

1 **TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**

2 **Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

3 **Monday, January 26, 2026**

4 **Draft**

5

6 **Members Present:** David Babbott-Klein, Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe

7 **Staff Present:** York Haverkamp, Town Administrator

8 **Others Present:** Lisa Loomis (Valley Reporter)

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10 **I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Brian Shupe. The meeting was

11 held in person at the Waitsfield Town Office and remotely via Zoom.

12

13 **1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A)**

14 No changes were made to the agenda.

15

16 **2. Public Forum**

17 Nobody requested time to speak to the Board.

18

19 **II. Regular Business**

20 **1. Contract for limited surveying services – Wu Ledges**

21 Mr. Shupe explained the proposal from the Conservation Commission (CC) to have surveying

22 work completed, with the first phase to be completed by Glenn Towne, who has done prior

23 extensive work regarding this property. The CC feels strongly that Mr. Towne is the person to

24 contract with for this work, as he knows the history of the property. The second phase would

25 be the completion of any field work determined to be necessary to finalize the survey. Mr.

26 Towne does not have the insurance coverage which may be required for this phase of the work,

27 but has expressed a willingness to sign a hold harmless agreement. Board members noted that

28 the first phase of the work may serve to answer most of the questions surrounding the

29 property lines and other survey details, and agreed to postpone a decision regarding a

30 contractor for the field work portion of the survey.

31

32 **MOTION:** *Mr. Babbott-Klein moved to approve a contract with Glenn Towne for Phase One*

33 *work on the proposed limited surveying at the Wu Ledges property. The motion was seconded*

34 *by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

35

36 **2. Final Budget Review and Appropriations**

37 Recent changes to the budget were reviewed, with it being noted that the Library budget had

38 been reduced slightly and that the Appropriations section had been adjusted in order to allow

39 for new requests to be voted on. The Ventrac will be paid for out of the Town Garage Facilities

40 budget. The version of the budget reviewed had a bottom line increase of 2.3%.

41

42 There was some discussion of the changing needs for MRVAS dispatch services, which will likely

43 increase in the coming months. Mr. Haverkamp will confer with Warren to determine if there is

44 potential for a discount to be requested due to both Fire Departments and now the ambulance

45 service all contracting with Capital dispatch for dispatching.

It was noted that changes in electrical costs due to the age of the solar array will need to be determined for future budgeting purposes.

The Capital Budget was reviewed, with Mr. Curtis explaining that reserves are being spent down, but that funds will likely be available as needed in the upcoming few years if the current rate of contributions is continued. It was agreed that it is likely that unassigned funds will be used for covered bridge work to take place in the spring, before the FY27 budget is operational, and also that the reappraisal fund is currently sufficient and does not need a contribution at this time.

After some discussion and a determination of the overall budget increase if all expense items which will be presented to voters are approved, it was agreed to increase the Street Tree Reserve contribution by \$10K in order to address tree treatment and removal due to emerald ash borer impacts.

3. Review and Approval of 2026 Town Meeting Warning

Mr. Shupe outlined the suggested changes provided through legal review, noting which of these had been incorporated into the draft Warning. The Board then reviewed each Article, adjusting the budget numbers and agreeing upon retaining the language regarding the allocation of LOT receipts as drafted. The Article related to borrowing in advance of tax receipts was removed, as Mr. Babbott-Klien had learned that this authority is granted to municipalities without the need for voter approval.

Mr. Haverkamp will communicate with the landowners impacted by the one-year agricultural stabilization proposal.

There was some discussion regarding the inclusion of the Article regarding the Town's participating in funding a project manager position to assist with implementation of the Active Transportation Corridor. Concerns were raised regarding the position potentially not being able to accomplish much progress in the upcoming year, due to the current funding climate, and that financing this position, as well as ongoing and future expenses related to the Corridor, need to be understood more clearly. It was also noted that the Mad River Path has put in much effort on the Corridor to date, and that in order to maintain momentum some assistance will be necessary. It was agreed to add language to Article specifying that this is to be a one-year expenditure.

MOTION: *Mr. Curtis moved to include the Article as amended in the Warning. The motion was seconded by Mr. Babbott-Klein, and passed with Mr. Messer opposed.*

Regarding the Article related to adoption of an LOT, it was agreed that it is important to keep the language related to the purpose of the funds, although it had been advised that this is not necessary. It was confirmed that the language as proposed is in alignment with the statutory allowances for an LOT. There was some discussion regarding posing a separate question for each tax category, but that change was not favored by all.

MOTION: Mr. Curtis moved to approve the language for the LOT Article, to be voted on by Australian Ballot. The motion was seconded by Mr. Babbott-Klein, and passed with Brian Shupe, Dave, and Chach approving with Mr. Messer opposed?

Town report

Mr. Shupe will draft a Selectboard Report and circulate it for review. He noted that a Budget Report should also be written. Suggestions were made for the dedication of the Town Report.

It was agreed to meet on January 29 at 4:00 pm to approve the Budget and Warning.

4. Consent Agenda

APPROVAL: *A motion to approve the Consent Agenda passed unanimously.*

- Approve Bills Payable & Treasurer's Warrants

5. Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Haverkamp had nothing to add to what was included in the meeting packet.

6. Selectboard Roundtable

Nobody had anything to report.

III. Executive Session

MOTION: *A motion to find that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to enter Executive Session per 1 VSA §313(a)(1)(E) [Civil Litigation or Prosecution], inviting Mr. Haverkamp to join, passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 9:12 pm and returned to open session at 9:43 pm.

No further action was taken by the Board.

IV. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary