

WESTFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING

Minutes

August 18th, 2025 – 5 p.m.

Westfield Town Office, 38 School Street

Meeting Recordings Available to View at <https://www.youtube.com/@TownofWestfieldVT>

Town Officials Present: Jacques Couture, Selectboard Chair; Richard Degre, Selectboard; Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Lisa Deslandes, Treasurer; Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk; Mike Piper, Constable (Partial Attendance); Shelley Martin, Lister & Town Health Officer (Partial Attendance); Will Young, Zoning Administrator (Partial Attendance)

Others Present: Alicja Adach (Partial Attendance), Thomasz Adach (Partial Attendance), Jan Degre, Ruby Bratcher, Watershed Engagement Coordinator (Partial Attendance)

1. **Call Meeting to Order – Jacques Couture, Chair:** Jacques called the meeting to order at 4:57PM.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** None
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** LaDonna added 13C, Front Porch Forum Correction of Information.
4. **Approve Minutes: (emailed in advance)**
 - a. **Approve Minutes of the 7-21-25 Selectboard Meeting:** Dennis motioned to approve the minutes from the July 21st Selectboard meeting, Richard seconded. Motion passed.
 - b. **Approve Minutes of the 7-24-25 Village Wastewater Study Selectboard Meeting:** Dennis motioned to approve the minutes from the July 24th Village Wastewater Study Meeting, Jacques seconded. Motion passed. Richard recused himself from the vote as he was not at the meeting.
5. **Missisquoi River Basin Association Public Use of Private Lands – Ruby Bratcher, Watershed Engagement Coordinator:** Ruby Bratcher joined to discuss the organizations expansion of people using the watershed of the Missisquoi River Basin. She is looking for public lands and private landowners that may have private access to the watershed that are willing to let the public access it. It can be any waters in the Missisquoi River Basin. LaDonna questioned what that entails. Ruby explained that they host water walks where they invite members of the community to walk the land. The end goal is to do some mapping of these lands and post them on their website so that people can plan outings in accessible areas of the watershed. She is looking to identify these areas right now. Will felt that this is good information that could be passed along to people who live along these waterways. Ruby will look into getting a flyer put together with some more information that can be passed out to anyone interested.
6. **Letter from Alicja & Thomas Adach Regarding School Street Swimming Hole: (emailed in advance)** Jacques noted that the Selectboard received and reviewed the letter the Adach's sent to them earlier in the month. The Selectboard asked VLCT for an opinion on this issue. Jacques read the opinion aloud. VLCT noted that the town has no jurisdiction over this issue and it is up to the property owners and their attorney. Thomasz wanted to make sure the Selectboard was aware of the issues they are having with people using the swimming hole. Thomasz feels that because the brook is not navigable the water is not able to be accessed by the public. They feel it is up to them to allow people the right to use the swimming hole. Jacques noted that people have used that spot for generations and sometimes these things happen over the years and people feel they have the right to use certain areas. Thomasz noted that in looking at the state laws they are not liable for any injuries that happen at the swimming hole if they grant them access. They

are not looking to stop people from coming to the swimming hole, but would like to give access, not allow free use of the spot at all times. It can interrupt their family gatherings, etc. Shelley noted that during her time at ANR she was made aware that the state owns the waterways, not the property owners. She felt they should notify the state that people are using hand soap repeatedly in the brook.

7. **Zoning Administrator Report, Follow-up on Eastman Development Review Board Ruling – Will Young:** Will noted that there was some confusion around the Eastman Notice of Decision from the Development Review Board hearing. Will explained that as of right now the conditions imposed by the DRB were never completed, so the change of use is not completed. That means at this point the property cannot be sold as a full-time home; it needs to be sold as a camp. Mr. Eastman needs to have a written agreement with the Selectboard regarding road maintenance to complete the conditions. The road has been worked on over the summer and Will felt that could put him in violation. Shelley questioned whether he needs a permit for wastewater to make the change from a camp to a full-time home. Will noted that the town does not have the authority to require wastewater as a condition to issue a permit. It is the landowner's responsibility to comply with state and federal permits. Will can reach out to him and make sure he is aware of what he needs to do to complete the notice of decision conditions. The Selectboard members will take a look at the road to see if the work he did on it was completed to their satisfaction.
8. **Delinquent Dog Situation – Mike Piper, Constable:** Mike noted that he has been to see Evan Brewster three times now. He was supposed to be bringing his dogs to Tractor Supply each month but continues to not get the dogs rabies vaccines. It has been 90 days since the warrant was dated, and Mike wanted direction from the Selectboard on what to do next. Richard motioned to send the warrant along with VT statutes, by mail, along with a hand delivered copy, and give him 30 more days to get this taken care of, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
9. **Library Report:**
 - a. **Approve Memorandum of Understanding between Library and Selectboard: (emailed in advance)** Dennis motioned to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Library and Selectboard, Richard seconded. Motion passed. Board signed.
10. **Approve Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP): (emailed in advance)** Jacques signed. Richard motioned to approve the Local Emergency Management Plan, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
11. **Treasurers Report – Lisa Deslandes:**
 - a. **Approve Warrants for July 7/2/25 \$6,013.58 (Payroll); 7/8/25 \$6,828.84 (Bills); 7/14/25 \$4,331.70 (bills) & \$7,666.54 (payroll); 7/29/25 \$18,320.31 (bills) & 7,458.23 (payroll):** Richard motioned to approve the warrants from July, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
 - b. **Review General & Highway Fund Budget Status Reports: (emailed in advance)** Board reviewed.
 - c. **Review Investments: (emailed in advance)** Board reviewed.
 - d. **Oil Supply Pre-Buy Price - \$2.52 per gallon:** The Town Office and Library are the only buildings that will be using oil now that the Community Center and Town Garage have switched to propane. The price is down from \$3.00 per gallon last year to \$2.52 this year. Lisa was thinking of pre buying 1000 gallons per building. Extra would be credited towards the following year. 2000 gallons would be \$5,040. Lisa will check with Anne at Oil Supply tomorrow to make sure the number of gallons will cover the two buildings for the winter and that the price will stay the same at \$2.52 per gallon. Richard motioned to accept the pre-buy amount of 2000 gallons at \$2.52 per gallon, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
 - e. **Pressure Wash Windows, Front and Side of Town Office – Mr. Clean: (emailed in advance)** To pressure wash the side and front of the Town Office and windows, the price

