



**SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OFFICE & ZOOM  
April 9th, 2026, 6:15 P.M.**

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

*Meeting ID: 835 7400 0385 - Passcode: 8YYyvE*

*OR dial +1 646 558 8656 – Meeting ID: 893 9413 2350 – Passcode: 341753*

*Please note that agenda times are approximate and are subject to change.*

**AGENDA**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
  - a. (6:15) – Roll Call Pat Haller
  - b. (6:20) – Changes to the agenda
  
2. **(6:25) – PUBLIC COMMENT** (Items not on the agenda)
  
3. **MINUTES (review and approve)** Pat Haller
  - a. (6:35) – January 16<sup>th</sup> (with amendments)  
January 28th (with amendments)  
March 26<sup>th</sup> – DRAFT Minutes
  
4. **CCRPC UPDATE**
  - a. (6:40) General update Ben Borenstein
  
5. **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT** Sean Cushing
  - a. (6:50) Review Road schedule
  
6. **TREASURER** Greg Barrows
  - a. (7:00) – Review FY’25 General Fund budget status report
  - b. (7:10) – Review FY’25 highway budget status report
  - c. (7:20) – Review and approve accounts payable and payroll warrants
  
7. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**
  - a. (7:30) General updates from Town Administrator Tommy O’Connor
  
8. **DISCUSSION**
  - a. (7:35) - Access Permit Signature Harmony Cism
  - b. (7:40) – UVM Capstone Presentation (1705 Property) UVM Students
  - c. (8:00) - VT Fish & Wildlife Grant Kirsten Tyler (WCC)
  - d. (8:05) – Legal Trails Guidelines Pat Haller

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| e. (8:20) – Dog Warden  | Pat Haller |
| f. (8:30) – Planning Commission Appointment                       | Pat Haller |
| g. (8:40) – Common Committee Appointment                          | Pat Haller |
| h. (8:50) – Long Term Planning Outlook (The Selectboard “Top 10”) | Pat Haller |

9. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. (9:00) – General email correspondence to Selectboard

10. COMMUNICATION

- a. Reminder of School Budget Vote – April 14<sup>th</sup> 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION (anticipated)

- a. Personnel meeting  
b. Legal Case

12. ADJOURN

***The next regular Selectboard Meeting will be held on April 23, 2026.***

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

SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Special Meeting on the Budget

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Draft Minutes

Present: Pat Haller, Deb Jorschick, Nick Nichols, Julia Andrews

Call to Order - 3:03 PM

No change to agenda

No public comment

**J. Andrews** made a proposal that all data discussed during the meeting today that a separate area of notes be taken and sent to Town Administrator who is absent during the meeting.

The group agrees to this.

The selectboard discussed looking at all salaries and the percentage raise offered to each town employee.

A conversation was had about hourly vs salary positions and how they affect the overall salary line.

**P. Haller** proposed level funding for all entities that sent in budget or donation requests.

**D. Jorschick** requested that we review health care options

A request was asked about reviewing our IT professionals

A request to learn more about the Home, Health, & Hospice.

There were discussions on how the employees go through an annual review process

We do not set library salaries / we set budget - we do not talk about the salaries of the town employees

(This is history from last year's budget meeting)

Office Equipment - need to put money into this line for computers - not zero

Office Supplies & Repairs - need to look at

Employee appreciation - \$200

Grant Writer - will we need this?

Can we look at the part-time planner position request - can the grant writer be part of this

Property & Casualty - when was the last W/C audit done

IT Professional Services - can this be lowered and what can the office staff absorb

Payroll Services Contract - can we look at another service?

Legal and Professional fees- sees out of whack even with moving the payroll out

Town Admin Computer - needs to go into office equipment

Stationary & Printing - has this been moved to another line item?

Line 36 - explain the travel current and increase

**P. Haller** made a motion to adjourn the meeting

**J. Andrews** seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:48PM

SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Special Meeting on the Budget

January 21<sup>st</sup> 2026

Draft Minutes

Present: Casey Mathieu, Pat Haller, Deb Jorschick, Nick Nichols, Julia Andrews, Tommy O'Connor

Call to Order – 7:39AM

No change to agenda

No public comment

**P. Haller-** provided a recap from the previous meeting. Primary discussion was focused on salaries and in the donations section – to level fund or accept the lesser amount if it was requested

Discussed a \$7,000 holdover in special projects and the costs associated with a Planning Coordinator or Town Planner.

Clean up of the budget sheet that had incorrect information due to improper data. That data was rectified.

There was a discussion on revenue sources and processes used by the town.

There was conversation on the paving project to happen on Westford-Milton Rd.

The board feels that the current budget worksheet does not adequately represent the proper status of the data in the forms provided.

The board reviewed the capital budget plan as well.

**D. Jorschick** made a motion to adjourn the meeting

**N. Nichols** seconded the motion

The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 9:37AM

SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Special Meeting on the Budget

January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2026

Draft Minutes

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

Call to Order – 9:03AM

No change to agenda

No public comment

**T. O'Connor** recapped a meeting with Holly, the Town's former administrator. He further discussed the way the large spreadsheet works for tax rate.

The board discussed upcoming road projects and the need to have future plans for larger projects as it pertains to local roads.

The board discussed changes to the capital reserve as it pertained to the admin section

**T. O'Connor** went through the budget actual change in numbers to properly update worksheet.

Reviewed the insurance audits timeline as well as delinquent tax collector lines

Discussions were had around the Town Office and feasibility study

The board created a Top 10 list of importance:

- 1) Software
- 2) IT
- 3) Fire Department
- 4) Capex
- 5) Payroll
- 6) Gravel
- 7) Roads
- 8) Excavator
- 9) Building
- 10) Salaries

**D. Jorschick** made a motion to adjourn the meeting

**J. Andrews** seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 11:00AM

SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Special Meeting on the Budget

January 28th 2026

Draft Minutes

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

Call to Order – 8:35 AM

Agenda changes:

There was discussion for posting the official Town Meeting warning.

Discussion on changing discussion for tax collection- floor vote vs Australian ballot

Article 1 in the warning would have to be changed.

**J. Andrews** asked that this has been discussed and the Town Clerk had raised concerns about this in the past.

The discussion was then tabled to review for next year.

**C. Mathieu** moved off of agenda items and moved onto budget discussion.

**T. O'Connor** began a walkthrough of the budget sheet. The primary focus of the conversation was the estimated taxable grand list.

**D. Jorschick** brought up reviewing the largest line items in the budget:

- 1) IT
- 2) Trash
- 3) Legal Services

**C. Mathieu** discussed previous attempts to review process of utilizing the Fire Department and what any changes would look like.

**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.

The board did a final review of salaries and growth.

The board worked to get as close to a 5% change in the budget and settled on 7% increase in expenses.

**P. Haller** motioned to accept the budget as presented and motioned to approve the official Town Meeting warning.

**J. Andrews** seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously

**N. Nichols** made a motion to adjourn

**J. Andrews** seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 AM

**SELECTBOARD MEETING  
MARCH 26, 2026  
Draft Minutes**

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

Guests: see attached.

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

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**MINUTES**

C. Mathieu moved to approve the March 12, 2026 minutes as amended. D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – Items Not on the Agenda**

Lori Johnson shouted out Maria. In the last week she had gone above and beyond to help the Common Committee follow open meeting law by posting the changed agenda to the town office board. Lori has always found Maria to be helpful and a great person in the town office.

Lisa Minor was present. She had been the victim of a vicious dog attack last year and was inquiring about the next steps and expected timeline for resolution as there had been no compliance. P. Haller asked Tommy to give Lisa an update via email. It has been discussed with the Selectboard and with the town attorney.

**SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE DISCUSSION**

Marlon Verasamy, EWSD Board Vice Chair was present. At the last board meeting in early March, the board passed a ballot measure to ask the community members if they want to move the school budget vote from April, where it is now, to March during Town Meeting Day. He was here to take any questions from the board and community.

J. Andrews has wanted this for a very long time. She thinks it is better for voter engagement. P. Haller asked if on Town Meeting Day we could have somebody from the school present at Westford's public meeting to present their budget. Marlon did not see a problem with that, but they have not formalized anything. J. Andrews thought it would be even better if the school board would empower school board representatives to speak on how the school budget would affect Westford, specifically in the meeting.

**RULES OF PROCEDURE DOCUMENT**

The draft Selectboard Rules of Procedure document with amendments discussed at the last meeting was ready for review. J. Andrews motioned to adopt the Rules of Procedure. N. Nichols seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **CCRPC UPDATE**

Ben Bornstein, CCRPC Representative, was present. There have been changes to our response to LURB which he will speak more on in the next agenda item. Things are on track.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION LETTER IN RESPONSE TO LURB (Tier 1B)**

Max Tyler, Planning Commission (PC), Chair, was present.

#### **Land Use Review Board (LURB)**

B. Bornstein had given a draft to the Selectboard (SB) at the last meeting. His understanding is that the SB asked the PC and himself to create a response based on that initial draft. M. Tyler noted that this should really be addressed to the CCRPC and not to LURB directly. This is an extended dissertation on why we believe the Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) is the correct area to include in the Tier 1B designation. It made reference to solicitation of comment from the public about an extended area at another time, but otherwise is the current area targeted for growth. This is not the last official position of the PC, but at the SB's request they have tried their best to create a document that defends the SB's choice of the more limited designation area.

This needed to get out soon. P. Haller noted there was one paragraph that describes that they are defending the area they have already accepted which he read aloud. L. Johnson suggested the board read the document out loud because the public had not yet seen it. She wanted what area that was being discussed clarified. J. Andrews read the document out loud for those in attendance.

Barb Peck, Kim Guidry, and Carol Winfield were present and are confused as to why a letter to LURB was in the packet on page 18, but the letter that the SB was currently discussing had not yet been approved. Harmony Cism, Zoning Administrator and Planning Coordinator, clarified they are different documents. The letter is a form sent out by LURB that lays out the resources in each town. It is required by LURB to accompany the letter worked on by Ben and Max that was previously read out loud by Julia. M. Tyler explained that nothing in our re-application had been sent to LURB or CCRPC yet. The form letter included in the packet was the same as the one we initially sent out when we entered Tier 1B for the current area over six months ago. Since they have asked us to reaffirm that area for Tier 1B status it has to be sent again. It is a standard form that every municipality that elects into Tier 1B inclusion has to certify.

L. Johnson thought it would make everyone more comfortable if we added a few words to the letter to LURB that clarified that we are opting in to Tier 1B status for the limited former NDA. This was not a form that the town could edit, it was a form given to us by LURB.

J. Andrews motioned to accept the letter drafted by Max and Ben as written and send it to CCRPC. D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0. J. Andrews moved to send the packet letter to Ms. Hurley at LURB. D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **Planning and Zoning Report**

Harmony Cism, Zoning Administrator and Planning Coordinator, was present. She gave a report of what the Planning and Zoning office has been doing lately.

