



SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OFFICE & ZOOM
AGENDA for March 26th, 2026

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83677614523?pwd=CoYiP9lRkRdVp7jJyjSzyApghQbgZ9.1>

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.

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|------|---|--|
| 6:15 | CALL TO ORDER
Roll Call
Changes to the agenda | Pat Haller, Selectboard Chair |
| 6:20 | Minutes Approval
March 12 th , 2026 Selectboard Meeting | |
| 6:25 | Public Comment – Items not on current agenda | |
| 6:35 | School Budget Vote Discussion | Marlon Verasamy, EWSD Board Vice-Chair |
| 6:40 | Rules of Procedure Document (possible action) | Pat Haller |
| 6:45 | CCRPC Update | Ben Bornstein, CCRPC Representative |
| 7:00 | Planning Commission Letter in Response to LURB (Tier 1B)
Land Use Review Board (LURB)
ACT 250 Exemption Discussion
Planning and Zoning Report | Max Tyler

Harmony Cism |
| 7:25 | Open Meeting Law Complaint
Corrective Actions | Pat Haller |
| 7:45 | Treasurer Report
Review FY'25 General Fund budget status report
Review FY'25 Highway budget status report
Review and approve accounts payable and payroll warrants
Budget Forecast | Greg Barrows, Town Treasurer |
| 8:10 | Highway Department
Review Road Schedule | Sean Cushing, Road Forman |
| 8:15 | Discussion
Follow up from N. Nichols and Library Trustees
Planning Commission Appointments
Cemetery Commission Appointment
Development Review Board Appointment
Bike Event
250 th Celebration Update | Nick Nichols
Max Tyler
Lynn Gauthier
Harmony Cism
Nick Nichols
Pat Haller |
| 8:45 | Town Administrator Report
VLCT-PACIF Visit
Visit notes
Corrective Actions | Tommy O'Connor |

Update from Chittenden Cty Sheriff

9:00 Legal Trail Maintenance Policy Pat Haller
Discussion on DRAFT document and next steps

9:20 Correspondence

Adjourn

The next regular Selectboard Meeting will be held on April 9th, 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 MEETING
MARCH 12, 2026
Draft Minutes**

Present: Pat Haller
Casey Mathieu
Julia Andrews
Nick Nichols
Deb Jorschick

Callie Hamdy
Tommy O'Connor

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

Added Executive Session. **J. Andrews** Motioned. **D. Jorschick** Seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

SELECTBOARD REORGANIZATION

Selectboard Welcome & Points of Order

Casey Mathieu and Deb Jorschick had been reelected to the Selectboard at the March 3, 2026 Town Meeting and there were no changes to the makeup of the Selectboard.

Election of Officers

C. Mathieu nominated Pat Haller to be chair. **D. Jorschick** motioned to accept the nomination. **N. Nichols** seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

D. Jorschick motioned to elect Julia Andrews as Vice-Chair. **C. Mathieu** seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

C. Mathieu moved to approve the February 26, 2026 minutes as amended. **D. Jorschick** seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

CCRPC UPDATE

Ben Bornstein, CCRPC Representative, was present. Prior to the last Selectboard meeting there had been discussion both by the Selectboard and Planning Commission (PC) about the three options for Tier 1B. Another municipality had made a partial adoption. Ben had inquired about what the root of that was and a lot of it was a desire to create a greater transparency and inclusion when it comes to indigenous people and minority people when it comes to development around the state. Ben had assured CCRPC staff that there was no history of such in Westford and we had recently adopted an inclusion statement. He communicated that Westford is concerned the guidance for Act 181 and Tier 1B is to give more authority and control to localities/municipalities themselves. He feels we are a text book case and why rush.

We want to do it right and ensure we are inclusive. He thinks we should put it back on LURB and have them explain exactly what they want because right now it is a bit too general.

REORGANIZATION

Set Meeting Schedule

The board currently meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the Month at 6:15pm. There was no desire to change that from the board members. Deb motioned. Julia seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Set Meeting Agenda Format/Year at-a-glance.

There was a suggested agenda format change by one of the board members. It combined the treasurer's reports into one report and some changes in how discussion was organized. The board agreed to combine the treasurer's reports into one section. The board discussed changing how they implemented public comment, suggesting that they have one public comment section at the beginning for items not on the agenda and another public comment section after all discussion items for items on the agenda. **T. O'Connor** clarified that in the rules of procedure, the board can put public comment where they wish and there is also language in there with an option to limit length of time. If there are items on the agenda it is up to the chair to open the floor to public comments on that item or to leave public comment until the end.

Barb Peck commented that when the public has to wait she feels all context is lost. The last Selectboard allowed the public to talk after every agenda item. She felt they could always limit how long the public speaks.

The board discussed the addition of an administrator's report. **D. Jorschick** was highly in favor of this item as it allowed the board to keep track of the things they ask Tommy to do on their behalf. **J. Andrews** asked if we should put something similar on the treasurer's report as well. **T. O'Connor** thought any action item specific to the treasurer's report could be added with the treasurer's report, he wanted to talk finances all in one shot.

Designate Three Public Posting Places

The town currently posts agenda items at the town office, library, and post office. The board felt this was still reasonable.

Designate Official Newspaper

The town currently posts agendas in the Essex Reporter. We also utilize SevenDays for posting larger items like RFPs. **C. Mathieu** asked if it has to be a physical newspaper. **T. O'Connor** clarified the statute says newspaper but does not designate media style. Pat asked that whichever we choose, that the board ask Tommy what we might be able to do to assist Westford Provisions with carrying the newspaper. The Library also carries both.

J. Andrews moved to make the Essex Reporter the official newspaper of record. **D. Jorschick** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Harmony Cism was present. She clarified if the legal notices now get posted to the Essex Reporter instead to SevenDays? Those are usually put there because of the larger reach. **D.**

Jorschick motioned to designate SevenDays to be an official newspaper for municipal business including RFPs hiring notices, legal notices, etc. **J. Andrews** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Review Selectboard Rules Procedure

T. O'Connor noted that currently the rules of procedures have the meetings starting at 6:00 p.m., which was inaccurate, so he had preemptively changed it to 6:15 p.m.

P. Haller noted that there might be other parts of the rules of procedure other than the public comment/participation previously discussed. He asked the board for any comments on other aspects of the Rules of Procedure. **J. Andrews** suggested that traditionally, when somebody comes and addresses the board, they address the board through the chair, they do not name names, they do not make personal pleas to individuals on the board. She feels in some instances we have gotten away from that tradition, and she wanted to be more aligned with that. **D. Jorschick** agreed. **J. Andrews** noted this is a procedure to keep things from becoming personal when things get passionate and she thinks it is a good practice.

P. Haller thinks at the heart of what the board is going to discuss is public comment. He read it aloud the existing rules of procedure for Public Comment. He would like to make a change and suggested a public comment section before discussion and after, but not during discussion. He has been on the board for two years. It is very hard for the board to get through their agenda without a long back and forth between members of the public talking both to the board and to members of the public. It feels like they are not having a meeting of the Selectboard in public, they are having a meeting for the public. Meetings are to get through the town's business. It will be easier if they restructured public comment. As chair, he would like to figure out how to allow members of other boards to speak at will at subjects they are experts on during agenda items. They would not be considered public at large. If they are talking about Tier 1B for example, somebody from the PC could be called upon during that section even though they are not a member of the Selectboard. He asked the other board members opinions.

J. Andrews agreed with Pat. She noted the agenda for tonight, which does not consider a long back and forth between the board and the public, is three and a half hours. She thinks there is a point where the human brain is no longer at its peak performance. These meetings are arduous. Sometimes they will go around a few times and hear comments that reflect one another in a repetitive way. She appreciates that people want to share, but once it has happened a few times it makes it really difficult to get the work done that needs to get done. **C. Mathieu** was also in favor. When we get into a contentious topic we know there will be feedback. Could the board build into a public comment to that discussion item? **J. Andrews** noted that it is up to the board to make an agenda any way they choose. **T. O'Connor** noted that if we know we are going to have a speaker that creates longer time frames they can build that in to the agenda. Reviewing the agenda by the chair before it goes public is very important to this aspect. How correspondences are done could also be improved in his opinion.

