

WESTFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING

Minutes

January 12th, 2026 – 5:00 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 (Via Zoom); Richard Degre, Selectboard; Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk; Mike Piper, Constable (Partial Attendance); Carolyn Lyster, Library Board of Trustees (Partial Attendance); Jennifer Stelma, Library Board of Trustees Chair (Partial Attendance); Karen Blais, Library Board of Trustees (Partial Attendance); Carrie Glessner, Library Board of Trustees (Partial Attendance); Will Young, Zoning Administrator (Partial Attendance); Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner (Partial Attendance)

Others Present: Jan Degre (Partial Attendance); Daniel Pellerin, Edward Jones (Partial Attendance); Ted Sedell, Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District, OCNRCD (Via Zoom, Partial Attendance)

1. **Call Meeting to Order – Jacques Couture, Chair:** Jacques Couture brought the meeting to order at 4:59PM.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** None
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** Added 8C – Approved Funding for Balance Rock Road Culvert, Sign General Permit.
4. **Approve Minutes:** (*emailed in advance*) Richard Degre motioned to approve 4a through 4d, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.
 - a. **Approve Minutes of the 12-12-25 Selectboard General Budget Meeting:**
 - b. **Approve Minutes of the 12-15-25 Selectboard Meeting:**
 - c. **Approve Minutes of the 12-18-25 Selectboard Public Meeting – Village Wastewater Study:**
 - d. **Approve Minutes of the 12-30-25 Selectboard Work Session Class 4 & Legal Trail Ordinance:**
 - e. **December Selectboard Meeting To-Do List:** No updates on this.
5. **Correspondence:** (*emailed in advance*) Board reviewed and acknowledged all correspondence.
 - a. **Sandy Snyder – Received December 15, 2025:**
 - b. **Jennifer Grace – October 20, 2025 Meeting Record; Confidential August 27, 2025 Communication; Open Meeting Law Violations; Traffic Safety on North Hill Road; Budget and Legal Expenditures; and Ongoing Unresolved Issues – Received January 2, 2026:**
 - c. **Jennifer Grace – Correction to Previous Correspondence Sent 1/2/26 – Received January 5, 2026:**
6. **Library Report:** The wall is up in the basement, and the bathroom demolition has begun. D&D Electric began the lighting upgrades for the MERP project. Jenn Stelma noted that they are looking into who brought some of the collections to the library or stories about why the collections were created. LaDonna Dunn noted that there was a small handwritten notebook about some of the donations that should be at the library. Carrie Glessner explained that they are going to ask for volunteers to help out with the care of the library collections at Town Meeting. Lisa Deslandes requested the dimensions of the changing table that the board would like in the bathroom so the

contractor can make sure to leave enough wall space for it. Jenn will get the dimensions to Lisa. The library board discussed putting \$10,000 of donation funds into a nine-month CD at Community National Bank. Lisa will do that for them.

a. Discussion on Investments – Edward Jones, Daniel Pellerin: (*emailed in advance*)

Daniel Pellerin from Edward Jones joined the meeting and explained the investment accounts. The library account made 15.41% last year. Currently the cemetery and grader funds are still combined. Some of the accounts were created under an old tax id number. Daniel will be opening three new accounts with the correct tax id number and then moving the investments to the correct accounts so the library, cemetery and grader funds will be split up correctly. The library account is currently made up of 60% stocks and 40% bonds. Carrie noted that the library would like to use the interest from their investments as part of their budget each year. Daniel explained that they can take the capital gains distribution or he can send the change in value throughout the year and they can take part of that. Some years there won't be any increase though. He noted that people sometimes pick a number like 4% and take that every year because over time the increases and decreases should average out and not affect the principal amount. That would be around \$3,000 per year and the library board was thinking of taking \$2,000 a year. Lisa would like to take the money all at once now and then at the end of this year they can look at it again to see what to take out next year. The library board agreed to take 4%, which is \$3,000 out for use in this year's budget. Daniel will get this money moved out of the account before the new accounts are set up. Lisa questioned why the CD's go down some months. Daniel explained that when interest rates increase a CD purchased at a lesser interest rate would sell for less, which causes the rate you could sell for at the moment to decrease. This is reflected in the current value of the CD. The opposite would be true if interest rates went down after you put money into a CD. At the maturity date you will get the full rate of interest that was stated when you initially opened the CD. He also noted that interest only shows after 1 year, so after 6 months you won't see interest reported on the statements.

b. Sign Investment Paperwork: Richard and Dennis signed, Jacques will sign when he returns from vacation.

7. Treasurers Report – Lisa Deslandes:

a. Approve Warrants for December – 11/4/25 \$15,400.68 (bills) & \$12,376.74 (payroll), 11/7/25 \$23,039.21 (bills), 11/10/25 \$4,001.01 (bills), 11/17/25 \$57,770.49 (bills) & \$9,285.87 (payroll), 11/25/25 \$12,822.41 (bills): (*emailed in advance*) Richard Degre motioned to approve the warrants, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

b. Discuss Future CD's at Community National Bank: Lisa let the board know that the bank is not doing 6-month CDs anymore, just nine months. So she opened CD's for 9 months at 3.73% for the reappraisal fund, grader fund, good neighbor fund and unexpected expenses. Jacques Couture motioned to approve these CD's, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

c. Request Increase in Petty Cash Account from \$50 to \$100: Dennis Vincent motioned to increase the petty cash amount from \$50 to \$100, Richard Degre seconded. Motion passed.

