officer or a person or group closely tied with the officer including his or her spouse, household member, child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle, brother- or sister-in-law, business associate, or employer or employee in the outcome of an official act or action, or any other matter pending before the officer or before the public body in which the public officer holds office. A conflict of interest may take any of the four following forms:
  - a. A direct financial conflict of interest arises when a public officer acts on a matter that has a direct financial impact on that officer.
  - b. An indirect financial conflict of interest arises when a public officer acts on a matter that has a financial impact on a person or group closely tied to the officer.
  - c. A direct personal conflict of interest arises when a public officer acts on a matter that has a direct impact on the officer in a non-financial way but is of significant importance to the officer.
  - d. An indirect personal conflict of interest arises when a public officer acts on a matter in which the officer's judgment may be affected because of a familial or personal relationship or membership in some organization and a desire to help that person or organization further its own interests.
2. A situation where a public officer has publicly displayed a prejudgment of the merits of a particular quasi-judicial proceeding. This shall not apply to a member's particular political views or general opinion on a given issue.

- 
3. A situation where a public officer has not disclosed ex parte communication(s) related to a quasi-judicial proceeding that is before the body to which that officer belongs.

A "conflict of interest" does not arise in the case of an official act or action in which the public officer has a personal or financial interest in the outcome, such as in the establishment of a tax rate, that is no greater than that of other persons generally affected by the decision.

- B. **Emergency** means an imminent threat or peril to the public health, safety, or welfare.
- C. **Ex Parte Communication** means direct or indirect communication between a member of a public body and any party, party's representative, party's counsel or any person interested in the outcome of a quasi-judicial proceeding, that occurs outside the proceeding and concerns the substance or merits of the proceeding.
- D. **Official act or action** means any legislative, administrative or quasi-judicial act performed by any public officer while acting on behalf of the municipality. This term does not apply to ministerial acts or actions wherein no discretionary judgment is exercised.
- E. **Public body** means any board, council, commission, or committee of the municipality.
- F. **Public interest** means an interest of the municipality, conferred generally upon all residents of the municipality.
- G. **Public officer** means a person elected or statutorily-appointed to perform executive, administrative, legislative, or quasi-judicial functions for the municipality. This term does not include municipal employees.
- H. **Quasi-judicial proceeding** means a case in which the legal rights of one or more persons who are granted party status are adjudicated, which is conducted in such a way that all parties have opportunities to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses presented by other parties, and which results in a written decision, the result of which is appealable by a party to a higher authority.

#### **Article 5. Prohibited Conduct**

- A. A public officer shall not participate in any official act or action if he or she has a conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, in the matter under consideration.
- B. A public officer shall not personally - or through any member of his or her household, business associate, employer or employee - represent, appear for, or negotiate in a private capacity on behalf of any person or organization that has an interest in an official act or action pending before the public body in which the public officer holds office.
- C. A public officer shall not accept gifts or other offerings for personal gain by virtue of his or her public office that are not available to the public in general.
- D. A public officer will not request or accept any reward, gift, or favor for taking an official act or action or advocating for or against an official act or action.

- E. A public officer shall not use resources unavailable to the general public - including but not limited to municipal staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities - for private gain or personal purposes.
- F. A public officer who is a member of a public body shall not give the impression that he or she has the authority to make decisions or take actions on behalf of that body.

#### **Article 6. Disclosure**

A public officer who, while serving on a public body, may have a conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, in a matter under consideration by that public body shall, prior to taking an official act or action or participating in any official act or action on the matter, publicly disclose at a public meeting or public hearing that he or she has an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the matter under consideration and disclose the nature of the actual or perceived conflict of interest. Alternatively, a public officer may request that another public officer recuse him or herself from a matter due to a conflict of interest, whether real or perceived.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Article 7. Consideration of Recusal**

Once there has been a disclosure of an actual or perceived conflict of interest, other public officers shall be afforded an opportunity to ask questions or make comments about the situation. If a previously unknown conflict is discovered during a meeting or hearing conducted by a public body of the municipality, the public body shall take evidence pertaining to the conflict and, if appropriate, adjourn to an executive session to address the conflict.