N. Nichols felt this was a big change to what we have done previously and was in favor of making the change more gradual. He wonders if there is some middle ground the board could consider for a timeframe. There should be a way to allow limited one time comments from

folks while allowing the board to do its business. He wondered about a compromise where for each agenda item they had a public comment where the public can speak once for two minutes. **P. Haller** and **C. Mathieu** expressed they thought this was a reasonable compromise.

Lori Johnson was present. She read VLCT's model rules of procedures for public bodies aloud. To her, limiting public comment is squashing public interaction. She felt the board was trying to exclude the public.

B. Peck felt if the public cannot speak after an agenda item then the board can make a motion and vote. If that occurs and public comment is at the end how can they speak on things before they are voted on? She did not hear complaints previously so does not know why there has to be a change.

P. Haller heard both Lori and Barb's comments and agrees that we want to have good public engagement, he liked Nick's recommendation. The change might be that we be more strict and actually follow the public participation rules more than we may have in the past. He does think we should still allow for public comments at the end of the meeting because if we are going to have an initial period of public comment and then makes a motion and a public participant wants to react to that it might be appropriate at the end of the meeting for the reaction to come. **J. Andrews** think that public discussion on discussion items should be after because the board discussion is what will drive people's comments and to put some of the guard rails in place as we currently spend an hour or more on some topics. We should remember that the public can only speak once for two minutes on each topic and cut it off there. If it is not successful we can adjust things.

Vicky Ross was present. She liked the direction the board was going with public comment. She thinks we should adjust the rules of procedure to reflect this change.

L. Johnson noted that the public comment after discussion should be separated with the public comment for items not on the agenda. The board agreed and thanked Lori.

J. Andrews moved that the board have Tommy make the discussed changes to F2 on the Rules of Procedure document. **D. Jorschick** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Re-Adopt Conflict of Interest Policy

This is an annual item. **P. Haller** stated that part of the policy he is most interested in discussing is that now that the board is five members it would hold a lot of weight if the someone were not recusing themselves, but the five-member board thought they should. He thinks if this occurs he feels this should be a removal from office, but how does this work statutorily. **J. Andrews** moved to adopt the Conflict of Interest policy. **C. Mathieu** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Review Municipal Ethics Policy & Training Review

This is along the same lines as the Conflict of Interest Policy. **P. Haller** asked if this code of ethics applies to the PC and other boards? **T. O'Connor** noted it was a state statute; this is more than the Selectboard, but they are the overseeing officers for the municipality. **P. Haller**

asked if this addresses the fact that Maria is the Ethics Liaison? She is more like a point of contact for the individuals that have the required ethics training.

Open Meeting Law Policy & Training Review

VLCT notes that board members should always review Open Meeting Law and there are available trainings. **N. Nichols** asked Tommy to clarify the differences in posting requirement timelines for agendas. Tommy did so.

Tier 1 B Discussion

Pat Haller, Selectboard Chair, asked **Julia Andrews**, Vice Chair, to chair this section as for this discussion he wanted to recuse himself.

This is continued discussion from a previous meeting because the board had not had sufficient numbers to come to a majority vote. **J. Andrews** asked **Max Tyler**, Planning Commission Chair, to give a summary of what the PC had done regarding the Tier 1B question. The PC has recommended that Westford opt in to all eligible areas to Tier 1B. This was based on CCRPC and Land Use Review Board (LURB) feedback and the PC's understanding that they did not think defending the limited option was defined enough that they could make a good argument. Max thinks Ben has since convinced him that a partially in is viable, but it means we will be indeterminate until the debate between us and LURB is settled. Max believes opting in fully is the correct decision, although there are other options. There is some sentiment that opting out is a reasonable course of action. He agrees that LURB and Act 181 is a wild card within the state but continues to believe there is not much of a downside to opting in and there may be benefit because regardless if we like Act 181 it is the law of the land. There is no guarantee we can opt in later. What has been stated to him is that if the town wants to designate other areas it needs to be in the town plan before 2028 and that is why some feel urgency to move up the town plan rewrite prior to its 2029 expiration.

J. Andrews asked for clarification. There are three options: opt in with limited slope (current designation), opt in with broadened area, and not opt in at all. Was that correct? That was correct, but **M. Tyler** does not think we have the ability to defend the limited area. He asked if we wanted to encourage more municipal control in the village area or wait and see how this plays out and let the current regulations, such as Act 250 control development. He feels that Tier 1B allows a relaxing of state regulations, but not a relaxing of local regulations and zoning control. If we opted in with a smaller area than is eligible we would have to defend it.

N. Nichols appreciates Ben Bornstein's work on this. It feels like Ben is saying we could defend the decision from a couple months ago. That is what he had hoped for, to defend the limited Tier 1B selection. **C. Mathieu** noted it was a deadlock last time. He thinks the board knows which way they want to go and agreed with Nick. **B. Peck** was not sure we could defend the current area, but thought it was a better compromise than opting in entirely or opting out.

Carol Winfield was present and thought sticking with the current area was a good decision but did not think we should be required to defend it. **M. Tyler** has heard a lot of people say what is the harm of waiting, but he wanted to ask what is the harm of opting in? For him, all state regulations still apply, but local zoning would determine what would happen in the Tier

1B area rather than Act 250 permitting. What are we so worried about regarding opting in? He is not a big fan of Act 181, but on the other hand he is trying to understand why we are worried about reducing state regulation in an area we have already designated in the Town Plan as the town center.

Pat Haller was present speaking as a member of the public. He agreed with Max. He was a property owner in the proposed area. If he wanted to develop to the level local zoning requires and meets all those requirements, Act 250 makes an additional cost for anybody in the designated area, so it seems the purpose of not opting out is an order to essentially make our zoning more restrictive because of the interests of people who do not want more development in the town center. He thinks it is' inherently unfair for us to say this is what you are allowed to build but it will cost you more because we are opting out. He had talked to a neighbor of his on the town common area. We do not have a ten unit wastewater ability in the town common area; it does not exist so most development is impossible because we do not have a wastewater system. That neighbor had told him if they wanted to have a local Westford builder build three units on his property but in the past ten years he's already built five, it would cost a prohibitive amount of money as they would be subjected to Act 250. If in the next few years, the school closes and we all think senior or affordable housing could be put there that area is within the Tier 1B exemption, so if we are opting out, they would also have to enter into Act 250 at the school property if it were to be used for this purpose. He cannot imagine why, except to make it more expensive, we would not opt out of Act 250 for the area.

L. Johnson said she is not opposed to development but thought there should be a robust discussion. She pushed for allowing the community as a whole to make the decision where they want development. In the current town plan, it indicates that the town center is our area for development. Lori wants to see changes and opportunities for other areas to be developed and feels this is more fair.

M. Tyler was asked to close out discussion. He thinks if we opt out it is saying we do not have faith in our DRB and our Zoning Administrator. His understanding is that the CCRPC would not be asking us this question unless we qualify. As the state moves on the demands on our town are going to increase. We have a DRB, a PC, a Zoning Admin, and zoning Policy. Where do we fall short? He fails to understand.

C. Mathieu moved to defend the original Tier 1B submission. **N. Nichols** seconded. Motion passed 4-0. 1 Recusal. **H. Cism** asked if we are going to defend the current area are we submitting Ben's letter? What are we submitting to CCRPC and the land use review board? **J. Andrews** wanted more time to review Ben's letter before submitting it but knows we are on a timeline. **P. Haller** thought a good approach to answer Harmony's question is that we know now what the board wants to do, which is to respond with the original designation application. He suggested asking Ben Bornstein and the PC to work on a response however the PC decides should be done and have the PC have the response brought to the SB by the next meeting.

ROAD SCHEDULE

S. Cushing, Road Foreman, was not present. **P. Haller** went over the Road Schedule from February 27, 2026 to March 12, 2026.

D. Jorschick brought notice to the paving job on VT Route 128 that was done last summer. It is already starting to crack on the middle seam and around culverts. It did not hold up for the duration and did not even make it through one winter.

REVIEW FY'26 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT

G. Barrows, Treasurer, was not present. Tommy went over the FY'26 Highway Budget Status Report.

REVIEW FY'26 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

G. Barrows, Treasurer, was not present. Tommy 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 about status of Trail Ordinance, Tunbridge decision. Pat had replied. He is hoping to review this more at the next meeting.

Email about status of Town Moderator from the Town Clerk regarding not having a moderator and what next steps can be taken.