After the town wide reappraisal, the appraisers have forwarded Harmony un-permitted structures. All have been communicated with, and all are working on becoming into compliance. There will be an access permit application coming up, Sean has already looked at it. Harmony asked how frequently they wanted to hear a Planning & Zoning Report. The board felt once a month was sufficient.

#### **OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT**

Lori Johnson had filed an Open Meeting Law Complaint against the Selectboard. Her complaint alleged that the Selectboard did not properly warn the budget meetings that occurred on 1/16/2026, 1/21/26, 1/22/26, and 1/28/26 and had not had the minutes or recordings of these minutes up in the proper time frame.

The town had investigated the complaint and found that there were no violations regarding the warning of the meetings and that they had been warned within the correct timeframe and had the agendas placed on the town website and in three physical locations 24 hours prior to the meetings being held as dictated by statute. The town did find that there had been a violation in regards to the minutes and recordings being available within the 4 day time period. The Selectboard made corrective action to work with IT to create a more efficient upload process for future meetings, especially when LCATV is not present as was the case with the budget meetings.

#### **Corrective Actions**

After careful review, the Selectboard felt that there needed to be additions to the meeting minutes of the budget workshops to reflect the following discussion:

- January 16 – P. Haller proposed level funding for all entities that sent in budget of donation requests.
- January 28 – N. Nichols again proposed to level fund any entity that sent in a budget request of donation request. This includes the Volunteer Fire Department and the Library as well as all outside organizations that made requests.

So and So motioned to approve the corrective actions. So and so seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The board also made the following actions:

- Town Administrator took required training on March 3, 2026.
- Selectboard Chair P. Haller took training on March 19, 2026
- P. Haller also recommended that members of the board review the Open Meeting Law Training.
- Selectboard worked with town staff to add a proper grievance form to the Selectboard page on the town website.

J. Andrews motioned to accept the corrective actions. D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

N. Nichols would like the board to be more proactive on budget discussions next year, so they are on less of a time crunch. He would like to give more than 24 hour notice.

Lori Johnson was present. She thought that was great first step and asked the SB to become familiar with OML. She suggested a document VLCT had about OML FAQs she found to be better than the training. She wanted the grievance procedure personalized to the town. She suggested that there is so many details about OML and thought it would be useful to have a checklist for each meeting.

J. Andrews thanked Lori but wanted to address her mention of executive session. It is intentionally opaque, so she apologizes, she knows it is hard to put trust into a process you cannot see. In J. Andrews's experience the SB has done a great job speaking up when they get off track and bringing it back to the topic at hand. She hopes this builds a little trust in the process.

Vicky Ross was present. She appreciated N. Nichols suggestions about planning better for the budget meeting cycle. She wanted the budget meetings to be at a time the public could better attend such as at night. N. Nichols had looked at the OML page Essex has on their website. It could be a good model to including the policy and procedure in its own area for Westford.

#### **TREASURER REPORT**

##### **Review FY'25 General Fund Budget Status Report**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'25 General Fund Budget Status Report.

##### **Review FY'25 Highway Budget Status Report**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'25 Highway Budget Status Report.

The board discussed the money for the already existing salt shed and what should be done with it.

##### **Review and Approve Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants**

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

##### **Budget Forecast**

Greg had been asked by the Selectboard to give a budget forecast but felt he did not have the sufficient information at this time to provide it this meeting. He will be able to provide it next meeting.

#### **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

##### **Review Road Schedule**

Sean Cushing, Road Foreman, went over the road schedule from March 13, 2026 to March 26, 2026.

J. Andrews stated that the board and Sean got a lovely email from a resident complimenting Sean for his work. V. Ross suggested that if we find we have money in the capital budget reserve for items that are no longer needed, possibly redirect the funds to cover Library expenses.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Follow Up From N. Nichols and Library Trustees**

N. Nichols had reached out to the Library Trustees and met with them. He found some of the communication process surrounding the budget and library troubling. Because the Library has a unique relationship with the town and SB they had suggested an MOU. J. Andrews thinks the SB was not well positioned to direct the Library, that is why there were Trustees. She suggested reaching out to the Trustees and see if they would be willing to let Maggie research this. N. Nichols will communicate with the trustees.

### **Planning Commission Appointments**

During the March 16 Planning Commission (PC) meeting the PC had interviewed the four candidates that had applied for appointment for the three open seats and made a recommendation to the Selectboard to appoint Arthur Woolf, Ben Bornstein, and R. Kirsten Tyler to the Commission. The PC had provided the Selectboard with a description of each candidate recommended and explained that Ben Bornstein had expressed a preference for the 2 year term while the other two candidates were fine with serving for any of the available terms (5 year, 3 year).

Barb Peck had written correspondence concerning nepotism. Max Tyler, PC Chair, is the ex-father in law of applicant Kirsten Tyler. Barb's correspondence indicated that the appearance of impropriety could give others the perception of impropriety and that despite VT statute allowing family members to serve on boards together, that Kirsten not be appointed to avoid perceptions of impropriety. The Town's personnel policy covered nepotism in Section 9. Kirsten and Max did not currently meet the requirement for "close relative" nor did Kirsten's potential appointment on the PC meet the Personnel Policy's concerns for nepotism which surrounded having close relatives supervise or evaluate the work of one another.

C. Mathieu and D. Jorschick spoke against Kirsten Tyler's appointment from a professional standpoint. P. Haller had worked with both Max and Kirsten, and both had been professional. Kirsten is extremely good at working with the public and responding to difficult conversations as chair of the Conservation Commission. He recognized she was related to Max but is no longer. As he tries to balance what he thinks is best for the town he looked into VLCT's handbook for SB's. He read VLCT's wording on nepotism aloud. Since the board is the appointing body a family member would not be appointing Kirsten. He did not feel the SB's appointment of an individual because of their relationship within the body is nepotism. J. Andrews has gone around in her own mind about this and feels it is a cloudy issue. Because of the nature of the relationship that Max and Kirsten have. She does not know if ex-daughter-in-law is a situation where she would feel nepotism makes sense in her head. She would feel different if Kirsten and her ex-husband were still together. It feels like extending the idea of nepotism pretty far out and it does not jibe with the reality. N. Nichols agreed with the other members, he lands on the point that the SB is the ones making the appointment, so he is not related to any of the candidates. He had concerns about the appearance of undue influence. The chair making the recommendation has the relation, so he would like Max to recuse himself from the recommendation. He thinks Kirsten is very qualified.

Barb Peck was present. She said they have a five member board of the PC. She does not think somebody that has one month left to go, such as one of the other voting PC members,

should be able to have a voice to put Kirsten forward. Had Max recused himself there would not have been able to be a three member vote. She felt there was impropriety. Even though Kirsten is divorced from Max's son she is the mother of Max's grandchildren. She felt this qualified as nepotism. She did not think they should rubber stamp what the PC asks them to do. She asked the SB if they had watched the interviews.

Vicky Ross was present. She heard in the reading of the guidelines that in some cases certain cases might not be practical in small towns. In her observation, Westford is suffering a crisis of volunteers with fewer people being willing to volunteer. She thought the SB should be careful on how they make the decision and what precedent they set. It is highly likely people are going to be related across roles in town. It would be a shame to limit the opportunities for people ready and willing to serve.

Carol Winfield and Lori Johnson both spoke to the fact there had been a fourth applicant to the PC spots, Bill Cleary. Callie Hamdy spoke for Kirsten's character. J. Andrew and B. Bornstein spoke to Art Woolf's temperament. B. Bornstein spoke for a long time about multiple candidates as well as his own qualifications. Max Tyler was present. He echoed that he has extreme respect for all the applicants and does not mean to diminish anybody by the PC's recommendations.

The board needed to make a decision by April 30<sup>th</sup>. They could deliberate in this on an executive session if they wanted to, it qualifies. D. Jorschick made a motion to table the PC appointment for this meeting and move it into an executive session. J. Andrews seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **Cemetery Commission Appointment**

The Westford Cemetery Commission only had one seat up for appointment in 2026 and recommended Lynn Gauthier to the role. She was the sole applicant. J. Andrews moved to appoint Lynn Gauthier to Cemetery Commission. D. Jorschick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **Development Review Board Appointment**

During the March 23, 2026 Development Review Board (DRB) meeting the DRB had interviewed Greg Baker for an open seat on the board and recommended him to fill Max Tyler's seat. Current DRB members Bill Cleary and Jesse Labreque had put in their requests to be reappointed to their positions. J. Andrews was happy to see Greg step forward as he was a new volunteer. C. Mathieu made a motion to accept all appointments as recommended by the DRB. N. Nichols seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

#### **Bike Event**

N. Nichols introduced Jason Boyd of Fairfax. J. Boyd had packets about his event which he passed out to the Selectboard. He is an avid outdoorsman and cyclist. He rides a lot in Westford as the town has been becoming a mecca for gravel biking. Westford Provisions creates a great stop. He feels cycling could become an economic boost for Westford. He is suggesting a fundraiser for the Westford Food Shelf. J. Boyd gave the details of the ride, times, and routes. He wanted to look into an ambulance volunteer just in case and had already spoken with Westford Provisions for the pre-order of food. He was also interested in asking Bootlegger Bike to do bike support.

J. Andrews helps run the Westford Food Shelf. She thinks this is really exciting and thanked Jason for thinking of this ambitious event. She wondered if they had considered staggered starts to avoid the number of riders from clogging up roadways. J. Boyd had considered it and talked about a few configurations to spread out bike traffic. J. Boyd also suggested they would look at parking at the School. P. Haller voiced some concerns about the use of the school parking lot since it will be fall soccer season so we should make sure there is enough room. Trying to move parking around was also discussed. J. Boyd also discussed use of the Common with Lori Johnson, chair of the Common Committee, as well as insurance for the event.

### **250<sup>th</sup> Celebration Update**

P. Haller had asked Caroline Brown from the Westford Historical Society (WHS) about what is going on and how things were going with planning. The State had asked the Town if we would provide a celebration. The previous Selectboard had said yes and asked the WHS to plan for us. They had budgeted \$800 for them to do that. Not long after, they had talked about the budget and Caroline had said they are looking for a band and some reenactors. Jason Boyd works with marine reenactment groups for the revolutionary war so he said he could talk to people.

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

#### **VLCT-PACIF Visit**

They had finished their walkthrough annual report. They provided corrective actions within the Town Garage and Sean is working on that. Fire extinguishers had all been inspected. Ordered a battery for exit signs. Garrett Bartlett, Fire Chief, had asked if we could let him know when the PACIF is inspected next year so he could be present.

#### **Update from Chittenden County Sheriff**

Brian Welch had provided a report. They have let us know that Chittenden County Sheriff's department had put in a grant to update their radio communications with Westford as an area of concern. We agreed that would be great. This would make it easier for those patrolling in Westford to talk with dispatch.