#### **Article 8. Recusal**

- A. **Recusal of Appointed and Elected Officers.** After taking the actions listed in Articles 6 and 7, a public officer, whether appointed or elected, shall declare whether he or she will recuse him or herself and explain the basis for that decision. If the public officer has an actual or perceived conflict of interest but believes that he or she is able to act fairly, objectively, and in the public interest, in spite of the conflict, he or she shall state why he or she believes that he or she is able to act in the matter fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise, the public officer shall recuse him or herself from the matter under consideration. A public officer that recuses him or herself may, but not must, explain the basis for that decision.
- B. **Recusal of Appointed Officers.** The failure of an appointed public officer to recuse himself or herself in spite of a conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, may be grounds for discipline or removal from office.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Article 9. Recording**

The minutes of the meeting or the written decision/minutes from the meeting/hearing shall document the actions taken in Articles 6 through 8.

---

<sup>1</sup> Such request shall not be considered an order for the officer to recuse him or herself.

<sup>2</sup> Each member of an elected public body is independently elected and answers only to the voters. Therefore, unless there is a local ordinance or charter provision that states otherwise, the remaining members of the body may not force recusal. They may only express their opinion about the subject and/or privately or publicly admonish a fellow member who fails to handle conflicts appropriately.

<sup>3</sup> Certain appointed public officers such as a Zoning Administrator and members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment or Development Review Board may only be removed for cause and after being afforded with procedural due process protections including notice and a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

### **Article 10. Post-Recusal Procedure**

- A. A public officer who has recused himself or herself from participating in an official act or action by a public body shall not sit with the public body, deliberate with the public body, or participate in the discussions about that official act or action in any manner in his or her capacity as a public officer, though such member may still participate as a member of the public or private party, if applicable.
- B. The public body may adjourn the proceedings to a time, date, and place certain if, after a recusal, it may not be possible to take action through the concurrence of a majority of the total membership of the public body. The public body may then resume the proceeding with sufficient members present.

### **Article 11. Enforcement**

- A. **Enforcement Against Elected Officers; Consequences for Failure to Follow the Conflict of Interest Procedures.** In cases in which an elected public officer has engaged in any of the prohibited conduct listed in Article 5, or has not followed the conflict of interest procedures in Articles 6 through 10, the Selectboard may, in its discretion, take any of the following disciplinary actions against such elected officer as it deems appropriate:
  - 1. The chair of the Selectboard may meet informally with the public officer to discuss the possible conflict of interest violation. This shall not take place in situations where the chair and the public officer together constitute a quorum of a public body.
  - 2. The Selectboard may meet to discuss the conduct of the public officer. Executive session may be used for such discussion in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(4). The public officer may request that this meeting occur in public. If appropriate, the Selectboard may admonish the offending public officer in private.
  - 3. The Selectboard may admonish the offending public officer at an open meeting and reflect this action in the minutes of the meeting. The public officer shall be given the opportunity to respond to the admonishment.
  - 4. Upon majority vote in an open meeting, the Selectboard may request (but not order) that the offending public officer resign from his or her office.
- B. **Enforcement Against Appointed Officers.** The Selectboard may choose to follow any of the steps articulated in Article 11A. In addition to or in lieu of any of those steps, the Selectboard may choose to remove an appointed officer from office, subject to state law.

### **Article 12. Exception**

The recusal provisions of Article 8 shall not apply if the Selectboard determines that an emergency exists or that actions of a quasi-judicial public body otherwise could not take place. In such a case, a public officer who has reason to believe he or she has a conflict of interest shall only be required to disclose such conflict as provided in Article 6.

**Article 13. Effective Date**

This policy shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Selectboard.

Signatures: Allison Hope  
Allison Hope

Julia Andrews  
Julia Andrews

Grant Thomas  
Grant Thomas

Adopted at the March 22, 2018 Selectboard Meeting.