J. Andrews noted Barb Peck had sent each board member individual correspondence about Act 181. **P. Haller** noted he would prefer if residents used email correspondences when possible.

COMMUNICATION

Reminder about deadline for applying for volunteer positions, March 15th.

EWSD will be joining next meeting to go over a new article on EWSD ballot.

Speed Feedback signs have been ordered and are being delivered at no cost to us.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

P. Haller moved that premature general public knowledge would place the body or person at disadvantage. **J. Andrews** seconded. Motion passed 5-0. **P. Haller** motioned to enter executive session and invite Tommy for legal reasons at 8:30 p.m. **C. Mathieu** seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

P. Haller motioned to have Tommy continue on with the Town Attorney about next steps as it pertains to the open court case. **J. Andrews** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0

ADJOURN

C. Mathieu made a motion to adjourn the meeting, **P. Haller** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0

Selectboard Meeting
March 12, 2026
Page 8

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pat Haller
Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy
Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Dave Gauthier
Lynn Gauthier
Dick Lavallee
Dave Lavallee
Harmony Cism
Barb Peck
Carol Winfield
Max Tyler
Lori Johnson
Michael G
Kim Guidry
Ira Allen
Ben Bornstein
Vicky Ross

**ESSEX WESTFORD EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY
UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT #51
2026 ANNUAL MEETING**

April 14, 2026, 7:00 AM-7:00 PM

The legal voters of the Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District #51 (hereafter "Essex Westford School District") comprising the voters of the City of Essex Junction, Town of Essex, and the Town of Westford are hereby notified and warned to meet at their respective polling places on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 7:00 AM at which time the polls will open and 7:00 PM at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot on the following articles of business:

Article 1: To authorize the Essex Westford School District to borrow money to be used for the payment of District expenses by the issuance of notes or orders payable not later than one year from the date of issuance, pending receipt of payments from the State Education Fund.

Article 2: Shall the voters of the Essex Westford School District approve the school board to expend **\$102,014,902**, which is the amount the school board has determined necessary for the ensuing fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026? The Essex Westford School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per-pupil education spending of \$14,468, which is 2.82% higher than per-pupil education spending for the current year.

Article 3: Shall the voters of the Essex Westford School District authorize the school board to allocate the FY2025 audited fund balance of **\$4,234,392** without effect upon the District tax levy as follows: assign **\$4,034,392** as revenue for the FY2027 operating budget and assign the remaining balance, **\$200,000**, as revenue for future operating budgets?

Article 4: Shall the voters of the Essex Westford School District approve the school board to expend **\$9,747,737**, which is the amount the school board has determined necessary for the support of the Center for Technology Essex for the ensuing fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026?

Article 5: Shall the voters of the Essex Westford School District authorize the school board to allocate the Center for Technology Essex FY2025 audited fund balance of **\$1,053,800** without effect upon the District tax levy as follows: assign **\$300,449** as revenue for the Center for Technology Essex FY2027 operating budget and assign the remaining balance, **\$753,351** as revenue for future operating budgets?

Article 6: Shall the Essex Westford School District change the date of its Annual Meeting, beginning in 2027 and each year thereafter, from the second Tuesday in April to the first Tuesday in March?

Article 7: Shall the voters of the City of Essex Junction elect two (2) School Directors for terms of three (3) years?

Article 8: Shall the voters of the Town of Essex elect one (1) School Director for a term of three (3) years?

Article 9: Shall the voters of the Town of Westford elect one (1) School Director for a term of three (3) years?

Upon closing of the polls, the ballots for Articles 7 through 9 will be counted by local town/city election officials, who shall transmit the voting results to the Clerk of the Essex Westford School District, who will then tabulate the final results.

Upon closing of the polls, the ballots for all other Australian ballot Articles shall be transported by the members of the Board of Civil Authority to a central location where the ballots will be commingled and counted under the supervision of the Clerk of the Essex Westford School District, who will then tabulate the final results, pursuant to 16 VSA Section 741-742.

The legal voters of the Essex Westford School District are further notified that voter qualification and registration relative to said Annual Meeting shall be as provided in Chapter 11, Subchapter 3 of Title 16 and Chapters 43, 51, and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Polling Places

The voters of the Essex Westford School District, residing in their respective cities and towns, will cast their ballots from 7:00 AM-7:00 PM in the polling places designated for their community as follows:

- **City of Essex Junction:** Champlain Valley Expo Blue Ribbon Pavilion in the City of Essex Junction
- **Town of Essex:** Essex Middle School in the Town of Essex
- **Town of Westford:** Westford School in the Town of Westford

Informational Hearing

Said persons and voters are further notified and warned of a public informational hearing, pursuant to 17 V.S.A. §2680(h), on March 31, 2026, at 6:30 pm at the Essex High School Library on Educational Drive in Essex Junction. The informational hearing is to discuss and provide voters with information on Articles 1 through 5.

ATTEST:

Robert Carpenter, Essex Westford School Board Chair

Received for record and recorded prior to posting this ____ day of March 2026

John Sonnicks, Essex Westford School District Clerk

TENTATIVE ARTICLE TO CHANGE VOTE DATE

Article 6: Shall the Essex Westford School District change the date of its Annual Meeting, beginning in 2027 and each year thereafter, from the second Tuesday in April to the first Tuesday in March?

Moves Annual Meeting and Budget Voting to Town Meeting Day.



**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 (2nd) and fourth (4th) Thursday of the month at 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. The public shall have time afforded for open public comment for items not on the agenda. The body shall designate a specific agenda item for the public comment. The body may increase, decrease, or cease the time for open public comment and its place on the agenda.
3. 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 the currently discussed items on the agenda. The body may increase, decrease, or cease the time for open public comment and its place on the agenda.
4. 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.
5. Members of the public must be acknowledged by the chair before speaking.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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 26th day of March 2026

WESTFORD SELECTBOARD

Julia Andrews

Patrick Haller

Casey Mathieu

Deb Sawyer Jorschick

Nick Nichols



Janet Hurley, Chair, Land Use Review Board

Via email

March 26th, 2026

Dear Ms. Hurley,

On March 26th, 2026 the Town of Westford's legislative body adopted a resolution opting into Tier 1B status. We understand that since then, the Land Use Review Board's process has evolved to require additional detail about local capacity to administer Tier 1B. Please accept this letter attesting to our capacity.

In addition to having municipal staff, municipal officials, or contracted capacity adequate to support development review and zoning administration in the Tier 1B area in accordance with 6033(c)(6), as confirmed in the aforementioned resolution, the Town of Westford has ALL of the following, as required:

- appointed or contracted zoning administrator (may be permanent or acting)
- yearly budget to support administration of development regulations, including enforcement or appeals as needed
- municipal staff and volunteers can attend trainings as requested
- ZA and the DRB (or ZBA and PC) regularly process applications within the required timelines
- Technical assistance is available for projects that exceed normal capacity or knowledge by one or more of the following:
 - RPC
 - VLCT
 - Town Attorney
 - Other

Thank you for your consideration and please reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Cc: Taylor Newton, Planning Program Director, CCRPC
Kate McCarthy, Senior Planner, CCRPC
[Other ccs as appropriate – legislative body chair, planning director, etc.]

Tommy O'Connor

From: Seth Jensen <seth.m.jensen@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2026 8:37 PM
To: selectboard
Cc: TownAdmin; Harmony Cism; PlanningCommission
Subject: Re: Tier 1B Designation

Members of the Westford Selectboard,

I am providing this email as a follow-up to my previous email regarding Tier 1B Designation. I was surprised by the vertrolioc response from some members of the Westford community to my previous statement that working age families face challenges affording homes in Westford. I was especially surprised by the attempts to counter the direct, lived experience of my peers with anecdotal observations.

In the spirit of ensuring that discussions are based on fact, I have consulted official data from the US Census Bureau -- specifically the 2024 American Community Survey for the Westford Census Designated Place (CDP) and the Westford County Subdivision.

For those of you less familiar with Census Data, the Westford CDP includes roughly the same geographic area as the Town Center District in Westford's Town Plan and Land Use Regulations (as an aside, the fact that this geographic area has been in place long enough to be recognized by the Census Bureau should put to rest counter-factual claims that it is somehow "new")

The Westford County Subdivision covers the geographic area of the entire Town, inclusive of the CDP. Therefore, it is possible to evaluate demographics and housing costs in the Town Center compared with the Town as a whole.