### **LEGAL TRAIL MAINTENANCE POLICY**

#### **Discussion on DRAFT Document and Next Steps**

P. Haller prefaced that this is not a review to adopt any language, it is just the beginning to make sure the existing language is in line with what the SB is interested in doing. Westford has legal trails that are ROWs but do not exist on Westford owned land, instead they are easements built through decommissioned roads. We have had difficulty negotiating the relationship with the Westford Conservation Commission (WCC) and those property owners. Part of the spirit is to not allow the WCC to be stuck with answering to the landowners and the SB giving them direction. The document would allow a landowner to manage their section of the trail if they wished to do so and creates a format on how they would maintain the trail with oversight from the WCC to make sure it meets the proper standards. If it did not, the WCC would come to the SB to talk things through.

P. Haller had initially thought to get this finalized by April 1, but feels that is currently unrealistic. We want to be able to have some policy that can be used this summer. It depends on if they are on the right direction. The trails have not been maintained by the WCC for more than a year due to the disputes between the land owners and the town. D. Jorschick wanted to table the discussion for the next meeting, wanting more time to read the document and properly absorb its contents, other board members agreed.

Kati and Jim Anderson were present. They thanked P. Haller for his time. This has been a much longer than a year process, so they appreciate the time and attention. While they do not want anybody to rush, they would love to have a plan in place sooner rather than later.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence from Seth Jensen regarding ex-parte discussion with the DRB, letter from Max regarding his relationship with Kirsten, Andre Roy had sent an email regarding the Covered Bridge, Road Crew is taking some training for traffic control, Pat met with Ben Bornstein, Email from UVM about 1705 Capstone Project asking to be on the next SB Agenda for a presentation. Call from Kirsten Tyler about significant grant Westford Conservation Commission won to help with watershed/water quality, she thinks some of 1705 outreach would fit within it.

The board had received emails from several community members questioning P. Haller's use of email and Open Meeting Law. N. Nichols tried to read all the correspondences and feels based the response P. Haller received from VLCT regarding his use of the Westford email address, P. Haller's use of such was appropriate. N. Nichols requested that when Pat responds expressing his opinion to make sure that is clear. P. Haller noted that one of the challenges the board has when responding to a resident that has sent an email to the SB is how to respond properly without violating open meeting law. From VLCT it looks to be that the approach would be that one responds and cc's the Selectboard. That cc doesn't then violate open meeting law. The only way to violate open meeting law is to start having a discussion in the email chain amongst the board. He suggested it's best practice that if one responds, and cc's the rest of the Selectboard, and then fellow SB members do not start responding. J. Andrews hopes that every member of the board would cc the other board members when speaking to a member of the community, so they are all aware of the conversation and that a response has been made. P. Haller noted all emails to the Selectboard members are public record. He, as a member of the Selectboard, is allowed to respond and send emails as long as he is doing the business of the town. He had an email he'd sent to a chair to a committee asking questions and that, as the VLCT lawyer put it perfectly acceptable and part of his job as SB chair. He thanked the board for working through it with him.

Barb Peck expressed her disappointment with how the board is running. She didn't think anybody has word comprehension or reads the correspondences. She thinks everything Pat has said is an excuse. She is not happy with how the board handles things and that the board's words that are meaningless to her.

Lori Johnson wanted to point out that she's been dealing with the SB on a lot of different issues over the years and this is the first time in her experience that the chair has deemed it appropriate to write back to residents at length. She did not think Pat was cordial. Past

Selectboards had talked about these things in public meeting. She knew that the Selectboard could respond but thought that any board member sending out an opinion was not right. She had not seen VLCT's response to Pat. Even if it was legal she had a problem with it.

D. Jorschick thought the board members had a lot on their plates and that the back and forth was too much. She suggested acknowledging receipt of the communication was a better way forward. She thinks that overall, their meetings run well and she liked the new agenda structure.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

P. Haller motioned that premature public knowledge regarding personnel and legal would place the town at a significant disadvantage. C. Mathieu seconded. Motion passed 5-0. P. Haller moved to enter executive session at 9:40p.m. and invited Tommy and Harmony. C. Mathieu seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

**P. Haller** moved to table personnel discussion to a later date as the board agreed they needed more information. **D. Jorschick** seconded the motion, all were in favor. The motion carried **5-0**.

**J. Andrews** motioned to adjourn the meeting, **N. Nichols** seconded the motion. The motion carried **5-0**.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pat Haller  
Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy  
Minute Clerk

#### **GUEST LIST**

Dave Gauthier  
Dick Lavalley  
Marlon Verasamy  
Bill Cleary  
Ira Allen  
Carol Winfield

Harmony Cism  
Barb Peck  
Lynn Gauthier  
Kim Guidry  
Lori Johnson  
Vicky Ross

Selectboard Meeting  
March 26, 2026  
Page 2

Lisa Minor  
Max Tyler  
Greg Baker  
Michael G  
Maureen Wilcox

Ben Bornstein  
Zach Audet  
Jason Boyd  
Kati & Jim Anderson  
Will

DRAFT



Town Administrator Report  
Selectboard Meeting April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Over the past few weeks the Town Office has been handling several items related to deadlines. The clerks were busy finalizing dog licenses (April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline) with several residents stopping by the office to handle those items.

The Town Administrator handled 6 public records requests since the last selectboard meeting. All were for documents in house. There were 15 new Excess Weight Permits filed, with 2 additional amendment requests. The amendment requests were for an additional vehicle to a fleet, and one was a date correction.

Three different property maintenance companies stopped by to discuss the open RFP for mowing. The companies were working on bids and wanted to chat about specifics. The voting process will happen later in April.

The lister did a walk-through of updates that were happening in regard to property reviews. She shared the spots that were identified as needing visits and sharing updates from a recent seminar held at St. Michael's College.

I also reviewed some legislative talking points over some proposed bills that are related to municipalities as well as some general state law proposals. The legislature YouTube videos are available in case folks were unaware and are a great listen if interested in expert testimony. Obviously, items around ACT 181 were discussed, as well as some conversations on new taxation ideas being floated.

I had a walkthrough with Sean Cushing, Road Foreman, on some general reporting changes that have happened around the employees of the Road Crew and did a general check in with the staff during a quick visit to the garage.

Application Rec'd 3/25/26

Fee: \$85.00 (new)  
\$40.00 (culvert replacement w/ changes)  
No charge (culvert replacement same length)

TOWN OF WESTFORD APPLICATION FOR ACCESS PERMIT

Applicant Christopher Kinney Phone # 802-343-7679

Mailing Address 416 Cambridge Rd Westford VT, 05494

Location of Property: 416 Cambridge Rd Westford Parcel # 02CM019

Intended use of access:  Driveway (single family dwelling) : Access to serve DRB approved accessory structure  
(Please check one)  Private Road to serve \_\_\_ homes  
 Commercial Establishment

The undersigned requests an Access Permit to allow NA preexisting (contractor) to construct an access in accordance with Vermont Department of Highways Standards to serve the applicant's property, located on the west side of Town Highway No. 3 (The local name for this road being Cambridge Road). The proposed access will be located approximately .75 (feet or miles) from the intersection of this road with Covey Road. The applicant agrees to maintain said access and culvert, if needed, adhere to the directions, restrictions and conditions forming a part of this permit.

Dated at 3-25-26, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.

Signature of Applicant [Signature]

ACCESS PERMIT

NOTICE:

This permit is issued in accordance with Title 19, Section 1111(b), V.S.A. relative to all highways within the control and jurisdiction of the Town of Westford. The issuance of this permit does not release the applicant from any requirements of statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations administered by other governmental agencies. The permit will be effective upon compliance with such of these requirements as are applicable and continue in effect for as long as the present land use continues. Any change from the present land use will require a new permit. This permit is issued subject to the directions, restrictions and conditions contained herein and on the reverse of this form and any attachments hereto, and covers only the work described in this application, and then only when the work is performed as directed. Violations are subject to the penalties set forth in Title 19, Section 1111(b), V.S.A. of fines of not less than \$100 nor more than \$10,000 for each violation.

DIRECTIONS, RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS:

- Suitable culvert to be furnished and installed by applicant. Galvanized or plastic pipe at least fifteen inches (15") diameter, thirty feet (30') long, unless other wise instructed by Town Road Foreman. Conformance to the enclosed sketch required.
- Access must be installed according to Section 320 of the Westford Land Use & Development Regulations and as close to a 90 degree angle as possible to \_\_\_\_\_ Road and level for 20'.
- Additional conditions: \_\_\_\_\_
- Approval of this permit does not relieve the applicant from obtaining any other required State or local permits.

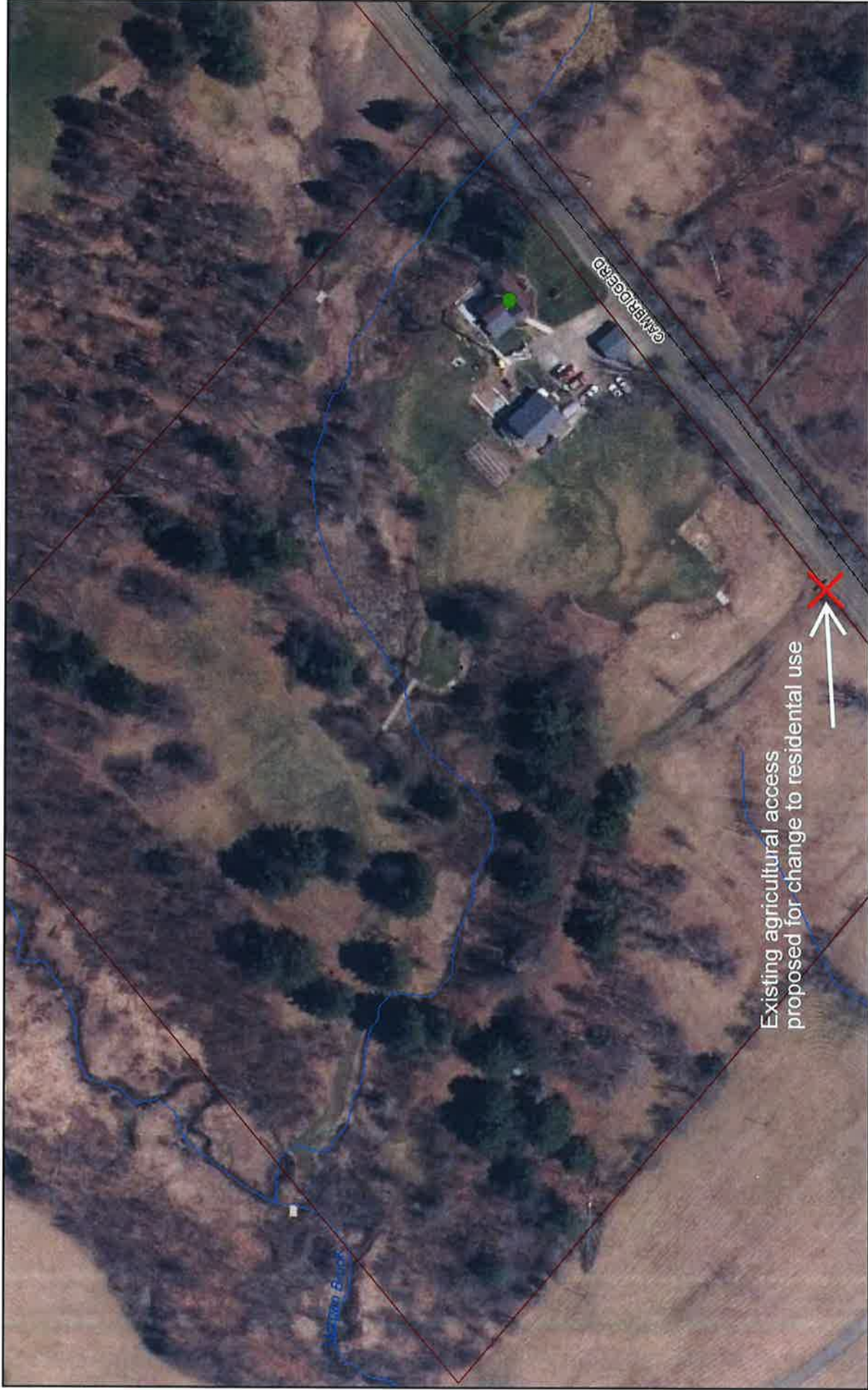
Culvert: Required \_\_\_\_\_ Not required X Initials SC Date 3/31/26