Sec. 22. 24 V.S.A. chapter 60 is added to read:

**CHAPTER 60. MUNICIPAL CODE OF ETHICS**

**§ 1991. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this chapter:

- (1) “Advisory body” means a public body that does not have supervision, control, or jurisdiction over legislative, quasi-judicial, tax, or budgetary matters.
- (2) “Candidate” and “candidate’s committee” have the same meanings as in 17 V.S.A. § 2901.
- (3) “Commission” means the State Ethics Commission established under 3 V.S.A. chapter 31, subchapter 3.
- (4) “Confidential information” means information that is exempt from public inspection and copying under 1 V.S.A. § 315 et seq. or is otherwise designated by law as confidential.
- (5) “Conflict of interest” means a direct or indirect interest of a municipal officer or such an interest, known to the officer, of a member of the officer’s immediate family or household, or of a business associate, in the outcome of a particular matter pending before the officer or the officer’s public body, or that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the officer’s duties. “Conflict of interest” does not include any interest that is not greater than that of other individuals generally affected by the outcome of a matter.
- (6) “Department head” means any authority in charge of an agency, department, or office of a municipality.
- (7) “Designated complaint recipient” means:
  - (A) a department head or employee specifically designated or assigned to receive a complaint that constitutes protected activity, as set forth in section 1997 of this title;
  - (B) a board or commission of the State or a municipality;
  - (C) the Vermont State Auditor;
  - (D) a State or federal agency that oversees the activities of an agency, department, or office of the State or a municipality;
  - (E) a law enforcement officer as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2358;
  - (F) a federal or State court, grand jury, petit jury, law enforcement agency, or prosecutorial office;
  - (G) the legislative body of the municipality, the General Assembly or the U.S. Congress; or
  - (H) an officer or employee of an entity listed in this subdivision (7) when acting within the scope of the officer’s or employee’s duties.
- (8) “Domestic partner” means an individual in an enduring domestic relationship of a spousal nature with the municipal officer, provided the individual and municipal officer:
  - (A) have shared a residence for at least six consecutive months;

- (B) are at least 18 years of age;
- (C) are not married to or considered a domestic partner of another individual;
- (D) are not related by blood closer than would bar marriage under State law; and
- (E) have agreed between themselves to be responsible for each other's welfare.

(9) "Illegal order" means a directive to violate, or to assist in violating, a federal, State, or local law.

(10) "Immediate family" means an individual's spouse, domestic partner, or civil union partner; child or foster child; sibling; parent; or such relations by marriage or by civil union or domestic partnership; or an individual claimed as a dependent for federal income tax purposes.

(11) "Legislative body" means the selectboard in the case of a town, the mayor, alderpersons, and city council members in the case of a city, the president and trustees in the case of an incorporated village, the members of the prudential committee in the case of a fire district, and the supervisor in the case of an unorganized town or gore.

(12) "Municipal officer" or "officer" means:

- (A) any member of a legislative body of a municipality;
- (B) any member of a quasi-judicial body of a municipality; or
- (C) any individual who holds the position of, or exercises the function of, any of the following positions in or on behalf of any municipality:
  - (i) advisory budget committee member;
  - (ii) auditor;
  - (iii) building inspector;
  - (iv) cemetery commissioner;
  - (v) chief administrative officer;
  - (vi) clerk;
  - (vii) collector of delinquent taxes;
  - (viii) department heads;
  - (ix) first constable;
  - (x) lister or assessor;
  - (xi) mayor;
  - (xii) moderator;
  - (xiii) planning commission member;
  - (xiv) road commissioner;
  - (xv) town or city manager;
  - (xvi) treasurer;
  - (xvii) village or town trustee;
  - (xviii) trustee of public funds; or
  - (xix) water commissioner.

(13) "Municipality" means any town, village, or city.

(14) "Protected employee" means an individual employed on a permanent or limited status basis by a municipality.

(15) "Public body" has the same meaning as in 1 V.S.A. § 310.

(16) "Retaliatory action" includes any adverse performance or disciplinary action, including discharge, suspension, reprimand, demotion, denial of promotion, imposition of a performance warning period, or involuntary transfer or reassignment; that is given in retaliation for the protected employee's involvement in a protected activity, as set forth in section 1997 of this title.

## **§ 1992. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

(a) Duty to avoid conflicts of interest. In the municipal officer's official capacity, the officer shall avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. The appearance of a conflict shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable individual with knowledge of the relevant facts.

(b) Recusal.

(1) If a municipal officer is confronted with a conflict of interest or the appearance of one, the officer shall immediately recuse themselves from the matter, except as otherwise provided in subdivisions (2) and (5) of this subsection, and not take further action on the matter or participate in any way or act to influence a decision regarding the matter. After recusal, an officer may still take action on the matter if the officer is a party, as defined by section 1201 of this title, in a contested hearing or litigation and acts only in the officer's capacity as a member of the public. The officer shall make a public statement explaining the officer's recusal.