This data shows a median home price of \$375,000 in the Town Center (CDP), compared with \$425,000 Townwide. Notably, the data does not report any homes valued greater than \$500,000 in the CDP, while the Town-wide data shows 20% of homes priced between \$500,000 -- \$1million, and an additional 4% valued over \$1million. Note that the ACS data does include margins of error, so a small deviation does not invalidate the overall finding.

A clear finding of this comparison is that the type of housing found in the Town Center is, in aggregate, more affordable than housing Townwide. Anecdotal observations that families with children have purchased in the Town Center in recent years simply confirms that the type of housing in the Town Center -- i.e. smaller homes on smaller lots -- is more affordable and accessible to working age families.

Therefore, more housing of the type found in the Town Center -- i.e. smaller homes on smaller lots -- is needed to remain affordable and accessible to working age families. Without working age families, Westford will not maintain the sustainable student populations at the Westford School. Creating barriers to these housing opportunities is counter to the Selectboard's stated goals of ensuring the Westford School remains open.

Further, data shows that even if families have been able to move to Westford, many are struggling to afford housing in Westford. 18% of Westford families are considered housing cost burdened (paying more than 30% of their income for housing) and nearly 10% are severely housing cost burdened (paying more than 50% of their income for housing).

Counter to claims that have been circulating in the community, Westford's Zoning and Subdivision Bylaws were not imposed on the community from above. The Town Center Area itself has been in place since at least the mid-1990s. The design standards found in the Form Based Code were developed based on at least half a dozen community forums held from 2013-2015. (Not 2018 or 2021, as some appear to be claiming). Finally, they were duly adopted by the Selectboard after numerous public hearings. The Town's rules for development are not impositions from above, but rather the product of significant public input and efforts by people invested in the future of the community.

Further, at that time, efforts to improve housing options have extended beyond the Town Center. At the same time the Form Based Code was adopted, the Town's subdivision bylaws were also revised to significantly increase the density bonuses available for diverse housing options (not just subsidized "affordable" housing) in the Town's Rural Districts.

For more than three decades, I have warned that Westford is at risk of losing the next generation. At first I was speaking of my own generation, then those 10, 15, and eventually 20 years younger than me. Now I am speaking of my own daughter. If the Town does not seize opportunities to improve affordability like the Tier 1B Designation, I am deeply afraid that mine may be the last generation born in Westford that is able to grow a family here.

Please remember ALL members of the community. Including those who will be here when we are gone but are currently too small to speak at every meeting.

Thank you,

Seth Jensen

On Tue, Feb 24, 2026 at 8:47 PM Seth Jensen <seth.m.jensen@gmail.com> wrote:
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: LK Johns <lkjohnson4625@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 12:45 PM
To: Pat Haller
Cc: selectboard
Subject: Fwd: Sunshine Week! and Open Meeting Law
Attachments: mime-attachment.eml; mime-attachment.eml; mime-attachment.eml

Dear Pat,

Thank you for your quick reply. Open Meeting Law (OML) requires the SB to discuss this formal complaint at a public meeting. It concerns more than just the budget meetings. In fact, by replying to all and including the other Selectboard members in your discussion, this is a further example of actions which are not recommended as per OML.

As for the Feb 17th message, apparently I wasn't clear in my email. I had written it then, but did not send it as I was giving the board opportunities to express your serious commitment to following the law before making a formal complaint. Since in my opinion there hasn't been a serious commitment, I am now making the formal complaint.

Lori

From: Pat Haller <Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us>
Date: March 18, 2026 at 10:19:42 AM EDT
To: LK Johns <lkjohnson4625@gmail.com>, selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>
Cc: Tommy O'Connor <toconnor@westfordvt.us>
Subject: RE: Sunshine Week! and Open Meeting Law

Lori,

I see in the body below that you suggest you sent something to us on Feb 17. Filtering on your name I don't have that correspondence from you....attached are 3 emails, on from 2/18, one from 2/19, and on from 2/23. Of these 3, you asked about budget info and we answered these but this more formal request isn't showing up.

As for open meeting, we are aware that several have questioned if we met the open meeting law requirements and for the budget meetings, I'm confident that we met the 24hr notice we would need. We all agree however, that we want to provide much more time in the future. This budget this round was rather clunky and the spreadsheet had some original errors that had us needing to regroup quickly once it was fixed to get it complete, putting us in the fast lane to meet and work on it. I don't anticipate that we'll have such accelerated meetings in the future, and I'll commit as Chair to do all

possible to have more time, including warning. We will meet the statutory requirements but with the intent of more than just meeting them when at all possible.

I will work with Tommy on what sort of resources he needs to feel confident in Open Meeting Law. I believe we've addressed the concerns several times in the last month, agree that we want more notice and will be sure to have more complete minutes; most focused here is certainly for budget meetings that are not our standard regularly scheduled meetings.

Sincerely, Pat

-----Original Message-----

From: LK Johns <lkjohnson4625@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 7:53 AM
To: selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>
Subject: Sunshine Week! and Open Meeting Law

Dear Selectboard,

Interestingly, it is Sunshine Week! Sunshine Week is a U.S. nonpartisan collaboration among groups in the journalism, civic, government, education and private sectors that shines a light on the importance of public records and open government.

With that in mind, Issues have been raised multiple times about Open Meeting Law and the Selectboard. I had written the message below Feb 17 but was giving you opportunities to express your serious commitment to following the law before making a formal complaint, but apparently there needs to be a formal complaint.

According to Statute, once a written statement is provided to a board, the board has 10 days to respond publicly and must provide cure within 14 days of that meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 314(b)(1)–(3). I have waited to send this message until it is within 10 days of your next meeting so you won't have to schedule a special meeting. Pat and Tommy please put this topic on the next agenda.

Dear Selectboard, Feb 17, 2026

I'm writing about some serious issues which need to be addressed. It has come to the attention of residents that the Selectboard is not following Open Meeting Law (OML) fully. I'd like to think that this is simply an oversight, and

will not happen in the future. OML requires all meetings of non-advisory boards (like SB) with a quorum present, to duly warn, provide agendas in advance, post minutes and post recordings of all meetings within 5 days. There are no exceptions. There were several budget discussions earlier this year. None of those minutes or recordings were posted until residents requested them. Further, there is some question as to if they were warned and agendas posted. The last one was warned (1/28/26), but only after a resident questioned it. See attached for screenshot of posted minutes where budget discussion minutes are missing. The minutes have now been posted, but much later than the 5 days, and with very sparse information. The minutes for the 2/26/26 SB meeting are now also missing from the website as of 3/17/26.

Some data "Public bodies must take minutes of their meetings. ...The open meeting law requires that minutes "give a true indication of the business of the meeting," covering all topics that arise. At minimum, minutes must include: the names of all members of the public body who are present at the meeting; the names of all other active participants; all motions, proposals, and resolutions made, and their dispositions; and the results of all votes, with a record of individual votes if roll call is taken. 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)(1). Minutes are public records and must be made available for public inspection and copying after five calendar days from the date of the meeting. If a public body maintains or designates a website, minutes must also be posted to that website no later than five calendar days after the meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)(2)."

In previous years the OML was followed in regards to budget meetings, including warnings, minutes and recordings. See minutes 1/15/24, 1/22/24, 12/10/24, 11/19/24 for the last 2 years.

It is understandable that the new Town Administrator is not yet up on all relevant statutes. The previous Town Administrator (TA) had the benefit of training from a very experienced mentor (Carl). Perhaps the current TA should be afforded the same? At any rate, it would be a good idea for him to study the OML as he will span various SB members as they come and go, and he should be the gatekeeper for making sure the SB follows the law. I remember previous SBs referring to Nanette or Holly for questions of legality and policy. It is critical that he be well versed and is instructed to verify information before presenting it as fact.

There is extensive information and links to open meeting law (OML) including links to trainings available here <https://sos.vermont.gov/municipal-division/open-meetings>

If there are questions about OML, I have found Jenny Prosser, General Counsel & Director of the Secretary of States (SOS) office to be very helpful. Her contact info is 802-828-9130, jenny.prosser@vermont.gov She has been contacted by multiple Westford residents. Enforcement of the law is through the Attorney Generals (AG) office.