Dated at Westford, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

Town Selectboard Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Inspected by \_\_\_\_\_ (Road Foreman) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# aerial photo



1/16/2026, 12:03:39 PM

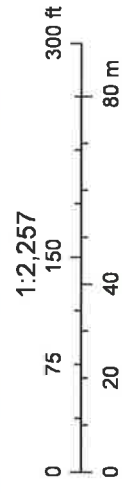
2024 Color Imagery (30 cm)  Tax Parcel Boundary (Years 2025/2024) Road Centerline

Red: Band\_1 Housing Points

Green: Band\_2 Single Family

Blue: Band\_3 River or Stream Centerline

— Class 2 or 3



Chittenden County RPC, VCGI, Esri, Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA, VCGI and Sanborn Map Company

Chittenden County RPC, VCGI, Esri, Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA, VCGI and Sanborn Map Company | VCGI | VTANRGIS | Vermont municipalities |

# **Tier 1**

## **Paths**

This design includes two primary paths. A dirt trail on the west side of the property provides access to the water, and a mowed path on the east side connects to the western trail at the shoreline.

## **Native Pollinator Garden**

The pollinator garden will consist of native wildflowers and perennial species that support pollinators. Located within the existing open lawn, the garden will follow one of the paths, allowing visitors to experience it firsthand. It will be designed as a low maintenance landscape, requiring only minimal upkeep to prevent encroachment onto the path.

## **Benches and Picnic Tables**

Benches and picnic tables will be installed throughout the property to provide seating and gathering spaces for visitors.

## **Riparian Buffer**

The existing riparian buffer will be enhanced through the planting of native riparian species to improve ecological function and shoreline resilience.

## **Informational Signs**

Interpretive signage will be installed throughout the site, positioned near key features. These signs will include illustrations and educational content to engage visitors and enhance their understanding of the landscape.

## **Bank Stabilization**

Vegetation that reduces erosion will be planted around the culvert to stabilize the soil.

## **Phytoremediation**

Phytoremediation plant species will be introduced in the southwest corner of the property to help remove pollutants from the soil. Prior to planting, invasive species in this area will be removed.

## **Tier 2**

### **Informational Signs**

Interpretive signage will be installed throughout the property, featuring illustrations and educational information about site features and ecological processes.

### **Paths**

The west-side trail will be improved with the addition of stairs to assist with navigation on steeper slopes. The mowed eastern path will continue to connect to the western trail at the water's edge.

### **Community Garden**

A community garden will be established near the road, consisting of raised planting beds and a small storage shed for tools.

### **Walking Planks**

Walking planks will be installed near the shoreline to improve accessibility in wet or muddy conditions and to create a defined access point to the river.

## **Dock**

A small dock will be constructed to provide safe and convenient access to the water.

## **Riparian Plantings**

The riparian buffer will be strengthened through native plantings along the water's edge.

## **Picnic Tables with Grills**

Picnic areas will be established with charcoal grills placed alongside picnic tables to support outdoor dining and gatherings.

## **Native Pollinator Garden**

Areas adjacent to the paths will be planted with native species that attract and support pollinators.

## **Bank Stabilization**

Erosion control plantings will be installed along the culvert to stabilize the bank and prevent soil loss.

## **Phytoremediation**

The southwest corner of the site will be planted with phytoremediation species to improve soil quality by removing contaminants.

## **Benches**

Additional benches will be distributed throughout the property to provide resting areas for visitors.

## **Pavilion**

A pavilion will be constructed to serve as a central gathering space, suitable for small events and community use.

## **Tier 3**

### **Benches**

Benches will be placed throughout the site to provide ample seating and rest areas.

### **Informational Signs**

Signage with illustrations and educational content will be installed near key features across the property.

### **Pavilion with Amphitheater**

An expanded pavilion will be developed alongside an amphitheater to support concerts, performances, and community events. The amphitheater will feature terraced landscaping, allowing visitors to sit on blankets or lawn chairs.

### **Paths**

The west-side dirt trail will lead to the pavilion near the water, while the east-side mowed path will provide a gradual route across the lawn to the shoreline. Both paths will include stairs in steeper sections to improve accessibility and safety.

### **Native Pollinator Garden**

Native pollinator-friendly plantings will be established along the dirt trail to enhance habitat and visual appeal.

## **Bioswales**

Bioswales will be constructed along impervious surfaces, such as sidewalks and parking areas, to capture and filter stormwater runoff.

## **Community Garden**

A community garden with raised beds and a small tool shed will be located at the southern end of the property for convenient access.

## **Dock and Kayak Rack**

A dock will be installed to facilitate water access, accompanied by a kayak rack to support recreational use.

## **Pavilion**

An additional pavilion near the water will provide a sheltered space for visitors, particularly those using the river.

## **Picnic Tables with Grills**

Picnic tables and charcoal grills will be distributed throughout the site to encourage outdoor recreation and social gatherings.

## **Riparian Planting**

Native riparian species will be planted to strengthen the buffer and enhance ecological health along the shoreline.

## **Bank Stabilization**

Erosion control measures, including strategic plantings, will be implemented around the culvert to reduce bank degradation.

## **Playground**

A designated playground area will be developed to provide recreational opportunities for children and families.

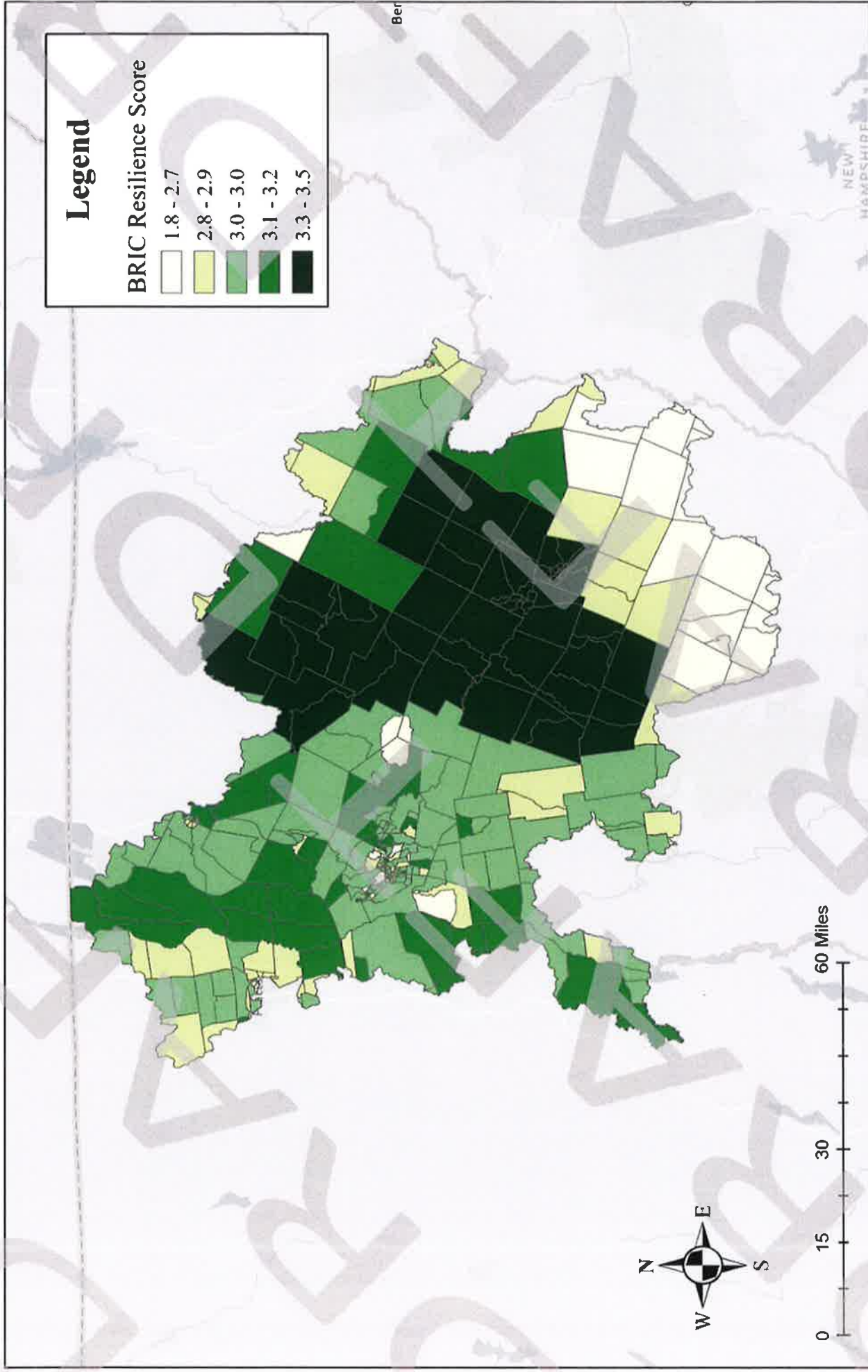
## **Retaining Wall**

A retaining wall will be constructed near the culvert to improve structural stability and reduce erosion risks.

## **Parking Lot**

A parking lot will be developed in the southeast corner of the property. This area will be cleared of invasive species prior to construction.