(2)(A) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection (b), an officer may continue to act in a matter involving the officer's conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest if the officer first:

(i) determines there is good cause for the officer to proceed, meaning:

(I) the conflict is amorphous, intangible, or otherwise speculative;

(II) the officer cannot legally or practically delegate the matter; or

(III) the action to be taken by the officer is purely ministerial and does not involve substantive decision-making; and

(ii) the officer submits a written nonrecusal statement to the legislative body of the municipality regarding the nature of the conflict that shall:

(I) include a description of the matter requiring action;

(II) include a description of the nature of the potential conflict or actual conflict of interest;

(III) include an explanation of why good cause exists so that the municipal officer can take action in the matter fairly, objectively, and in the public interest;

(IV) be written in plain language and with sufficient detail so that the matter may be understood by the public; and

(V) be signed by the municipal officer.

(B) Notwithstanding subsection (A) of this subdivision (2), a municipal officer that would benefit from any contract entered into by the municipality and the officer, the officer's immediate family, or an associated business of the officer or the officer's immediate family, and

whose official duties include execution of that contract, shall recuse themselves from any decision-making process involved in the awarding of that contract.

(C) Notwithstanding subsection (A) of this subdivision (2), a municipal officer shall not continue to act in a matter involving the officer's conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest if authority granted to another official or public body elsewhere under law is exercised to preclude the municipal officer from continuing to act in the matter.

(3) If an officer's conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest concerns an official act or actions that take place outside a public meeting, the officer's nonrecusal statement shall be filed with the clerk of the municipality and be available to the public for the duration of the officer's service plus a minimum of five years.

(4) If an officer's conflict of interest is related to an official municipal act or actions considered at a public meeting, the officer's nonrecusal statement shall be filed as part of the minutes of the meeting of the public body in which the municipal officer serves.

(5) If, at a meeting of a public body, an officer becomes aware of a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest for the officer and the officer determines there is good cause to proceed, the officer may proceed with the matter after announcing and fully stating the conflict on the record. The officer shall submit a written nonrecusal statement pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection within five business days after the meeting. The meeting minutes shall be subsequently amended to reflect the submitted written nonrecusal statement.

(c) Authority to inquire about conflicts of interest. If a municipal officer is a member of a public body, the other members of that body shall have the authority to inquire of the officer about any possible conflict of interest or any appearance of a conflict of interest and to recommend that the member recuse themselves from the matter.

(d) Confidential information. Nothing in this section shall require a municipal officer to disclose confidential information or information that is otherwise privileged under law.

### **§ 1993. PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

(a) Directing unethical conduct. A municipal officer shall not direct any individual to act in a manner that would:

- (1) benefit a municipal officer in a manner related to the officer's conflict of interest;
- (2) create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest for the officer or for the directed individual; or
- (3) otherwise violate the Municipal Code of Ethics as described in this chapter.

(b) Preferential treatment. A municipal officer shall act impartially and not unduly favor or prejudice any person in the course of conducting official business. An officer shall not give, or represent an ability to give, undue preference or special treatment to any person because of the person's wealth, position, or status or because of a person's personal relationship with the officer, unless otherwise permitted or required by State or federal law.

(c) Misuse of position. A municipal officer shall not use the officer's official position for the personal or financial gain of the officer, a member of the officer's immediate family or household, or the officer's business associate.

(d) Misuse of information. A municipal officer shall not use nonpublic or confidential information acquired during the course of official business for personal or financial gain of the officer or for the personal or financial gain of a member of the officer's immediate family or household or of an officer's business associate.

(e) Misuse of government resources. A municipal officer shall not make use of a town's, city's, or village's materials, funds, property, personnel, facilities, or equipment, or permit another person to do so, for any purpose other than for official business unless the use is expressly permitted or required by State law; ordinance; or a written agency, departmental, or institutional policy or rule. An officer shall not engage in or direct another person to engage in work other than the performance of official duties during working hours, except as permitted or required by law or a written agency, departmental, or institutional policy or rule.

(f) Gifts.