Further, towns are required to provide the OML grievance procedure. Perhaps this is on our website, but I didn't find it. If it is, please provide the link. Here is the pertinent section from the statutes:

From <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/01/005/00314>
"1 V.S.A. § 314 (e) A municipality shall post on its website, if it maintains one: (1) an explanation of the procedures for submitting notice of an Open Meeting Law violation to the public body or the Attorney General; and (2) a copy of the text of this section. (Amended 1979, No. 151 (Adj. Sess.), § 4, eff. April 24, 1980; 1987, No. 256 (Adj. Sess.), § 5; 2013, No. 143 (Adj. Sess.), § 4;" According to the Statute, once a written statement is provided to a board, the board has 10 days to respond publicly and must provide cure within 14 days of that meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 314(b)(1)–(3)

A suggested cure would be for the SB to have an OML training session as part of a regular meeting with robust discussion of the most pertinent issues. In addition, the TA might spend further time studying the law and perhaps keep a cheat sheet of the most important considerations handy for future meetings. If anyone is unsure of the correct OML procedure, they should research the answer. In addition, the grievance procedure should be provided on our website if it is not already there.

Sincerely,
Lori Johnson

MODEL OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

[Insert name of municipality]

[Insert date]

ATTN: [insert legislative body, town manager/administrator, selectboard chair, or town clerk]

[Insert address]

PHONE:

EMAIL:

FACTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLAINT:

Prior to bringing a civil action in the Civil Division of the Superior Court in the county in which the alleged violation has taken place for appropriate injunctive relief or for a declaratory judgment, Vermont law requires any person aggrieved by an alleged violation of the Open Meeting Law to provide the public body with a written notice that alleges a specific violation and requests a specific cure of such violation.

- Date and Time Occurred:
- Name of Public Body:
- Specific Violation Alleged:
- Specific Cure Requested:

Please provide any additional facts that may assist the [insert name of municipality] in its investigation below:

If you need more space, please attach sheets to this form. Submit this document, and any supporting documentation, to the address at the top of this form.

Name of individual submitting complaint and contact information:



Open Meeting Law Complaint

Meeting warnings – no violation as meetings were warned on town website and in three physical locations within 24 hours

Meeting minutes – violation found in regard to minutes and recordings being made available within 5 days– corrective action to work with IT to create more efficient upload process for future meetings (especially when LCATV is not present)

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

After careful review the selectboard feels that there needs to be additions to meeting minutes of the budget workshops to reflect the following discussions:

January 16th – P. Haller proposed level funding for all entities that sent in budget or donation requests.

January 28th – N. Nichols again proposed to level fund any entity that sent in a budget request or donation request. This included the Volunteer Fire Department and the Library as well as all outside organizations that made requests.

THESE ABOVE ACTIONS REQUIRE A VOTE BY THE SELECTBOARD

TA Training- TA took required training on March 3rd, 2026

SB Chair- P. Haller chair of the Selectboard took training on March 19th, 2026

P. Haller also recommends that members of the board review the Open Meeting Law Training located at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5O5Pj4NHjw>

Grievance options on website – a link to a proper grievance form will be added to the Selectboard page of the Town's website.

Tommy O'Connor

From: Max Tyler <maxxtyler@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 11:54 AM
To: selectboard
Cc: PlanningCommission; Harmony Cism
Subject: Planning Commission recommendations for commission appointments

The Planning Commission recommends the following candidates for appointment to the Westford Planning Commission.

Arthur Woolf - Mr. Woolf is a long-time resident of Westford and has formerly served as a member of the Westford School Board while raising a family in town, serving as a professor of Economics at the University of Vermont and partnering in a consulting firm located in town. He maintains a pragmatic approach to balancing community and private property interests and a realistic assessment of growth opportunities in Westford. His experience and skill in economic analysis will be a valuable contribution to the commission.

Ben Bornstein - Mr. Bornstein is a long-time property owner in town and has served as the town's CCRPC liaison for 3 years and has recently been reappointed to that role by the Selectboard. He is an attorney and appears well-versed in Vermont property rights case law. In addition, during his tenure as CCRPC representative, he has demonstrated an indefatigable willingness to research thorny issues and to use his network of CCRPC contacts to develop an understanding of regional and statewide issues confronting the town. His legal knowledge, research skills, and CCRPC relationships will be a valuable addition to the commission.

R. Kirsten Tyler - Ms. Tyler is the current chair of the Westford Conservation Commission and also serves as a Director of the Westford Farmers Market. She holds a PhD in forest ecology from the University of Vermont, teaches there part-time, and operates a farming business in town. She has been an active participant in debates on many issues confronting the town, including the future direction of the Westford Elementary School. She has educated various town boards and commissions about opportunities for collaboration with the University of Vermont through her connections there. Her commitment to the future of Westford, her high energy, and UVM network represent valuable contributions to the commission.

There are 3 openings of 5-year, 3-year, and 2-year terms. Mr. Bornstein has expressed a preference for the 2-year term. The other candidates are open to serving for any of the available terms.

Max Tyler
Westford Planning Commission, Chair



Town of Westford Cemetery Commission

The Cemetery Commission has one open seat that is set for appointment in the year 2026.

The commission only received one application. Lynn Gauthier sent in an application requesting reappointment.

The Cemetery Commission further supports the applicant and recommends that the Selectboard re-appoint Lynn Gauthier to the Cemetery Commission for a period of 3 years.



March 9, 2026

Member Name: Westford Town
PACIF Contact: Thomas O'Connor III
Address: 1713 VT Route 128
Westford, VT 05494

Visit Date: February 17, 2026
Consultant: Zander Yensan

I recently completed a visit to your municipality for the purpose of conducting a routine safety walkaround of the Town Hall and Garage. I appreciated the annual follow-up tour of the Town facilities, and I look forward to providing future safety guidance in Westford.

This letter is provided to you as a summary of my visit and primary activities while onsite. If a risk management report was also provided as part of this email, I encourage you to take note of the suggested correction dates and risk priority assignments as these should help you with your response to each issue. Please note that risk management recommendations are tracked and used for underwriting purposes and equipment grant qualification and reimbursement.

If there are any questions about the visit correspondence, or if I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Zander Yensan
Sr. LC Consultant
zyensan@vlct.org

Sponsor of:

VLCT Employment
Resource and Benefits
Trust, Inc.

VLCT Municipal
Assistance Center

VLCT Property and
Casualty Intermunicipal
Fund Inc.

Our service visits are designed to assist you in your risk management efforts. We do not assume responsibility for the discovery or elimination of all hazards which could possibly cause accidents or losses. Recommendations are developed from the conditions observed at the time of the survey and may not include every possible cause of loss. Compliance with these recommendations does not guarantee the fulfillment of your obligation under local, state, or federal laws or regulations.

PACIF Risk Management Report

Member: Westford Town

Visit Date: 02/17/2026

Consultant: Zander Yensan

Location: Town Garage **Location Detail:** Fire Alarm System - Annual Inspection

Issue ID: 11875 **Priority:** LOW **Suggested Correction Date:** 05/18/2026 **Status:** Open

Issue: Fire alarm equipment was slightly overdue for inspection as of the visit.

Recommendation: Maintaining annual inspection cycles for fire alarm equipment, ideally to the month, is recommended.



Location: Town Garage **Location Detail:** Boiler / Pressure Vessels - Inspection

Issue ID: 11876 **Priority:** MEDIUM **Suggested Correction Date:** 04/18/2026 **Status:** Open

Issue: Boiler/pressure vessel inspections were overdue.

Recommendation: Todd Templeton of Travelers has retired recently and as such the transition between him and his replacement has left some towns with slightly overdue inspection stickers. The new contact is Mike Theberge who can be contacted at mtheber2@travelers.com (or cell phone 603-289-5339).



Our service visits are designed to assist you in your risk management efforts. We do not assume responsibility for the discovery or elimination of all hazards which could possibly cause accidents or losses. Recommendations are developed from the conditions observed at the time of the survey and may not include every possible cause of loss. Compliance with these recommendations does not guarantee the fulfillment of your obligation under local, state, or federal laws or regulations. When recommendations have been completed, please let us know. Note: all "High Priority" recommendations must be completed prior to being considered for a PACIF Equipment Grant "award".