# Visualized Community Resilience Index for the Greater Winooski Watershed



Cartography: Ray McAuliffe

Date: 4/1/26

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



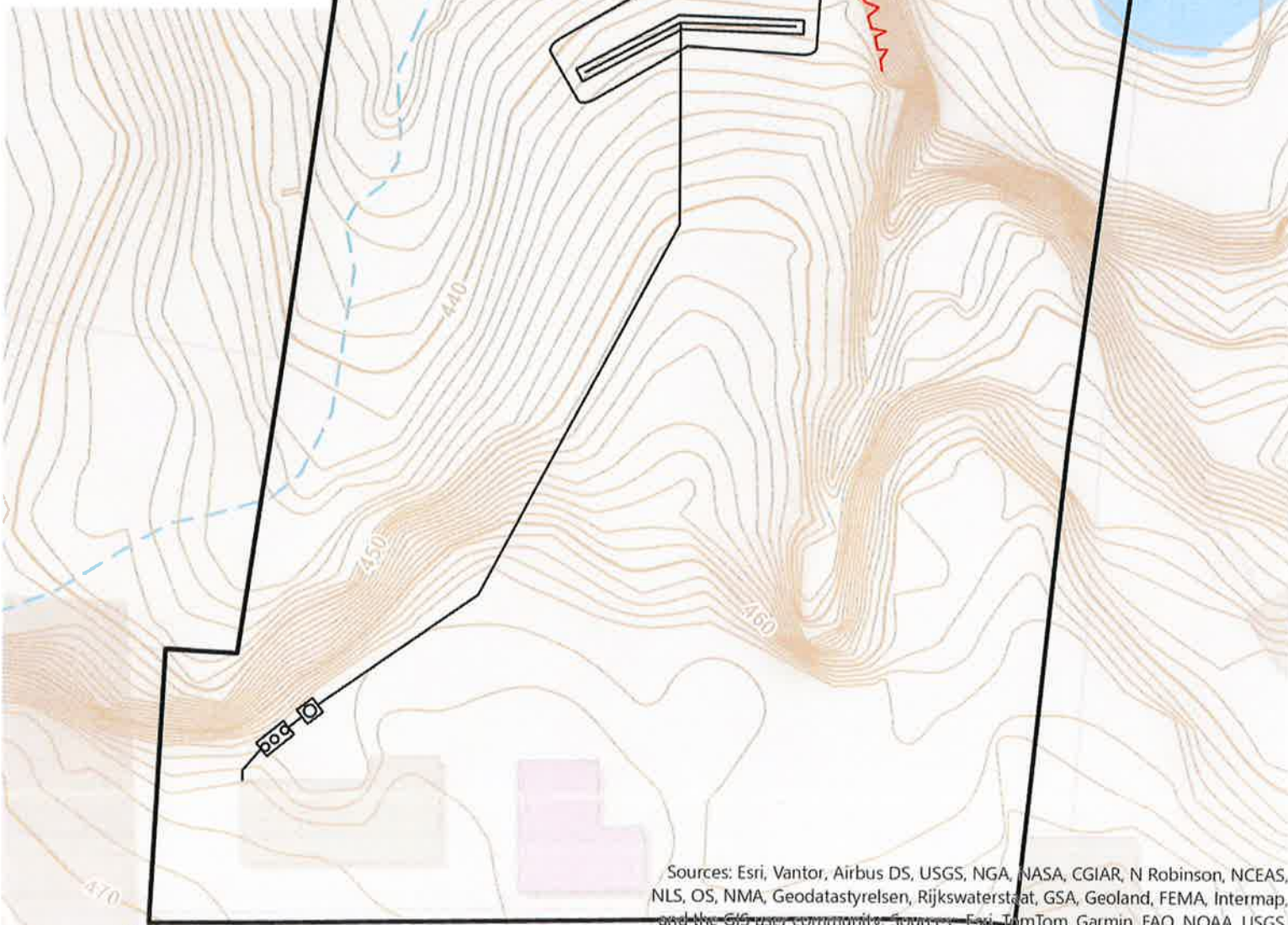
### Legend

 1705 Property Line

 Elevation Contours

 Septic System

 Retaining Wall

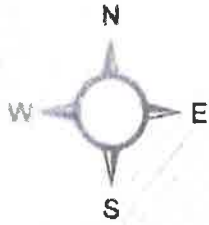


Sources: Esri, Vantor, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatasysteisen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, and the GIS user community. Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community





Low



### Legend

1705 Property Line  
Elevation Contours

Septic System  
Retaining Wall



Dirt Path

Native Pollinator Garden

Bench

Picnic Table

Riparian Planting

Informational Sign

Mowed Path

Plants for bank stabilization

Phytoremediation Planting

sidewalk

0 62.5 125 250 Feet

© OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Microsoft Template Script

Survey Name: Flood-Resilience Attitude Evaluation

Introduction Statement:

*The Westford Selectboard and Conservation Commission are looking to understand community members' attitudes around riparian buffer corridor development on the Pigeon Property. The Pigeon Property has recently been synonymous with "the 1705 Property". Please keep in mind that riparian buffer corridors are unmaintained land areas for ecosystem service functions.*

*Your input will help inform the Selectboard about next-step decisions. This survey takes about five minutes to complete. Your feedback affects Westford's future flood resiliency response efforts. Please help shape the future of Westford's riverfront.*

Section A: Self-Examination of Community Engagement (from 2019 survey)

**1. Please indicate where you live or own property in Westford**

- West of Route 128
- East of Route 128
- Route 128
- Plains Road Area
- Village Area
- I do not live in Westford

**2. If you reside in Westford, do you work from home on a regular basis?**

- Yes
- No
- I do not live in Westford

**3. Please indicate the number of people in your household**

- 1 – 2
- 3 – 4
- 5 – 6
- 7 +
- I do not live in Westford

**4. How do you receive information about the town?**

- Front Porch Forum
  - Town Newsletter
  - Word of mouth
  - Town Clerk Email List
  - School Email List
  - Town website
  - Lake Champlain Access Television
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
-

Section B: Awareness of the 1705 Property

**5. Before today, were you aware of the town-owned property along the Browns River? This property is also known as the Pigeon Property.**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**6. If yes, how familiar are you with it?**

- I've visited it
- I know where it is but have not visited
- I've only heard about it
- I was not aware of it until now

**7. What do you currently associate with this property? (select all that apply)**

- Flooding / river access
- Conservation initiatives
- Recreation
- Education / school use
- I'm not sure

**8. How important do you think this property could be for the town's future?**

- Extremely important
- Important
- Neither important or unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely unimportant

Section C: Center of Town Vision (Q11 – 13 are from 2019 survey)

**9. How important are land conservation initiatives to you?**

- Extremely important
- Important
- Neither important or unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely unimportant

**10. Which of the following best reflects your perspective?**

- Protect natural ecosystems first, limit development
- Balance conservation and community use
- Increase development for community/economic benefit

**11. The following is a list of open land uses. Please indicate the level of importance of each item to the people and the future of this community.**

	Extremely Important	Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Unimportant	Extremely Unimportant
Water quality protection					
Flood area protection					
Stormwater retention					
Scenic view areas					
Wildlife corridor & habitat protection					
Environmentally sensitive areas protection					
Carbon sequestration					
Recreation					

**12. Large undeveloped forest blocks located near hill-tops and ridge-lines containing significant unfragmented wildlife habitat and natural areas are present in Westford. Would you support a conservation district with a minimum lot size requirement of greater than 10 acres in these areas?**

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

**13. The following is a list of natural resource goals. Please indicate the level of importance of each item to protect the people and future of this community.**

	Extremely important	important	Neither important or unimportant	unimportant	Extremely unimportant
Protect significant natural resources					
Protect large forest blocks					
Protect farmland					
Support local food production					
Protect the rural character					
Protect scenic views					
Protect historic & archeological sites					



Section D: Stormwater & Flooding Experiences

**14. Have you experienced flooding or stormwater issues in Westford?**

- Yes, frequently
- Yes, occasionally
- Not sure

**15. What impacts have you seen or experienced from stormwater & flooding issues? (select all that apply)**

- Road closures or damage
- Property damage
- Erosion
- Water quality deterioration
- Limited access to services
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- I have not seen or experienced stormwater & flooding issues

**16. Where have you noticed stormwater & flooding issues?**

- Residential property
- Roads
- Near rivers and streams
- Agricultural land
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- I have not seen or experienced stormwater & flooding issues

Section E: Optional Input

What is one thing you love about Westford that should never change?

What is one thing you would like to see improved in the future?

What about other things the town should consider?

## Tommy O'Connor

---

**From:** Pat Haller  
**Sent:** Monday, April 6, 2026 7:13 AM  
**To:** Tommy O'Connor  
**Subject:** FW: [WestfordCC] Trail Maintenance Guidelines- DRAFT  
**Attachments:** Westford Legal Trails Policy - Working Draft RKT\_3.24.26.docx; WCC notes on Westford Legal Trails Policy DRAFT 3.24.26.docx

Tommy,

Will you please add these 2 things to our packets for the trails? And the email below?  
These are comments from Kirsten and the WCC on the guidelines.

Thanks!

Pat

**From:** Kirsten Tyler <kirstenbeat@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 5:52 PM  
**To:** westfordcc@googlegroups.com; Pat Haller <Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us>  
**Subject:** Re: [WestfordCC] Trail Maintenance Guidelines- DRAFT

Pat,

The WCC has spent some time going over the document individually. I have added my notes within the document, attached here. Also attached here are some broader comments made by members of WCC.

Looking at our notes separately, it seems our biggest concern was the contradictory nature of 3.1 and 3.2.3 (regarding scheduling of maintenance). I think the WCC is board with letting landowners know about maintenance in advance, but it will be almost impossible to set a seasonal "day" to do maintenance given that we are a group of busy volunteers, we can't predict the weather, and it might take longer than expected to do the work, especially if there is an issue (erosion etc). I hope we can come to a compromise here.

Let us know if you need clarification on anything.

Thanks for your work on this!

Kirsten

On Mar 17, 2026, at 5:06 AM, Kirsten Tyler <kirstenbeat@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you Pat!

We will be looking this over tonight at our meeting. No need to attend! We will respond shortly with any comments.

Thank you,  
Kirsten

Ps. Congrats on Chair :)

On Mar 17, 2026, at 4:59 AM, Pat Haller <[Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us](mailto:Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us)> wrote:

Dear WCC,

I hope you're all well and enjoying the first signs of Spring!

As the new Chair of the SB this year, I'm setting our agendas and I'm looking ahead to Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup>'s Selectboard meeting. I'm intending to have on the agenda this Draft policy for the Selectboard to discuss. The purpose of our work on the 26<sup>th</sup> is merely to get from my fellow board members an indication of IF the framework here is in-line with what we all might be aiming for, gain additional direction, and only then to really move this working draft toward adoption with the steps of working again with the WCC and the public (targeting the immediate landowners) for feedback too. This is DRAFT and nothing in it is settled, for example in this draft, Section 3.1 that suggests trail maintenance on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month. The example is to indicate the intent of having a repeating/periodic maintenance schedule on the trails for expediency and convenience to the volunteers. Rather than informing every land owner via 1 on 1 notice that maintenance might be coming, setting repeatable maintenance days allows for just one public notice instead.

I'd appreciate it if you had time to review this, and ask questions on the intent of any section and hopefully you generally think it's steering in the right direction. Ultimately we need cooperation and mutual respect across all fronts and the Selectboard to fully support a policy.

I'm happy to come to a WCC meeting if you'd like.