(1) No person shall offer or give to a municipal officer or candidate, or the officer's or candidate's immediate family, anything of value, including a gift, loan, political contribution, reward, or promise of future employment based on any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the municipal officer or candidate would be, or had been, influenced thereby.

(2) A municipal officer or candidate shall not solicit or accept anything of value, including a gift, loan, political contribution, reward, or promise of future employment based on any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the municipal officer or candidate would be or had been influenced thereby.

(3) Nothing in subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection shall be construed to apply to any campaign contribution that is lawfully made to a candidate or candidate's committee pursuant to 17 V.S.A. chapter 61 or to permit any activity otherwise prohibited by 13 V.S.A. chapter 21.

(g) Unauthorized commitments. A municipal officer shall not make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the municipality unless otherwise permitted by law.

(h) Benefit from contracts. A municipal officer shall not benefit from any contract entered into by the municipality and the officer, the officer's immediate family, or an associated business of the officer or the officer's immediate family, unless:

(1) the benefit is not greater than that of other individuals generally affected by the contract;

(2) the contract is a contract for employment with the municipality;

(3) the contract was awarded through an open and public process of competitive bidding; or

(4) the total value of the contract is less than \$2,000.00

February 14, 2026

Dear fellow members of the Select Board,

Following this past Thursday's discussion of Tier 3B I have wrestled on how to present my thoughts on the subject without seeming to be self-serving. As you know, approximately 24 acres of my Family's property would be affected by expanding Tier 3B to the land area toward the Westford School on Brookside Road (the expansion of Tier 3B to encompass the Town Center would impact our 4 acres on the West side and 20 acres on the East side of Brookside Road).

I believe that I should not be voting on this due to our property ownership within the Town Center and a perceived conflict of interest, even though we have no intention of developing our property. However, my position on the Board does not remove my property rights nor does my position require me to give up my first amendment free speech rights. Originally I was staying out of the discussion except for factual details I might know. Upon further reflection I wish to argue for the rights of the property owners in the Town Center area and I would also use the same principals of argument for all property owners. I believe by not taking the opportunity provided by the State in the form of opting in Tier 3 for the Town Center area with the sole reason to deter development that would otherwise be congruent to our current local zoning laws is unfair and I make the argument with the following points.

1. Our current local zoning regulations were created through a lengthy public process and duly passed. One wishing to develop their property within the parameters of the current and duly passed zoning regulations should be treated fairly.
2. I recognize that some perceive the failed bond vote on the "Maple Shade" community septic system as an indication of the majority's wish to change our Zoning regulations. But property owners today should not be unfairly subject to uncertain future zoning changes until such changes are made.
3. I think not taking the opportunity we have to potentially relieve the significant cost burden of ACT 250 on residential housing development from a property owner who, absent Act 250, might otherwise find it feasible to create housing that meets our local zoning and all other State requirements as purposefully adding a hidden layer of zoning restrictions.
4. I think that IF we were to decide to keep this Act 250 layer in place, it could be argued by a property owner that the decision *was solely to prevent development of property in a pattern that has already been approved by the Town of Westford* and we could be putting the Town in legal jeopardy.

In conclusion I think that members of the Board that will vote on this should be asking; Is it not reasonable that if the Town has the ability to potentially reduce property owner's costs while supporting our local zoning regulations we should do so rather than purposely limit our own citizen's rights to develop their property with an intentional YES BUT cost layer that we can blame on the State?

Sincerely, Pat Haller

## Tommy O'Connor

---

**From:** Harmony Cism  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2026 11:20 AM  
**To:** Pat Haller; selectboard  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission  
**Subject:** RE: Tier 3 Opinion

Pat (and other Selectboard members),

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughtful letter and for reflecting so carefully on your role in the discussion of this topic.

First, I want to clarify that the current discussion is regarding **Tier 1B**, rather than Tier 3. Tier 1B relates specifically to the Town's eligibility for certain Act 250 jurisdictional thresholds tied to designated areas, whereas Tier 3 involves a different structure and criteria related to the protection of critical natural resources. Interestingly, many of the residents who oppose Tier 1B because it will *remove* one layer of review for properties in the Village Area are opposed to Tier 3 because it will *add* a layer of Act 250 review to their own properties.