would be \$225. Richard motioned to approve hiring Mr. Clean to pressure wash the windows and building, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

12. Highway Update – Eric Kennison:

- a. **Grants In Aid Pre-Construction Scoping Summary GA0932 – To be Completed by 9/30/25:** Eric was not in attendance, no update on this.
- b. **Status of Selling/Disposing of Used Grader Tires and Sander – Richard Degre:** Richard is working on putting these on Facebook marketplace. Richard may have a buyer for the old windows from the Town Office.
- c. **Status of Culvert on School Street/ Ballground Road:** Will explained that Eric is aware the work needs to be done and will be getting to it before winter. The Adach's will purchase stone and the culvert, and Eric will do the work of installing it.
- d. **Update on Corrow Basin Culvert:** Eric was not in attendance, no update on this.

13. Village Wastewater Study:

- a. **Schedule Workshop/ Presentation with Lynette Claudon from Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation:** Lynette typically does a presentation for towns before they begin this type of study to explain the overall process of town wastewater systems. This would be a Selectboard meeting, but would be open to the public, as all Selectboard meetings are. The Selectboard would like to go forward with the presentation. LaDonna will check with Lynette to see if September 9th or 11th will work.
- b. **Date for Site Work:** Jacques and AES Northeast will be going around Thursday, August 21st to look at the flags placed around people's homes. Jacques would like to have emails sent to people who turned in surveys letting them know that they will be around Thursday to look at them.
- c. **Front Porch Forum Correction of Information:** There was a post on Front Porch Forum that incorrectly stated a loan amount of \$140,000 was taken out for this project. A \$125,000 Forgivable Loan was taken; this Loan does not need to be repaid. It was also noted that no feasibility study has been done. The current Village Wastewater Study that is being funded by the forgivable loan, is the feasibility study.

14. Update on MERP Grant Projects: (emailed in advance) The board was updated on the current progress of the building projects and the total amount spent so far as well as the amount reimbursed. Jacques questioned if solar panels at the Town Garage have been looked at yet. Niki noted that there are still questions around what can be done for solar and that we will be looking into this more over the winter after the bulk of the other projects are finished. The Selectboard agreed to hire Jeff Dunn to do the insulation top off at all the town buildings for the same hourly rate that he is installing windows. Richard talked to Jeff Dunn about fixing the Town Garage door that needs to be done for the insurance. Richard will speak to Nick about getting the door removed and put back in so the work can be done.

15. Discuss Updates on Ballground Property Complaint: There is only one trailer and a camper left there. All the trash has been picked up.

16. Approve Updated Cemetery Policy: (emailed in advance) There was an oversight with the cornerstone cost in the last update to the policy and some slight clarifications made regarding monument benches and the Cemetery Sexton. Dennis motioned to approve the updated cemetery policy, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

17. Review/ Sign Policy for Receipt of Correspondence: (emailed in advance) LaDonna explained the need for the policy. This would streamline handling correspondence that comes into the Town Office, and it would also help explain to people who bring correspondence to the Selectboard what the process will be for answering their questions. Dennis motioned to approve the Selectboard Policy for Receipt of Correspondence, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

18. Recycling Updates:

- a. **Schedule for September:**
September 6th – Jacques Couture
September 13th – Maurice Doyon & Roger Tetreault
September 20th – Richard Degre
September 27th – Dennis Vincent
- b. **Mandatory Training, Who is Attending – September 8th:** Jacques is planning on going, Maurice expressed interest in going.

19. Sheriff's Report for June: (emailed in advance) Board reviewed. 0 Tickets, 2 Warnings, \$0 Fines, 0 Arrests, 14.75 Hours.

- a. **Review North Hill Road Speed Cart Data: (emailed in advance)** The data was reviewed, and the average speed was 34 MPH.

20. Executive Session (if needed): Richard motioned to enter executive session at 6:53pm for a staffing issue, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
Exited executive session at 7:29PM. Richard motioned to give Rick Danforth a \$50 gift certificate for helping with the library sign, with the funds coming from the general fund, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

21. Other Business:

- a. **Discuss Response to Sandy Snyder's Letter: (emailed in advance)** Sandy requested information on missing signs over the years. A response will be sent about the signs currently ordered; there is not information on when they went missing. The Selectboard acknowledges that the signs going missing is an ongoing problem and one that every town faces.
- b. **Reminder - Legal Trail Ordinance Work Session, August 25th at 5PM at the Westfield Town Office:** Informational.
- c. **Possible Dates for Board of Civil Authority Meeting for Biennial Checklist Review:** Tentatively set for August 27th at 5pm.

22. Adjourn: Dennis motioned to adjourn at 7:32PM, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

Westfield Selectboard Approval Date: _____ **with** _____ **change(s)**

X

Jacques Couture
Selectboard Chair

X

Richard Degre
Selectboard

X

Dennis Vincent
Selectboard