8. Highway Update – Eric Kennison:

a. Community Center Plowing/Shoveling: Dennis noted that the Community Center needs to be shoveled and sanded every day. Lisa explained that for the insurance the front steps need to be shoveled also. Eric will let Larry know.

- b. **Updates on Agency of Transportation Small Scale Local Safety Grant – Application Due 2/2/26:** Eric will get photos for a guardrail section on Buck Hill and Dennis noted that they could use a hidden drive sign in one spot and possibly some curve or stop signs.
- c. **Approved Funding for Balance Rock Road Culvert, Sign General Permit – Ted Sedell:** Ted Sedell joined and let the board know that complete funding has been awarded for the Balance Rock Road Culvert. There are two permits that need to be signed. The full amount of \$419,000 dollars in funding that was awarded covers the structure, Ted's time and Eric's estimated pre-bid amount plus an on-site engineer. He explained that BUILD Funding is now available to help pay for the other Taft Brook Culvert. Jason Sevigny and Eric Pope will be helping to apply for that funding. Jacques questioned if that would be a culvert or a bridge, Ted was not sure at this point. Ted noted that there are also designs ready for two culverts on Sniderbrook. Dennis Vincent motioned to move forward with the Balance Rock Road Culvert and for Richard Degre to sign the permits in Jacques' absence, Richard Degre seconded. Motion passed. Richard signed the permits and LaDonna will get them back to Ted. Ted noted that the funding for this culvert is available until 2028. He spoke with Eric and Eric will try to get it completed this year.

9. Update on MERP Grant Projects: (*emailed in advance*)

- a. **Solar Project Update:** Lisa and Niki are meeting with Green Mountain Solar on Thursday to discuss potential sites for the solar panels. They will update the board after this meeting.
- 10. Discuss/Approve Increasing Cemetery Cornerstone Prices – Currently \$250: (*emailed in advance*)** Heritage Memorials is increasing their prices for cornerstones to \$275. Jacques questioned if there is clerical time involved that would require some funds above that price. LaDonna noted that they are now requiring someone to go to the cemetery and put flags out where the cornerstones will be put in. Richard Degre motioned to increase the cornerstone prices to \$300, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

- 11. Discuss/Approve Increasing Zoning Fees – Currently \$55 for Zoning Permit & \$205 for DRB Hearing:** It was previously discussed to bring these prices to \$65 and \$400. Will Young did some calculations and decided that \$70 for a zoning permit, with \$55 going to the Zoning Administrator, and \$370 for a Development Review Board (DRB) Hearing, with \$100 going to the Zoning Administrator would cover the costs. He currently gets \$40 and \$80 respectively. Will can keep track of his time for the year and revisit the pricing again next year to make sure it's working. Dennis Vincent motioned to increase the zoning permits to \$70 and the DRB Hearing prices to \$370 effective immediately, with \$55 of the permit price and \$100 of the hearing price going to the Zoning Administrator, Richard Degre seconded. Motion passed.

- 12. 2025 CLA 54.4%, COD 28.38%, CLA with Statewide Adjustment 77.35%:** Informational.

13. Act 171 Municipal Ethics:

- a. **Approve Ethics Complaint Investigation Policy: (*emailed in advance*)** Dennis Vincent motioned to approve the Ethics Investigation Policy, Richard Degre seconded. Motion passed.
- 14. Sheriff's Report for November: (*emailed in advance*)** Tickets Issued 1, Warnings Issued 6, Fine Total \$105, Arrests 0, 13.25 Hours Billed. Carolyn Lyster questioned if the report notes what roads they spend time on. She was given a copy of the report.
- 15. Recycling Updates:** LaDonna felt that the steel dumpster is not going up at all. Dennis has not seen any tracks around it lately. Styrofoam can be brought to the recycling center again.

a. **Schedule for February:**

February 7th – Jacques Couture
February 14th – Marice Doyon and Roger Tetreault
February 21st – Richard Degre
February 28th – Dennis Vincent

16. Executive Session (if needed): Richard Degre motioned to enter executive session for Confidential Attorney Client Communication and invited LaDonna, Niki and Lisa to join them, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

Richard Degre motioned to exit executive session at 6:48PM, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

Dennis Vincent stated that under counsel from the Town Attorney and Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns (VLCT) the Selectboard did not violate any open meeting laws.

Dennis Vincent motioned to have Town Attorney Nick Daley send a letter to Jennifer Grace in response to her latest correspondence, Richard Degre seconded. Motion passed.

17. Other Business:

i. **Upcoming Meetings - Budget Meeting Thursday, January 15th at 4:30PM:** Informational.

18. Adjourn: Richard Degre motioned to adjourn at 6:50PM, Dennis Vincent seconded. Motion passed.

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

X

Jacques Couture
Selectboard Chair

X

Richard Degre
Selectboard

X

Dennis Vincent
Selectboard