I also wanted to follow up specifically on your concern about whether you should recuse yourself due to your family's property ownership within the Tier 1B-eligible area. Based on my understanding of municipal decision-making in this context, I do not believe recusal would be necessary or expected. The Selectboard will ultimately be asked to consider whether to opt into Tier 1B as part of a broader policy decision affecting zoning districts and development town wide. Similarly, when the Selectboard considers zoning regulation amendments, the full board is expected to participate and vote, even when those amendments affect properties owned by board members.

In situations such as this, the Selectboard is acting in a legislative capacity, making a policy decision that applies generally to a class of properties, rather than in a quasi-judicial capacity affecting a specific application or individual property. Property ownership within an affected area, by itself, does not typically constitute a conflict requiring recusal when the board is making policy decisions of general applicability. Guidance from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns similarly distinguishes between legislative decisions, where broad participation is expected, and quasi-judicial matters, where recusal may be necessary due to a direct personal interest in a specific application.

Additionally, representatives from CCRPC have indicated that they do not view recusal as necessary in this instance, given that the Tier 1B decision is a policy-level action affecting an entire designated area, rather than a decision tied to a specific property owner or development proposal.

It is also important to note that the Planning Commission, in its role as the Town's statutory planning body, has reviewed this matter and voted to recommend that the Town opt into Tier 1B. That recommendation reflects the Commission's responsibility to ensure that local implementation remains aligned with the Town Plan and its intended development pattern. While the Selectboard is, of course, the decision-making body on this question, the Planning Commission's recommendation is an important part of the process and should be given careful consideration.

The proposed Tier 1B area reflects the Town's longstanding planned development pattern, as established through the Town Plan and implemented through the Village zoning districts. These areas have already been vetted through extensive public process and intentionally identified as appropriate locations for compact development. Opting into Tier 1B would align Act 250 jurisdictional thresholds with those locally adopted plans, rather than introducing new development rights beyond what is already permitted under current zoning. Deferring participation based on the possibility of future planning changes could create uncertainty for property owners whose land is currently designated and regulated to support this pattern of development.

In a similar vein, the Town owns property within the Tier 1B-eligible area. And obviously, the Selectboard, as a governing body, cannot recuse themselves from a decision regarding property that they have final say over regarding any development decisions.

I might recommend that you seek additional guidance from VLCT or the Town Attorney if you would like a formal opinion. I just wanted to share my understanding so you have the information needed to make a comfortable and informed decision about your participation.

Thank you again for your thoughtful engagement on this issue. I apologize for my long-winded response to your letter, but I (obviously) have many thoughts following the several meetings and discussions that I have been involved in on this topic, and I hope I explained them well! I certainly don't want to overstep my role as Zoning Administrator, but as the current de facto Town Planner, I felt the need to explain some of the reasoning behind my support for opting-in to Tier 1B and the land use policy decision-making process. Please let me know if there are any further questions on Tier 1B or Act 181.

Sincerely,  
*Harmony Cism*  
Administrative Officer & Planning Coordinator  
Town of Westford  
(802) 878-4587

*This email message, along with any response or reply, is considered a public record, and thus, subject to disclosure under the Vermont Public Records Law (1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320).*

**From:** Pat Haller <Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 14, 2026 4:19 PM  
**To:** selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission <planningcommission@westfordvt.us>; Harmony Cism <zoning\_admin@westfordvt.us>  
**Subject:** Tier 3 Opinion

Dear Selectboard Members, I want to share my thoughts on the Tier 3 subject, Please see attached.

Sincerely, Pat Haller

## Tommy O'Connor

---

**From:** Seth Jensen <seth.m.jensen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 8:47 PM  
**To:** selectboard; TownAdmin; Harmony Cism  
**Subject:** Tier 1B Designation

Members of the Westford Selectboard,

I understand that the Selectboard is considering Tier 1B Designation for the entire Town Center Area. I would like to offer the following practical and existential rationale for supporting this Designation.

**Practical:** The Town Center Area has existed in the Town's planning and zoning documents in its current configuration since at least the mid-1990s. These plans and bylaws were adopted by the community following the full legal process. Property owners purchased property with the understanding of what is and is not allowed, based on the Town's duly adopted zoning and subdivision regulations. Tier 1B Designation will not absolve a builder from meeting the requirements of the Town's Zoning, or local State technical permits addressing matters such as drinking water, wastewater, wetlands, stormwater, or highway access.