PACIF Risk Management Report

Member: Westford Town

Visit Date: 02/17/2026

Consultant: Zander Yensan

Location: Town Garage **Location Detail:** Hoist Point - Guardrail Securement

Issue ID: 11877 **Priority:** MEDIUM **Suggested Correction Date:** 04/18/2026 **Status:** Open

Issue: The Mezzanine hoist point railings did not have a means of securing from their removal. Note: This is consistent with a recent VOSHA finding at another municipality in the last 6 months.

Recommendation: Addition of three loops of chain around each connection point of the removable guardrail sections (left, middle, right) with tight bolt/multi-nut hardware (i.e., cannot be backed out by hand) securing each is recommended. As an academic FYI, VOSHA found that locks/keys were not as reliable as tool-based hardware as a means of securing removable sections at another municipality. The thought process- I believe- may be similar to tool-required guards on machinery or fencing, generally. Again, an academic albeit valuable bit of intel for any municipality- such as yours- with a potentially analogous situation.



Location: Town Garage **Location Detail:** Heat Source Combustibles - Fire Hazard

Issue ID: 11878 **Priority:** MEDIUM **Suggested Correction Date:** 04/18/2026 **Status:** Open

Issue: The mezzanine was being used as overflow storage for bankers boxes of town documents within 36" of a heating source.

Recommendation: In general, any combustible materials such as paper, cardboard, or flammable liquids should not be stored within 36" of a heat source such as a permanent heater or space heater. Given how dry it can be in winter- especially this past one being so cold- the flammability risk of paper increases. Noted during the walkaround and likely already addressed as of this writing, the boxes of paper should be removed from that area.



Our service visits are designed to assist you in your risk management efforts. We do not assume responsibility for the discovery or elimination of all hazards which could possibly cause accidents or losses. Recommendations are developed from the conditions observed at the time of the survey and may not include every possible cause of loss. Compliance with these recommendations does not guarantee the fulfillment of your obligation under local, state, or federal laws or regulations. When recommendations have been completed, please let us know. Note: all "High Priority" recommendations must be completed prior to being considered for a PACIF Equipment Grant "award".

PACIF Risk Management Report

Member: Westford Town

Visit Date: 02/17/2026

Consultant: Zander Yensan

Location: Town Hall **Location Detail:** Fire Extinguishers - Monthly Inspections

Issue ID: 11871 **Priority:** MEDIUM **Suggested Correction Date:** 04/18/2026 **Status:** Open

Issue: Fire extinguishers were not presently being inspected on a monthly basis.

Recommendation: Reminder to visually check fire extinguishers monthly (annual inspections were being done by third party vendors as otherwise required) and make notations on the tag's grid. 1) Ensure pressure is in the green; 2) Confirm the zip tie has not been broken; and 3) Confirm there are no other signs of damage such as corrosion or dents. This task should be applied to all facilities.

internal process created



Location: Town Hall **Location Detail:** Floor Cord - Trip Hazard

Issue ID: 11872 **Priority:** MEDIUM **Suggested Correction Date:** 04/18/2026 **Status:** Open

Issue: A cord ran across the bottom of the basement vault entry, posing a trip hazard.

Recommendation: As discussed during the visit, there are some wiring challenges in the basement office space which necessitate creative cord management. Contracting with a certified electrician to add an electrical outlet to the far side of the vault entry would mitigate this hazard and provide local power to the needs of the space.

working on moving power sources



Our service visits are designed to assist you in your risk management efforts. We do not assume responsibility for the discovery or elimination of all hazards which could possibly cause accidents or losses. Recommendations are developed from the conditions observed at the time of the survey and may not include every possible cause of loss. Compliance with these recommendations does not guarantee the fulfillment of your obligation under local, state, or federal laws or regulations. When recommendations have been completed, please let us know. Note: all "High Priority" recommendations must be completed prior to being considered for a PACIF Equipment Grant "award".

PACIF Risk Management Report

Member: Westford Town

Visit Date: 02/17/2026

Consultant: Zander Yensan

Location: Town Hall

Location Detail: EXIT Signs - Inspection

Issue ID: 11873

Priority: MEDIUM

Suggested Correction Date: 04/18/2026

Status: Open

Issue: EXIT signs did not test properly.

Recommendation: Verification that EXIT sign battery backups are in good shape is recommended. Replace batteries as needed – Reminder that electrical work should be conducted by a certified electrician. Quarterly activation checks of these units is recommended as a general safety maintenance item.



Location: Town Hall

Location Detail: OSHA 300A Summary Sheet - Annual Posting

Issue ID: 11874

Priority: LOW

Suggested Correction Date: 05/18/2026

Status: Open

Issue: OSHA 300A postings were not found.

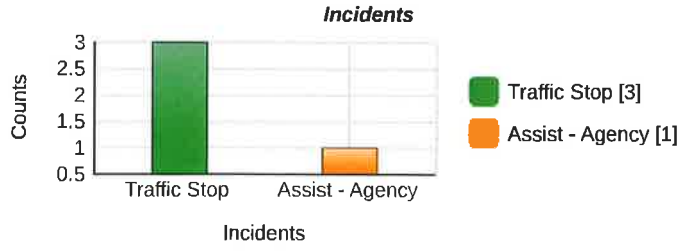
Recommendation: In the future, OSHA 300A summaries should be posted with other employee labor postings at the beginning of each year. This annual numerical, anonymous, public-facing summary corresponds to the annual OSHA 300 log, which is a confidential HR log of recordable OSHA injuries maintained elsewhere in a secure location (e.g., HR file). For more information or assistance, please feel free to contact your Loss Control Consultant.



*action corrected day of
visit*

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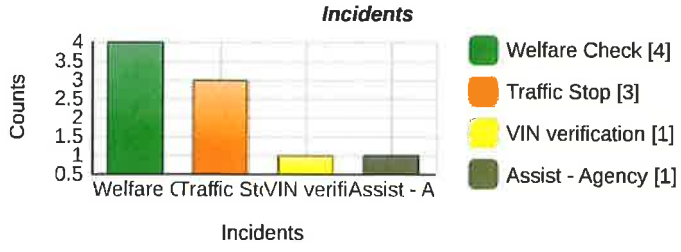
Chittenden County Sheriff's Incident Race Stats for Towns



Call Type	Incident Number	Race	Date/Time	Location	City	Area
Assist - Agency	25CCSD004941		11/11/25 15:16:30	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	25CCSD004825		11/03/25 09:12:09	VT Rte 128 / Morgan Brook Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	25CCSD004823		11/03/25 07:56:38	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	25CCSD004821	White - W	11/03/25 07:31:30	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494

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Chittenden County Sheriff's Incident Race Stats for Towns



Call Type	Incident Number	Race	Date/Time	Location	City	Area
Traffic Stop	25CCSD005501	White - W	12/31/25 14:16:20	VT Route 128 / Morgan Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Assist - Agency	25CCSD005488		12/31/25 08:00:05	1088 VT Rte 128, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Welfare Check	25CCSD005412		12/24/25 11:36:19	1059 Vt Rte 128, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Welfare Check	25CCSD005412	White - W	12/24/25 11:36:19	1059 Vt Rte 128, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	25CCSD005392		12/23/25 12:58:32	VT Rte 128 / Morgan Brook Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	25CCSD005253	White - W	12/16/25 14:53:15	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
VIN verification	25CCSD005186	White - W	12/10/25 15:14:45	245 Westford-milton Rd, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494

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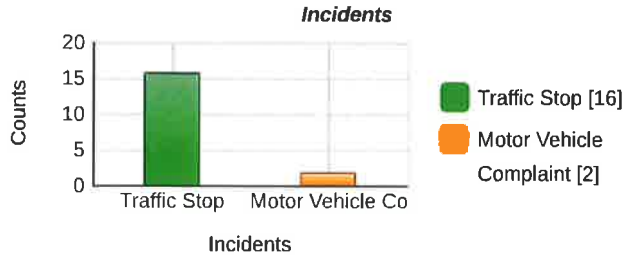
Towns Monthly



Call Type	Incident Number	Race	Date/Time	Location	City	Area
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000431	White - W	01/30/26 07:39:56	Woods Hollow Rd/ Maple Tree Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000272	White - W	01/20/26 14:17:46	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000135	White - W	01/12/26 08:41:19	Woods Hollow Rd / Maple Tree Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000124	White - W	01/09/26 13:49:16	brookside/ westford school, Westford, VT, 05464	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Assist Motorist	26CCSD000002	White - W	01/02/26 08:28:20	VT Route 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Assist Motorist	26CCSD000002	Unknown - U	01/02/26 08:28:20	VT Route 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494