Thanks, Pat Haller

---

**From:** Pat Haller <[Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us](mailto:Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2026 5:19 PM  
**To:** selectboard <[selectboard@westfordvt.us](mailto:selectboard@westfordvt.us)>  
**Cc:** Tommy O'Connor <[toconnor@westfordvt.us](mailto:toconnor@westfordvt.us)>; Harmony Cism <[zoning\\_admin@westfordvt.us](mailto:zoning_admin@westfordvt.us)>  
**Subject:** Trail Maintenance Guidelines- DRAFT

NOT for tonight's meeting but for future.. Here's the draft of the Westford Legal Trails Policy, the name of which IS DRAFT as well as I've been liking to call it the Trail Maintenance Guidelines most recently.

--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "WestfordCC" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to [westfordcc+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:westfordcc+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com).

To view this discussion

visit <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/westfordcc/BY5PR10MB438752959E12E71ED952459C8F45A%40BY5PR10MB4387.namprd10.prod.outlook.com>.

<Westford Legal Trails Policy - Working Draft.docx>

1. April is a little early in the season to assess trail conditions after the winter. May would work better. Once we have a chance to get out on the trails and see how they fared over the winter we can then present an action plan to the SB for any major repairs that need to be addressed. I do not feel that routine maintenance can be scheduled months ahead of time as it largely depends upon the weather. If it is a dry summer growth will be less and if it is wet or there are severe storms things will need more attention.
2. As a volunteer that already gives many hours to the town I do not think we should be locked into a fixed schedule of when we are going to do normal trail upkeep. I think we should be able to determine when and where we need to do trail work at our monthly meeting for the next month.
3. The term walkability is used several times in the draft. Is this the criteria which is to be used to determine if adequate trail maintenance is being done? Are other uses still allowed on these trails such as horseback riding or mtn biking and what are the criteria for those activities?
4. My only other comment would be to reinforce the fact that ANY duly appointed member of the WCC has the right to inspect the trails covered in these regulations!
  - One day a month for maintenance is not adequate for the amount of time it takes to maintain these trails, adverse weather, and the various obligations of Conservation Commission members.
  - Conservation Commission members cannot be expected to maintain all right-of-way trails with one day per month. We cannot maintain four trails at the level they require. For example, Goodrich and Schultz trails will each take most of a day to clear the backlog of overgrowth caused by delayed maintenance. If we are starting this work in May, we cannot be expected to clear and maintain trails adequately for safe public use until the end of the summer. This does not serve the residents of Westford adequately.
  - Can we limit our maintenance to Saturdays only? This might be a compromise for the landowners...
  - I want to make sure that if a volunteer wants to help out, either on trail maintenance day or on an as needed basis, they are allowed to do so on these trails.

## **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, 2025<sup>1</sup> 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.

**Commented [PH1]:** This is largely new to the working document, especially regarding May to Oct commitment AND the annual renewal bit including annual time line and auto renewal for 5 years and requirement to renew commitment after 5 yrs. Purely something I added and not the work of others.

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.)*

<sup>1</sup>Act 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

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**From:** Matt Bartholomew <mbartholomewk9@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 1, 2026 7:30 AM  
**To:** selectboard; TownAdmin  
**Subject:** Dog Warden Position

Good Morning All,

It's unfortunate that I need to continue to write to you all without resolution. This will be the final ask. Seems the selectboard only takes prompt action when dramatic things happen like the clerk closing the townhall to the public or the uncontrollable citizens removing trail markers (both incidents which should have been proactively dealt with by the selectboard prior to getting there).

So here we are I'm feeling dramatic. Spring is here you have had 6 months to take action to assist me and surprise surprise I've been politicianed told something nice and kicked along down the road. It ends today.

You need to provide me a phone, a place to hold dogs, and access to the registration records so I can be effective without the needing the town office. I have now set a deadline you have the month of April to figure it out or hire a new dog warden.

Might I remind you it took this new selectboard no time to get an "inclusive" certificate when the only inclusive thing in this town is the lack of a public restroom. To further get ahead of your other pending excuses back when Nanette had the public dog records accessible to the public on the town Google docs (novel concept) data shows Westford has always had 400-500 registered dogs. The state keeps \$7 of registration and the town keeps \$5. You can't honestly say the clerks salary is dependent on dog registration revenue so to claim towns cut goes to paperwork is silly and a clear red flag. Furthermore \$5 per dog estimated 400-500 registered dogs who knows cause that public information hasn't been made public or even accessible to the dog warden! But it's fair to say that the town is collecting somewhere between \$2000- \$2500 in dog registrations. Where's it going? I don't take the pay times 4? Years now?

So don't make me write a very blunt and open letter to town about how the lack of town support is the reason I am no longer willing to be the dog warden.

This is NOT an April's fools joke I need concrete solutions by the end of the month.

-Matt

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Max Tyler <maxxytyler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 7:17 PM  
**To:** Pat Haller  
**Subject:** Last night's Selectboard meeting

Here are my concerns regarding last night's meeting.

Much of the discussion about the planning commission's recommendations focused on concerns about nepotism on my part. That concern should have been dismissed immediately for the following reasons:

- I have seen correspondence from both Tommy and Harmony indicating their investigations find that the relationship (former daughter-in-law) is not a nepotistic one as far as the state of Vermont is concerned.
- The recommendation comes from the planning commission and not from me as an individual in my role as chair. I was merely the scribe.
- I, or even the commission, does not appoint anyone. We do not have the authority to do so. It's hard to see how the writing of a recommendation, at the Selectboard's request to do so, by a commission, stretches to the point of *"using power to secure advantages for acquaintances regardless of merit"* (Cambridge Dictionary)
- If the Town of Westford is going to preclude appointments of former relations to town bodies, then we should have a formal policy stating as such. If the candidacy in question was to be disqualified, then why isn't this done in advance? Why have the commission interview them at all?
- Then there is the obvious point of the fact that the candidate is my *former daughter-in-law*. She is divorced from my son. This hardly seems the foundation for favoritism. This most fundamental and obvious point is swept aside when a community member repeatedly states, "she is the mother of his grandchildren." Does the fact that my grandchildren are being raised in two households endear this candidate to me in some special way? It's ludicrous and really sticks in my craw.

Then there is the whole recusal point. To my recollection, 3 of the 5 Selectboard members questioned my actions as inappropriate. The discussion surrounding the candidates took place in executive session. I will not relate anything of the position of the other commissioners, but I will convey the following:

- We are down to three commissioners, meaning we barely have a quorum for any discussion.
- I explained my relationship to the candidate to the other commissioners and offered to recuse myself, but the commission did not adopt this approach.
- I suggested that the commission recommend all 4 candidates to the selectboard as highly qualified, but the commission did not adopt this approach.
- The commission is making a non-binding recommendation; *it is not an appointment*. Even if I recused myself, what difference would it make if the Selectboard could still appoint the candidate? (As well they might, given that the candidate is highly qualified.)

In more general terms, my problem with the discussion last night stems far less from the planning commission appointment discussion per se than from a sense that there is an excessive focus on finding errors and omissions on the part of our officials and volunteers. It is hard to see how work gets done in this environment.

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Max Tyler <maxxtyler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 8:58 AM  
**To:** selectboard  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission; Harmony Cism  
**Subject:** Resignation

The Town of Westford is in the enviable position of having a bumper crop of highly qualified candidates for the open planning commission appointments.

I tender my resignation from the Westford Planning Commission, effective immediately.

Max Tyler

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Deborah Jorschick  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 9:06 AM  
**To:** Max Tyler; selectboard  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission; Harmony Cism  
**Subject:** Re: Resignation

Max,

As a resident and board member I am very sad to read this email. I hold you in high regards and commend you on the job you have done on the Planning Commission. It is my true feeling that I wish you would reconsider.

Deb

---

**From:** Max Tyler <maxxytyler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 8:57 AM  
**To:** selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission <planningcommission@westfordvt.us>; Harmony Cism <zoning\_admin@westfordvt.us>  
**Subject:** Resignation

The Town of Westford is in the enviable position of having a bumper crop of highly qualified candidates for the open planning commission appointments.

I tender my resignation from the Westford Planning Commission, effective immediately.

Max Tyler

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Pat Haller  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 9:37 AM  
**To:** Max Tyler; selectboard  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission; Harmony Cism  
**Subject:** RE: Resignation

Max,

I too would ask that you reconsider. I believe that you are a person we NEED on the PC. I was just in the Town office to sign something and heard such high regard for you, and I agree.

Sincerely, Pat

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

**From:** Max Tyler <maxxtyler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 8:58 AM  
**To:** selectboard <selectboard@westfordvt.us>  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission <planningcommission@westfordvt.us>; Harmony Cism <zoning\_admin@westfordvt.us>  
**Subject:** Resignation

The Town of Westford is in the enviable position of having a bumper crop of highly qualified candidates for the open planning commission appointments.

I tender my resignation from the Westford Planning Commission, effective immediately.

Max Tyler

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Carol Winfield <carol@vtwildlife.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 26, 2026 8:20 PM  
**To:** selectboard; TownAdmin  
**Subject:** Appointments

I believe the public has a right to ask if the Selectboard members are seriously considering all candidates for appointment to town committees and commissions equally, based on their interviews and qualifications, or are they specifically acting only on the recommendations of the Planning Commission?

*No act of kindness is ever too small*

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** William Dunkley <wdunkley65@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2026 8:51 AM  
**To:** selectboard; PlanningCommission; Harmony Cism  
**Subject:** Support for the Planning Commission

Hello Westford Selectboard,

Westford needs an effective and well supported planning commission. The PC has experienced difficulty in retaining members and maintaining morale since the wastewater system planning became a big issue in town. As the PC, we need the support of the selectboard. We need your support when you're engaging with the public when discussing our work and our processes. We also need your support in affirming our work and guiding us in the right direction so that the planning work we do is in line with what you want.

If you want us to change course, in ways big or small, please communicate that to us so we can adjust. If our work is satisfactory, if the way we go about making decisions is fine, if you have trust in what we're doing, we need to hear that and we need the public to know that you support us.

Respectfully,  
Will Dunkley

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Pat Haller  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 9:38 AM  
**To:** selectboard  
**Subject:** FW: Planning Commission Appointments

FYI

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**From:** pbirnholz@comcast.net <pbirnholz@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2026 8:06 AM  
**To:** Pat Haller <Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us>  
**Subject:** RE: Planning Commission Appointments

Apparently youre not thinking hard enough,. I was unable to attend last nite meeting due to illness but I received email this morning from residents I never hear from, "Westford now has a King"!!

This is a personal comment to you and would not expect any reply using town emails that would be inappropriate.

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**From:** Pat Haller <[Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us](mailto:Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 4:55 PM  
**To:** [pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** RE: Planning Commission Appointments

Paul,  
OK, you're giving me a lot to think on. Last person I ever want to be equated with is DJT and if that's how I'm coming off....I'm doing something wrong.