Act250 review does not alter what can and cannot be built under local zoning. However, the time and complexity of the Act250 process can limit WHO can build in a community. The 10-unit threshold for Act250 review is cumulative over five years within a five mile radius. The same builder building two or three homes at a time can trigger Act250 because of this five-year five-mile rule. The costs and complexities of the Act250 process discourage small builders from undertaking smaller, incremental projects that are more suitably scaled to a rural community. Meanwhile, large developers backed by national commercial banks are able to absorb the cost and complexities of Act250.

Tier 1B Designation will help level the playing field for small builders -- who are more likely to be locally based and responsive to the community's needs. Conversely, Opting Out of Tier 1B will in no way "protect" the Town from developers -- but rather make it harder for small builders to compete with large developers. Opting Out will make it more likely that development in the Town Center is designed to meet the expectations of national commercial banks rather than the hopes, dreams, and needs of the community.

**Existential:** The potential loss of the Westford School represents an urgent threat to the fabric of Westford's character. The School's declining enrolment is driven in part by the challenges working age families face in affording homes in Westford. After several years focused on flood recovery in the Johnson area, my partner and I will be returning to Westford to raise our first child. We would not be able to do so if not for family property in the community. There are simply not enough people with such opportunities to ensure a sustainable student population for the Westford School.

Opting Out of Tier 1B is opting out of one of the few tools available to the Town to make the community more accessible for working age families and begin stabilizing the population of the School.

Further, opting out will undermine Westford's ability to build support for our school from other communities in the District and the State as a whole. Whether intentional or not, opting out will send a message that Westford is not willing to take even modest steps to become more welcoming to working age Vermonters of modest means. Opting out will be another nail in the coffin of the Westford School.

Thank you for your time,

Seth Jensen

## Tommy O'Connor

---

**From:** Pat Haller  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026 3:02 PM  
**To:** Lori Johnson; selectboard  
**Cc:** Westford Conservation Commission  
**Subject:** RE: Court finding on legal town trails

Hi Lori!

Yes, some or all of us know about it but glad you're pointing it out in case it wasn't on our radar. I'm very glad it reinforced what we were doing and want to do in the future.

Regarding a trail ordinance...I think people generally mistake that what we've been working toward is an ordinance, but it is **not** an ordinance. It's guidelines for maintenance of these specific public r.o.w. trails that cross private property.

I'll give more but to answer quickly, the SB as a body needs to review the draft GUIDELINES that have been created on trail maintenance and determine if the draft is the direction/spirit of what we want. That has not yet happened and I believe we should soon so that we can move forward with the formalizing of the guidelines that will include further input from the Conservation Commission and the public (definitely targeting the land owners, but not exclusive).

As far as the spirit of the guidelines, I hope we drafted it to be congruent with the spirit we intended and that was to frame the maintenance as being under the purview of the Town and either our Cons Commission volunteers will maintain sections of trails, or land owners can opt to maintain their sections and should even be encouraged to do so. But if they so choose, they commit to the responsibility to maintain to the standard of a walking trail and the WCC still has oversight and can judge that it's not being maintained with some escalation steps that could lead to the Selectboard exercising our rights that now have been established (hopefully no need to)

Granted, I think SOME things came up that might be special to these particular trails, like dogs on leash and hunting season closures, but I don't think the Guidelines are the right place for those but amending existing ordinances should be considered. For example our existing Dog ordinance suggests dogs can be leashed or under direct verbal control, while I think on these particular trails we might all agree that dogs should be leashed. If there's agreement then we follow the necessary steps to amend a Town Ordinance.

Example number two, hunting season...Our existing trail ordinance discusses closures, mostly in regard to erosion/mud season, but we may consider that these specific trails be closed every year mirroring what we just did this year and thus ammendment to the existing Trails Ordinance would be what I'd recommend.

Thanks for bring this up,  
Pat Haller

**From:** Lori Johnson <lkjohnson4625@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026 1:38 PM

**To:** selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>

**Subject:** Court finding on legal town trails

Thought you might find this interesting since there have been issues with our town trails. What is the status of Westfords trail ordinance?