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Towns Monthly



Call Type	Incident Number	Race	Date/Time	Location	City	Area
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000783	White - W	02/24/26 13:05:19	VT Route 128 / Morgan Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000713	White - W	02/19/26 09:30:05	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000709	White - W	02/19/26 08:57:26	Old Stage Rd / Adams Turkey Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000708	White - W	02/19/26 08:19:30	Woods Hollow Rd / Maple Tree Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000708		02/19/26 08:19:30	Woods Hollow Rd / Maple Tree Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000707	White - W	02/19/26 07:50:28	Woods Hollow Rd / Maple Tree Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000704	White - W	02/19/26 07:15:10	Route 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000702		02/19/26 06:47:54	Rte 128/ Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000693	White - W	02/18/26 13:42:45	VT Rte 128 / Pine Cir, Westford, VT, 05452	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000647	White - W	02/13/26 15:12:12	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000624		02/12/26 17:04:32	VT 128, Westford, Vt, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000621	White - W	02/12/26 15:03:57	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000578	White - W	02/10/26 08:12:28	VT Rte 128 / Morgan Brook Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000559	White - W	02/06/26 14:30:56	VT RTE 128 / Osgood Rd, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Motor Vehicle Complaint	26CCSD000556	White - W	02/06/26 12:51:18	8 Kilburn Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Motor Vehicle Complaint	26CCSD000556		02/06/26 12:51:18	8 Kilburn Ln, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000555	White - W	02/06/26 12:16:16	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	0416 Westford 05494
Traffic Stop	26CCSD000462	Asian - A	02/02/26 07:39:42	VT Rte 128 / Howard Farm, Westford, VT, 05494	Westford	Westford Patrol 05494

Westford Legal Trails

Trail Maintenance and Use Policy (DRAFT)

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to set forth the responsibilities of the Selectboard, the Conservation Commission, and the Landowners through which legal trails have been established, and to institute cooperation to maintain trails through respect for the roles and rights of each including that of the public for the private property owner's land.

Authority:

VT State Act 178 of 2006 gave municipalities the option of researching their ancient roads, holding public hearings and adding them to the Town highway maps as Legal Trails by 2009, work that Westford's volunteer Conservation Commission completed. Westford is fortunate to have a Conservation Commission that works hard to maintain, preserve, and steward these Trails for the public's benefit. These trails pass through private property and are 3 rods or 49.5 feet wide.

VT State Act 66, 2025¹ amended the town highway law to clarify that municipalities have authority to maintain legal trails.

Definitions:

- Legal Trail (hereinafter "Trail") see 19 V.S.A § 301(8) & 19 V.S.A. § 304(5): a legally-established public right of way under the responsibility of municipalities, similar to town roads, but which are not Town Highways, and which:
 - (A) previously was a designated town highway having the same width as the designated town highway, or a lesser width if so designated; or
 - (B) a new public right-of-way laid out as a trail by the selectmen for the purpose of providing access to abutting properties or for recreational use.

The land a Trail crosses is typically owned by private landowners. The local Selectboard is responsible for regulating town rights-of-way, including Trails.

- Landowner: the owner(s) of property that is crossed or otherwise abutting one of Westford's Trails
- Interested Person or Person Interested in Lands (see 19 V.S.A. § 701): a person who has a recorded legal interest in the property affected.
- Landlocked Parcel: land surrounded by other property and only accessible through the property that surrounds it.
- Maintenance: a minimal level of work done to keep the Trail passable and safe for foot travel, while preserving its natural, undeveloped character. Includes clearing downed trees or large branches, managing erosion, clearing overgrowth and installing, maintaining, replacing, and removing signage.
- Walkable: Passable on foot. May include natural obstacles like rocks, roots and uneven terrain, but is free from dangerous obstructions like impassable blowdowns, washed-out segments or dense undergrowth that fully blocks progress.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- 1 Disputes: The Selectboard is responsible for resolving disputes.
- 2 Signage: The Westford Conservation Commission ("WCC") and Landowner will confer together to designate where signage (e.g. kiosk, blazes, closures, parking information) will be posted.
- 3 Trail Maintenance: The Town has elected to exercise its authority through Act 66 to maintain trails and empowers the WCC to be stewards of the trails. The Town also recognizes the strong ethic of landowners and invites their cooperation to maintain trails. The WCC will conduct routine scheduled maintenance unless a landowner wishes to assume some or all the responsibility for trails on or abutting their land.

3.1 Maintenance by the WCC:

Will be conducted at regular intervals with such intervals being publicized in Westford's monthly newsletter. For example, "The Westford Conservation Commission will conduct routine scheduled maintenance of trails on the third

Saturday of the month from May through October.” All maintenance by the WCC will be conducted between 8am and 6pm, or during daylight hours whichever is more restrictive.

The scheduled maintenance of the trails will be reviewed and determined annually by means of an agenda item at a Selectboard meeting held in April of each year.

- 3.1.1 The WCC will clear fallen trees and confer with the Landowner regarding cutting of public hazard trees or to clear within the right of way and what to do with the timber that is cut. All cut timber is the property of the landowner.

3.2 Land owner maintenance: Landowners may choose to perform maintenance of their section(s) of trails in lieu or in coordination with the WCC and by doing so agree to maintain walkability of the trails from May 1 through October 31. The Landowner will notify the WCC of their intent to maintain their section(s), in writing for public record. The time period of landowner maintenance will be no more than 1 calendar year, but will be automatically renewed yearly for a total of 5 consecutive years unless the WCC receives written notification of the landowner's desire to relinquish maintenance responsibility sooner. Landowner's may opt to continue maintaining the trails after the 5 year period but must renew their commitment every 5 years in writing to the WCC.

3.2.1 The WCC has the authority to determine whether a Trail is walkable and will periodically check Legal Trails for walkability. If a trail is determined to be unwalkable by the WCC, they will notify the Landowner in writing of the recommended maintenance. The Landowner will have 14 days to complete the recommendation or negotiate a plan of action including a time frame of completing the work with the WCC. Failure to meet this 14-day guideline will result in the WCC notifying the Selectboard, and the WCC will recommend an action for the Selectboard to consider. A regular action to recommend to the Selectboard will be for the WCC to carry out the recommended maintenance, giving no less than 2 weeks' written notice to the Landowner of the date and means by which the maintenance will occur.

3.2.2 Landowners may request help from the WCC in performing maintenance, in which case the Conservation Commission will work with the Landowner to find a mutually agreeable date/time to complete the work.

3.2.3 The Landowner may defer the maintenance to the WCC. The WCC will give no less than 2 weeks' notice to the Landowner of the date that maintenance will occur, how the maintenance will be completed, and whether the maintenance will cause loud noise or other disturbance.

4 Trail Use Guidelines:

Refer to the Westford Trail Guide & Westford Trails Ordinance(2009):

Recommendations regarding Trail Use

...Because we have a Trail ordinance, Trail Guidelines and a Dog Ordinances, I think any suggested items for these specific trails belong in those and not in this trail maintenance guidelines.

If the SB concurs, this means we should follow all rules for adoption of new or edited ordinances and such changes, in my opinion we should not hold up the goal of adopting these guidelines relatively soon.

Things that were brought up by Landowners that Might fit in Ordinances or Guidelines

1. Motor vehicle use. *Trail ordinance already Prohibits. Section 5, except for landowner, allows for permits requested by abutting landowners. Might wish to refine since a trail passing through a property is not really abutting. And ENFORCEMENT is called out (sheriff) in Section 8.*
2. Gates/blocking access: *Trail Ordinance Prohibits. Section 4. There's some desire for blocking gates, but Ben Bornstein, landowner off Goodrich trail, has direct legal standing from Vt Supreme Court that also prohibits it. Circles back to enforcement by sheriff.*
3. Dogs: *Although the dog ordinance covers dogs everywhere in Town and requires dogs must either be on a leash or under verbal or non-verbal control, I think we should consider modifying the Ordinance to require all dogs on THESE specific trails should have to be leashed, unless the dog is the landowners. This would require some new definitions and restrictions in the Dog Ordinance.*
4. Trail closing during hunting season. *If this is desired, this likely fits in our Trails Ordinance and some changes to our Westford Trail Guide is needed. Our Trail Guide says trails are open year-round. Some landowners may have no direct interest in hunting and restricting trail use during hunting season, but I think closing down these specific trails for Deer season is what some landowners have been most appreciative of being considered and I believe it'd be too cumbersome to have some of these trails open and some not...I do NOT suggest Maple Shade trails be closed, it's this specific type of trail (over private property).*

I suggest youth weekend through Regular Deer season through Muzzle loader. Encompassing the last week of October to Mid-December.