Pat

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**From:** [pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net) <[pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 4:50 PM  
**To:** Pat Haller <[Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us](mailto:Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: Planning Commission Appointments

You are between a rock and a hard place and it comes with your position. When I write to the SB I expect to hear what the SB has to say. You are welcome to express your personal opinions but not as representative of what the SB will be doing. If I had wanted to hear what every individual in town thought about my comments I would have addressed them to the town residents or posted it on front porch forum or such. Items addressed to the SB should be addressed by that board and if you were not a member of such you would not have been in a position to express your personal opinion which was not asked for.

In response to your prior memos, I find it difficult to believe that you actually equate the hiring of a member of the road crew as comparable to appointing members of specific commissions which have much greater responsibilities and effect on the town.

On a side note, I personally ( just exerting my first amendment rights) do not appreciate your emulating DJT with your authoritarian attitude. ( just my opinion)

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**From:** Pat Haller <[Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us](mailto:Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 1:45 PM  
**To:** [pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** RE: Planning Commission Appointments

Paul,

I'm feeling like I'm between a rock and a hard place here. As a SB member, I think it's polite to respond to emails and if I have an opinion that I want to express on the subject I do so not just because it's a 1<sup>st</sup> amendment right, but you may wish to challenge my thinking and possibly change my mind.

I have been admonished by certain residents for INCLUDING the SB on my response, believing that I'm violating open meeting laws and I have been admonished by other residents for not including the SB believing I'm violating the same laws.

I'm now more than ever certain that those that don't like my response will call to question the method of my response either way.

Sincerely, Pat

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**From:** [pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net) <[pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 12:26 PM  
**To:** selectboard <[selectboard@westfordvt.us](mailto:selectboard@westfordvt.us)>  
**Subject:** FW: Planning Commission Appointments

Since I sent my letter to the Selectboard I assume that the entire Selectboard received this response as would be appropriate. I am also curious as to why a single member of the SB is determining what the SB will do?

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**From:** Pat Haller <[Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us](mailto:Pat.Haller@westfordvt.us)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 10:56 AM  
**To:** [pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** RE: Planning Commission Appointments

Paul,

Thank you for your email. I wish to respond with my opinion.

I disagree that the SB must interview candidates and ignore the recommendations of the PC. I believe we should ask the PC and other bodies to interview candidates and make recommendations and the SB reserve the opportunity if they choose to also interview. The SB agreed to this process last year. I would not want a potential road crew member to not be interviewed first by the Road Foreman and Town Administrator and for the SB to not ask them to make a recommendation. Same with Cemetery Commission, Development Review Board, Common Committee, Conservation Commission, and Recreation Committee.

I do understand why members of the community and the previous SB shifted to the model you suggested but in my opinion it did more harm than good. When the Board had this discussion Nick did ask if in future at we could reconsider in the future and if my fellow members wish to propose a change, then it'd be discussed.

Regarding RPC relationship. I see what you mean. You may guess that I hold a different view and you'd be right.

On Town Plan, agreed that a survey will be needed and if we get a new Town Planner as intended in July, that person can start working on it. You will likely not like that we hope to be using RPC staff to help us in the planning stages if we don't hire a Town Planner, and if we are successful in the UPW planning grant we applied for and will learn about in May.

Sincerely, Pat Haller

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**From:** [pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net) <[pbirnholz@comcast.net](mailto:pbirnholz@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 8:51 AM  
**To:** selectboard <[selectboard@westfordvt.us](mailto:selectboard@westfordvt.us)>  
**Cc:** PlanningCommission <[planningcommission@westfordvt.us](mailto:planningcommission@westfordvt.us)>  
**Subject:** Planning Commission Appointments

Selectboard, Westford VT

RE: Planning Commission appointments

Dear Selectboard,

I am writing regarding the upcoming appointments for new members of the Planning Commission (PC). While it is the Selectboards's responsibility to appoint new members the process has changed since the time I was chairman of the PC. At that time the PC had no role in selecting members. I have stood for appointment more recently to the PC on two occasions. The first time I was 'interviewed' by the PC and found 'unworthy' ( despite my past experience and connections in this area) because I was not in full agreement with some of what the PC was doing. I expressed my frustrations/concerns with the process to the Selectboard at that time and the second time I applied I was not subjected to such an 'interview' but was given the opportunity to ask the PC questions regarding the direction and projects which I thought important for the PC to address. Listening to parts of the recent PC meeting the process seems to have reverted back to the PC doing 'interviews' and then making their recommendation to the Selectboard. This is inappropriate as previously noted and is akin to members of the Supreme court informing the Senate as to whom they should confirm as new members of the court. Following this process reduces outside opinions and ideas and serves to simply continue the status quo. It is obvious from observing the activities of the PC over the past months ( or longer ) that the PC is in need of 'fresh blood' with new ideas, opinions and direction for the PC. I strongly urge the Selectboard (SB) to ignore any recommendations from the PC as well as correcting the process to correct the PC's involvement. I find this particularly important in the current instance as the PC has, on numerous times, demonstrated its antagonism and bias's against certain community members who have not supported them on some issues in the past.

I am also concerned over the recent trend for prospectrs with connections to some of the Regional Planning Commissions (RPC) being appointed to our own PC. While this might seem like a good idea due to their knowledge and connections it has a number of flaws. While the RPC's have been helpful and necessary to our own PC in providing administrative, legal and other services, I am sorry to say that the RPC and the Westford PC have not always been in agreement and there were multiple times when I was chair of the PC that we found the RPC changing what we had proposed for what they were pushing. There is frequently a conflict of interest between what the State and the RPC's are proposing and the interests of the individual towns. Any PC member with affiliations to a RPC has an apparent 'conflict of interest and should not be a member of the PC. This is also a problem because due to the member with RPC affiliations other members tend to 'defer' to their 'expertise' and such member is thus able to exert undue influence on

PC decisions .This problem became quite apparent during the `wastewater` issues which the town recently contended with as the State's plan being pushed by RPC's was for development in towns to take place from the town `center` outward but was quickly stymied in many towns due to constraints on wastewater, etc. in those areas. Our PC `jumped` on this process (as being extensively pushed by one member with connections to the RPC's) by proposing substantial development around the town common ( including turning a good portion into a parking area), giving property that was part of the `common` to adjoining property owners ( thus allowing/giving them more property which could be developed) and bring `wastewater` to the area. This was followed by the recent Act 181 (?) REQUIRING towns to develop the town center. This was a long process initiated by the State and RPC's as their vision of what Westford should be. Had the Selectboard been more diligent in selecting and appointing members to the PC we might not have had a single member on the PC for 20+ years in which to push his ( and RPC's) project.

The third item I would like to address is the `Town Plan`. While plans were at one time revised every 5 years the current town plan (TP) has had minor revisions over the years but is based on a survey conducted over 20 years ago. When I last `stood` for appointment to the PC I was told that the PC had no interest in revisiting the TP. The survey which was conducted and which eventually led to our current TP was prepared with the `assistance` of the RPC and at the time both I, and other community members I have spoken with, refused to complete it and returned it to the town office with complaints pointing out that numerous questions were misleading and `called for` an obvious desired response ( eg: would you like to see development controlled in a specific area, such as the town center, or take place wherever someone wanted to build ?? – there were many other similar type `questions). RPC also assisted in compiling and `interpreting` the results and presented drafts of `their` results as `our` TP. It is obvious from the recent `debacle` over `wastewater` that this is not what the town wanted even though , as Mark Letorney repeatedly pointed out – it was what the TP" called for. It is time after approximately a quarter of a century for the town to conduct a new/proper survey and I strongly urge the SB to direct the PC to do so with substantial review and assistance from the public rather than their continued heavy reliance on the RPC, particularly since there are now many more town employees than in the past who can perform some of these functions.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these issues.

Sincerely

Paul Birnholz

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** LK Johns <lkjohnson4625@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 10:15 AM  
**To:** selectboard  
**Subject:** Common Committee Candidate recommendation

Dear Selectboard,

The Common Committee met yesterday and asked Katherine Kearns, our candidate for the committee, to introduce herself. She has long ties with Westford having grown up here and even told stories of swimming on the Common after heavy rains! She seems to have a strong commitment to protecting the Common and would be a good addition to the Committee. During the Communication section of the meeting, 2 of us voted to recommend her to the Selectboard for appointment (one person recused).

Please appoint Katherine to the Common Committee.

Thank you,  
Lori Johnson, Common Committee Chair



*This is a list of Top Items identified by the Selectboard. These items are fluid and likely to change frequently. This document is simply a reference item and does not pertain to any direct actions.*

**“Top 10”**

Current Software Company - can we drop (switch to new firm)

Town WIFI

Payroll

Fire Dept

Gravel

CAT Excavator

Office Building Discussion

1705 next steps

Town Plan

Town Vault Space

**Other Action Items (some from Board Meetings)**

VAST relationship building

Schedule a board "retreat" to discuss some of these tops and a work plan

Electricity (Net Metering) - Pat and Greg

Volunteer Policy

Board Minutes - need to add in Action items

Streamline employee reporting

# Essex Rescue Inc.

## Budget vs. Actuals: Budget\_FY26\_P&L - FY26 P&L

July 2025 - June 2026

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
<b>Income</b>				
49900 Capital Campaign Income	700.00		700.00	
700 DONATIONS & SUBSIDIES	611,212.60	602,166.00	9,046.60	101.50 %
710 TRANSPORT REVENUE	1,206,717.33	1,681,666.00	-474,948.67	71.76 %
715 INTEREST INCOME	9,160.56	37,832.00	-28,671.44	24.21 %
725 OTHER REVENUE	3,100.00	8,000.00	-4,900.00	38.75 %
730 SUBSCRIPTION REVENUE	145,606.50	132,500.00	13,106.50	109.89 %
Unapplied Cash Payment Income	0.00		0.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,976,496.99</b>	<b>\$2,462,164.00</b>	<b>\$ -485,667.01</b>	<b>80.27 %</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$1,976,496.99</b>	<b>\$2,462,164.00</b>	<b>\$ -485,667.01</b>	<b>80.27 %</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
1000 PAYROLL	933,655.67	1,393,057.00	-459,401.33	67.02 %
1700 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	84,976.54	163,024.00	-78,047.46	52.13 %
2050 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	8,121.66	14,825.00	-6,703.34	54.78 %
2060 UTILITIES	13,440.62	22,663.00	-9,222.38	59.31 %
2068 IT	14,725.16	26,700.00	-11,974.84	55.15 %
2070 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	75,848.59	80,590.00	-4,741.41	94.12 %
2080 AMBULANCE & RADIO	31,674.33	31,300.00	374.33	101.20 %
2090 CONTRACTUAL / SERVICES	83,976.28	110,605.00	-26,628.72	75.92 %
2099 ORGANIZATIONAL INSURANCE	85,688.32	103,795.00	-18,106.68	82.56 %
2100 EMS TRAINING	5,380.64	21,700.00	-16,319.36	24.80 %
2110 PERSONNEL INCENTIVES / RECOGNITION	6,313.63	16,100.00	-9,786.37	39.22 %
3020 UNIFORMS	4,826.00	7,300.00	-2,474.00	66.11 %
3040 FUEL	14,290.95	25,000.00	-10,709.05	57.16 %
3090 MEDICAL EQUIPMENT / SUPPLIES	92,990.65	103,800.00	-10,809.35	89.59 %
4020 BUILDING & MAINTENANCE	28,821.28	64,000.00	-35,178.72	45.03 %
5000 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	1,400.00		1,400.00	
6000 FUTURE BUILDING PROJECT	25,547.16	29,000.00	-3,452.84	88.09 %
7000 CAPITAL RESERVE CONTRIBUTION	345,919.00	216,000.00	129,919.00	160.15 %
Interest Expense	136.02		136.02	
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Expense	0.00		0.00	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,857,732.50</b>	<b>\$2,429,459.00</b>	<b>\$ -571,726.50</b>	<b>76.47 %</b>
<b>NET OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>\$118,764.49</b>	<b>\$32,705.00</b>	<b>\$86,059.49</b>	<b>363.14 %</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$118,764.49</b>	<b>\$32,705.00</b>	<b>\$86,059.49</b>	<b>363.14 %</b>

Good Afternoon,

Please find the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter data for 2026 below. As you review the data there are some details which are worth noting.