Vermont Supreme Court sides with Tunbridge in longstanding trails case  
vtdigger.org

## Tommy O'Connor

---

**From:** Town Clerk  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 4, 2026 10:12 AM  
**To:** selectboard  
**Subject:** Moderator Results & Next Steps  
**Attachments:** Ruling the Unruly 2027-02.docx

Hi All,

As you are all aware we did not have a Moderator candidate on the ballot for Town Meeting since Lee McClenny has to step away from the role for personal reasons. Unfortunately none of the write-ins for the Moderator position made it to 18 total votes, although Lee was close with 11. Knowing this, and knowing that even if Lee had made it to 18 he would likely not have been able to step into position again, I figured I would talk next steps.

In the absence of the Moderator, a Selectboard member may serve in this position. The Selectboard also has the authority to ask the public to submit themselves to be appointed. The Selectboard holds the sole authority to appoint an individual to this position and anybody appointed would only be Moderator until the next regularly scheduled election (if you were on the Selectboard the last time a Library Trustee was appointed the process is identical with the exception of there being no additional board like the Trustees putting forth a recommendation). If an appointed Moderator wished to continue they would have to run for election at this time. This would not be that unusual for Moderators as their term length is only for 1 year, so any individual should be prepared to run every year.

In case a Moderator is not found and moderation is needed by a Selectboard member, I am providing the board with the newest edition of the moderation handbook "Ruling the Unruly" as provided to me by our former Moderator, Ed Chase, this morning. Although Ed has retired from his moderation duties in Westford he is still quite involved at the state level and still leads the moderator trainings provided by VLCT. He would be a great person to reach out to if there are additional questions either by the board or by a new moderator. I will provide his email below:

Ed Chase: [eichase@yahoo.com](mailto:eichase@yahoo.com)

### **Callie Hamdy**

*Town Clerk – Westford, VT*

802-878-4587

<https://westfordvt.us/>

The Town of Westford has several available opportunities to serve the community!

These appointments of non-elected positions are made by the Selectboard after Town Meeting Day.

You can view the volunteer appointment policy for these positions here:

<https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/FINAL-Volunteer-Appointment-Policy.pdf>

To apply for one of the positions below, please submit an application for appointment, (<https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/APPLICATION-FOR-APPOINTMENT.pdf>) to [townadmin@westfordvt.us](mailto:townadmin@westfordvt.us) or mail/drop off at the Town Office at 1713 VT Route 128, Westford, VT 05494. Applications are due before 3/15/2026.

#### DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

There are three terms coming up for re-appointment in 2026. All seats are for 3-year terms, expiring in 2029. There are also two Alternate seats available for a 1-year term to expire in 2027.

Members of this board review and makes decisions on:

- Appeals of Administrative Officer decisions
- Conditional Use
- Site Plans
- Subdivisions & Planned Unit Development
- Variances & Waivers.

(<https://westfordvt.us/boards/development-review-board/>)

#### PLANNING COMMISSION

There is one term coming up for re-appointment in 2026. This seat serves for a 5-year term which will expire in 2031. There are also two vacant seats that are available for appointment, one for a 2-year remaining (of a 5-year term) that will expire in 2028 and one for a 3-year remaining (of a 5-year term), which will expire in 2029. Members of this commission prepare the Town Plan, Land Use & Development Regulations and participate in other planning studies, as necessary.

(<https://westfordvt.us/boards/planning-commission/>)

#### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

There is one term coming up for re-appointment in 2026. This is for a 4-year term to expire in 2030. The Conservation Commission helps preserve the rural character of the town by maintaining Town trails and planning conservation projects, among other things. (<https://westfordvt.us/boards/conservation-commission/>)

#### CEMETERY COMMISSION

There is one term coming up for re-appointment in 2026. This seat serves for a 3-year term and will expire in 2029. The Cemetery Commission oversees the care and maintenance of the seven Town cemeteries.

(<https://westfordvt.us/boards/cemetery-commission/>)

#### COMMON COMMISSION

There is one term up for re-appointment in 2026. This seat serves a 3-year term and will expire in 2029. The Common Commission oversees the care and maintenance of the Town Common and helps with scheduling activities that take place on The Common. (<https://westfordvt.us/boards/town-common-committee/>)

Please contact the Town Office at 878-4587 or [townadmin@westfordvt.us](mailto:townadmin@westfordvt.us) if you have questions about any of these positions.