5. Trail Use, staying on trails, no trespassing. *I think should be added to Trail ordinance and differentiating between public owned property when going off trail is Ok versus these types of trails when going off trail is not.*

6. Trail use: Nighttime: *Property owners have expressed interest in prohibiting night use of trails due to safety concerns. I think this is a reasonable request. If we choose, we'd also add this to the Trail ordinance AND should include something in the Trail Guide.*

7. Additional Trail use etiquette, *not part of Ordinance but some etiquette addressed in the trail use guide. The following items though are not but were concerns of the WCC and landowners and could be added to the Guide.*

- *Pass quietly over the Legal Trail*
- *Do not collect or take plants or rocks*
- *Pack out everything you bring in and leave in better shape than you found it. (Pack out any litter found on the Trail.)*

¹Act 66. Sec 44:

- (a) Findings. The General Assembly finds the following:
 - (6): While many trails in Vermont have been established through private easements or other agreements, a subset of trails, known as legal trails, lie along public rights-of-way that were once town highways and are governed by the provisions of 19 V.S.A. chapter 3.
- (b) Intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly to clarify municipalities' authority to exclusively or cooperatively maintain legal trails under the provisions of 19 V.S.A. chapter 3.

Chapter 3. Town Highways: DEFINITIONS as used in this chapter:

- (2) "Legislative body" means a legislative body as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2001.
- (3) "Selectboard" means a selectboard as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2001.
- (8)(A) "Trail" means a public right-of-way that is not a highway and that:
 - (i) municipalities have the authority to exclusively or cooperatively maintain pursuant to the provisions of this chapter; and
 - (ii)(I) previously was a designated town highway having the same width as the designated town highway, or a lesser width if so designated; or
 - (II) a new public right-of-way laid out as a trail by the legislative body for the purpose of providing access to abutting properties or for recreational use.

- (B) Nothing in this subdivision (8) shall be deemed to independently authorize the condemnation of land for recreational purposes or to affect the authority of legislative bodies to reasonably regulate the uses of recreational trails.

DRAFT

Tommy O'Connor

From: Max Tyler <maxxytyler@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 11:55 AM
To: selectboard
Cc: PlanningCommission; Harmony Cism; Tommy O'Connor
Subject: Planning Commission recommendation of appointments to the commission

Westford Selectboard:

A resident has raised the concern with me of nepotism on my part regarding the recommended appointment of R. Kirsten Tyler to the Westford Planning Commission. This concern stems from the fact that she was formerly my daughter-in-law.

I want the Selectboard members to be aware of this former relationship and associated concern.

Max Tyler
Westford Planning Commission, Chair

Tommy O'Connor

From: Barb Bates Peck <bpeck9191@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2026 5:33 PM
To: selectboard
Subject: Fwd: The Appearance of Impropriety

All:

In light of the response from Pat Haller, I feel the need to clarify that the intent of my letter (referenced below) has been misinterpreted by Pat.

Please Read my reply to him.

The letter is an opinion - pointing out what I think the SB should be thinking about when they choose applicants for the PC.

It does not need to be *"elevated to a more formal complaint"* because it's not a complaint.

Barb Peck

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Barb Bates Peck <bpeck9191@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Mar 22, 2026 at 5:12 PM
Subject: Re: The Appearance of Impropriety
To: Pat Haller <Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us>
Cc: Maria Barden <mbarden@westfordvt.us>

Hello Pat:

The PC hasn't released their recommendation to the SB publicly yet and the SB hasn't reviewed the PCs recommendations and made their final choices for the appointments.

Therefore,
my letter is not a formal complaint-
nor does it need to be elevated to one and/or be directed to Maria.

It is my opinion and directed to the Select Board as a body *to think about* when making their choices.

Barb

On Sun, Mar 22, 2026 at 11:31 AM Pat Haller <Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us> wrote:

Barb,

Thank you for your input. To elevate this as a more formal complaint, you may fill this out and it will be independently addressed by Maria Barton, our Ethics Liaison.

[FINAL-Westford-Municipal-Complaint-Form.pdf](#)

Sincerely,
Pat Haller

From: Barb Bates Peck <bpeck9191@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2026 1:46 PM
To: selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>
Cc: PlanningCommission <planningcommission@westfordvt.us>
Subject: The Appearance of Impropriety

In light of the fact the minutes of the 3/16/26 Planning Commission (PC) minutes have been posted, but applicant recommendations are either not completed (or not available to the public at this time)

I, as a resident of Westford write:

To All:

The Westford Select Board has adopted the requirement of having all Commissioners educate themselves and take the on-line ethics course.

For your reference I add this additional Link:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/24/060/01992>

In the recent past, the Select Board has been the *independent* body that has interviewed applicants for PC openings. That was a best practice to avoid any appearance of impropriety by the PC choosing their own members.

There are many ways to be improper : i.e. favoritism, retribution, confirmation or personal bias and an avoidance (or inability) to engage in civil discourse which often can usurp choosing the best candidate.

So,

After the SelectBoard members watch the 4 candidates' video interviews (which I assume they will) ; Please keep this in mind , when making the body's collective decision on the 3 applicants who will best serve the Town.

While it is not against VT state Statutes to have family members on the same municipal board per se, I contend that the appearance of impropriety (albeit not outright nepotism) can give the *perception* of impropriety.

Case in Point: Kirsten Tyler is related by marriage to Max Tyler. Her children are his grandchildren.

While in my opinion they are both capable and upstanding Westfordians; the appearance and perception of impropriety should outweigh a PC appointment for Kirsten Tyler.

Respectfully,

Barb Peck

Resident

802-310-2743

Tommy O'Connor

From: Harmony Cism
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 9:41 AM
To: Seth Jensen
Cc: selectboard; TownAdmin
Subject: RE: Possible Exparte Communication at DRB Meeting

Thank you Seth,

I went back and viewed the recording from the 1/26/26 meeting, and I will make a note in the landowner's file in case a formal application is eventually submitted.

Thanks also for the recommendation to have VLCT conduct some trainings. We do plan to have CCRPC come present a training on *Essentials of Land Use Planning* for the PC and DRB in late spring, but I can see that some of the VLCT trainings may be advantageous as well. I will bring this up to the board(s).

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: Seth Jensen <seth.m.jensen@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2026 7:33 PM
To: Harmony Cism <zoning_admin@westfordvt.us>
Cc: selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>; TownAdmin <townadmin@westfordvt.us>
Subject: Possible Exparte Communication at DRB Meeting

Harmony,

It has come to my attention that there may have been ex parte communication at the January 26, 2026 Development Review Board meeting.

A property owner discussed specific details of a possible subdivision in relation to specific provisions of Westford's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

This discussion occurred outside of an official **proceeding**. The discussion occurred under another agenda item, and was not publicly noticed in accordance with requirements of the Town's bylaws. Per the Town of Westford Policy Regarding Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Conduct:

"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**.

Due to the fact that this discussion occurred under another agenda item and not an official **proceeding**, other interested persons did not receive the notice required by law. The discussion has the potential to influence DRB members regarding the merits of future official proceedings.

These factors disadvantage other interested persons who may wish to participate in official proceedings in the future and deny them due process in those proceedings. The potential appearance of ex parte communication also ultimately disadvantages the property owner as well, as it opens future DRB approvals to process based appeals.

To his credit, the Chair of the DRB did not engage in this discussion. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns provides training regarding meeting procedures for municipal boards. Given the complex issues the DRB and Planning Commission face, it may be advantageous for both boards to participate in such a training.

Further, in order to avoid future appearances of ex parte communication and protect against future process based appeals, it may be advisable to keep the recording of the meeting in the permit files for the property discussed, and make it available for review by other interested parties when and if a formal application is submitted.

Thank you,

Seth Jensen