Our overall call volume is down 176 calls when comparing last year's volume at this same time. Sadly, that is the impact extremely frequent callers can have on one services call volume. When they are no longer calling, you can have an abrupt change in your volume. We have a few frequent callers in our service area that we are no longer seeing.

We are also excited to see the true gains our second unit has had on relieving mutual aid requests into our service area. We have cut our monthly mutual aid requests in half by staffing our additional ambulances reliably. Last year, we requested mutual aid on average 53 times per month. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of last year and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of this year we have requested mutual aid only 25 times. This is a huge win for us all and I am quite excited to share that information with you.

**Overall Call Volume**

Out of service hours:	0
Volume since January 1, 2026:	715
Volume last quarter (2025 Q4):	842
Volume this quarter (2026 Q1):	715

**Overall Call Details**

Ratio of calls taken by ER:	597 : 715
Day/night Truck:	463
Swing Truck:	134
Both Trucks:	4

**Mutual Aid**

Requests for mutual aid to respond into ER service area:	79
Requests for ER to respond outside our service area:	46

**Town/City Specific Data**

	<b><u>2025 / Qtr 4</u></b>	<b><u>2026 / Qtr 1</u></b>
City of Essex Junction:	343	210
Town of Essex:	398	367
Town of Jericho:	79	56
Town of Underhill:	44	26
Town of Westford	8	10

## Finance

I have provided a current Budget vs. Actuals report. Please note that our accounting reconciliation won't be completed for March until the end of April. Also, a reminder that our budget is based on cash and not accrual. The detail of this report is subject to change based. I am working on putting our next FY budget together for our annual meeting the first week in June.

## **FYE26**

**Income-** Overall things are looking good with income. We were slightly ahead at the start of our budget year, but our insurance reimbursement has been slightly down the last few months. This could be partly because of the government shut down and not receiving government funded reimbursement and it also could be that our call volume is slightly lower. It's a little too early to tell quite yet but we are monitoring it. We did receive another \$50,000 donation from a resident without our service area, which we are very appreciative of. Subscriptions have slowed down and will continue to trickle in throughout the remainder of the year.

**Expenses -** Expenses are on target with nothing unusual. Most of our large expenses are paid at different times of the year making it a little more difficult to appreciate our exact position. The age of our trucks has pushed the maintenance section of our budget beyond what was planned for.

Payroll and benefits are slightly under because we again have open positions. As history has proven, retaining EMS professionals is hard - especially with how expensive it is here in Vermont. It makes it hard for people to do this kind of work with these hours and be forced to work multiple other jobs to make ends meet. This type of work requires people to have down time and emotionally heal. Many of our personnel also work supporting 2-3 other EMS agencies, which results in high burnout rates and PTSD.

**Capital Reserve-** In good position and remains unchanged. We received the new Essex 1 and it is finally on the road. We received the truck in the last week of February but before it could go into service taking calls, we found that the control module was fried and required replacement.

## General Operations

The last few months have been quite trying as we worked hard to keep our ambulances on the road. We have encountered numerous mechanical problems and some which were incredibly costly. We are extremely grateful to our mutual aid partners for allowing us to borrow trucks. We have a mutual understanding amongst other EMS agencies in the area (Saint Michaels Rescue, Colchester Rescue, Milton Rescue, and Richmond Rescue) which allows us to loan each other ambulances when needed and as long as we have a spare truck to loan. Saint Michaels and Richmond have been life

savers these last few weeks and I cannot thank them enough. Interestingly, our fire-based EMS partners were not as open or supportive to helping in the same way.

We are extremely grateful for your continued support! Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions about our operations.

Sincerely,  
Colleen Ballard - Executive Director

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Barb Bates Peck <bpeck9191@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2026 8:59 AM  
**To:** selectboard; PlanningCommission; TownAdmin; Ben Bornstein  
**Subject:** Fwd: Act 250 - Public Comment on Proposed Guidelines for Road Construction Jurisdiction

This is the LURB

It's in response to the push back on rural mapping ( which also is under review till May 1st) and the Road Rule.

This does not affect Act 181 Tier 1B ( but there's new 3/26/26 bill s.325 affecting that )

B

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

**From:** **Weinhagen, Alex** <[Alex.Weinhagen@vermont.gov](mailto:Alex.Weinhagen@vermont.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 31, 2026 at 5:41 AM  
**Subject:** Act 250 - Public Comment on Proposed Guidelines for Road Construction Jurisdiction  
**To:** Weinhagen, Alex <[Alex.Weinhagen@vermont.gov](mailto:Alex.Weinhagen@vermont.gov)>

Act 250 Tier 3 Followers,

**\*\* Special Update – Road Construction Jurisdiction \*\***

See below for a message from two of my fellow Land Use Review Board (LURB) members regarding draft guidance on the Road Construction Jurisdiction provision. We are looking for public feedback before finalizing this guidance ahead of this year's construction season. If you have comments, please send via email to [Act250.Comments@vermont.gov](mailto:Act250.Comments@vermont.gov). If you have questions, please reach out to Sarah Hadd or Brooke Dingedine via the contact information below.

On a related note, Senate bill S.325 passed the full Senate on 3/26/26. This bill would push the Tier 3 effective date to June 30, 2028 and the Road Construction Jurisdiction effective date to January 1, 2030. Additionally, this bill would give the LURB the authority to tailor Act 250 review that is triggered by Tier 3 or the Road Construction Jurisdiction. This would help focus and limit the review to just the relevant review criteria. The bill will now need review and approval by the House, and then the Governor, so we probably won't have a verdict on this until May. The LURB supports this bill.

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Greetings:

Act 181 of 2024 created a new jurisdictional trigger for Act 250. Beginning July 1, 2026 “the construction of a road or roads and any associated driveways” will trigger the need for an Act 250 permit with few exceptions, when the length of any single road is greater than 800 feet, or the length of all roads and any associated driveways in combination is greater than 2,000 feet. [See 10 V.S.A. §6001\(3\)\(A\)\(xii\)](#). Exceptions are provided for municipal, state, utility, farm, and forestry roads and driveways.

Act 181 also provides that the Land Use Review Board (“Board”) may adopt rules to help guide implementation. The Board has requested that the Legislature delay the effective date to allow for the public outreach and consultation required by rule making. Given the uncertainty of whether or not this delay will be granted and the upcoming July 1<sup>st</sup> effective date, the Board is working instead to develop guidance. Guidance under development is intended to help clarify exemptions, define what qualifies as pre-existing road, and give definition to the difference between a road and a driveway. The Board intends to adopt guidance as far ahead of July 1<sup>st</sup> as possible to provide property owners and developers greater certainty in the permitting process after providing opportunity for public comment.

Draft Road Construction Jurisdiction Guidance is now available here:

<https://act250.vermont.gov/document/road-construction-jurisdiction-guidance-draft-3-25-26>

The Land Use Review Board is holding a 30-day public comment period from **March 30 through April 30, 2026** on the draft Road Construction Jurisdiction Guidance document:

Comments may be submitted via email to: [Act250.Comments@vermont.gov](mailto:Act250.Comments@vermont.gov)

Comments may also be submitted by U.S. mail to the Vermont Land Use Review Board at 10 Baldwin Street in Montpelier, Vermont 05633-3201 to the attention of "Comments on draft Road Construction Jurisdiction Guidance document."

A finalized draft of the guidance document will be produced for consideration in early May for the Board to consider adopting. Additional information as well as future drafts of the guidance will be posted here: <https://act250.vermont.gov/road-construction-jurisdiction> .

Thank you for your consideration.

[Sarah Hadd](#) - [802-480-1886](#) and [Brooke Dingleline](#) - [802-480-1878](#)

Land Use Review Board members project co-leads

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**Alex Weinhagen** | Board Member

Land Use Review Board

10 Baldwin Street

Montpelier, VT 05633-3201

[alex.weinhagen@vermont.gov](mailto:alex.weinhagen@vermont.gov)

802-480-1885

<https://act250.vermont.gov>

Emails and other written or recorded information produced or acquired in the course of public agency business are public records and may be subject to public examination under Vermont's Public Records Act.

## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Erin Ramsey <erindarsie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 3, 2026 8:24 PM  
**To:** selectboard  
**Cc:** Sean Cushing  
**Subject:** Sanctuary/Fieldstone Mailboxes

Good evening,

After several intermittent weeks of mail delivery in February and March, the homeowners who live on Sanctuary and Fieldstone wanted to reach out to the Selectboard to see when the members may be able to address our request that the town do some work to stabilize the posts.

As you may recall, Jennifer Simpson attended the Selectboard meeting November 13, 2025 to address the issue and share some photos of the leaning mailboxes. At that time, the HOA estimated the lean to be 10-15 degrees. As you can see from the photos below that were taken by a homeowner this week, they are at least that. When it rains, and mail has been delivered, mail is often wet because of the angle at which the mailboxes sit.

During the meeting in November, it sounded like the town may be able to address this issue as the ditches that were created behind the mailboxes have left us without enough dirt to stabilize the mailboxes ourselves. We also attempted to find a solution with USPS to move the set of mailboxes, but USPS said that would not be possible.

Could you please let me know when the Selectboard can discuss this issue again? I'll share with the other members of the HOA and do my best to attend that meeting in person or virtually, depending on the date.

Thank you for your consideration,

Erin Ramsey  
33 Fieldstone

Goo







## Tommy O'Connor

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**From:** Patricia Hechmer <phechmer@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 1, 2026 5:43 PM  
**To:** selectboard  
**Subject:** ? Marxh 26, 2026 SB Draft Minutes

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

The Corrective Actions to the minutes of the 1/16 and 1/28 budget workshops refer to “proposed level funding for all entities that sent in budget of donation requests”.

What does “budget of donation requests” mean?

Also, it would be helpful if the 1st time an acronym was used in meeting minutes it was followed by full name of entity.

I would appreciate an email response.

Thank you,

Pat Hechmer  
Westford resident