

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 10, 2026

Draft

Members Present: David Babbott-Klein, Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe, Larissa Ursprung

Staff Present: York Haverkamp, Town Administrator

Others Present: Chirs Austin, Susan Burbank, Larissa Darius, Mary Beth Herbert, MRVTV, Alice Peal, Joshua Schwartz, Dan Zucker

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Brian Shupe. The meeting was held in person at the Waitsfield Town Office and remotely via Zoom.

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

No changes were made to the agenda.

2. Public Forum

Nobody requested time to address the Board.

II. Regular Business

1. Animal Control Ordinance Enforcement

Mr. Shupe provided some background information regarding two recent incidents in Town, one in which an unleashed dog killed a leashed dog on a section of the Mad River Path (MRP), and another where a dog apparently escaped its leash and killed three of the knotweed herd goats. Mr. Messer and Mary Beth Herbert, the goat herder, outlined some further details of the goat attack situation; Mr. Messer noted that there is an ongoing investigation of this matter. Mr. Shupe indicated that the Town would look into what state statute and the local ordinance allows for compensation in this type of situation.

Mr. Shupe then explained that the update to the Animal Control Ordinance that the Board adopted in May includes a requirement that animals be under physical control of their caretaker (leashed). He indicated that the Board will be considering how to better enforce this and making plans for public awareness/outreach efforts, and noted that the MRP signage needs to be updated to reflect this change.

Larissa Darius and Susan Burbank were present, both as community members and as representatives of Neck of the Woods childcare. They explained that the MRP incident occurred on NOW's property, and reported that signage had been in place requesting that all dogs be leashed on that portion of the Path, but that the signs had been removed by an unknown person(s). They spoke of NOW's practice to visit the trail every day with children ranging in age from infant to five years, and outlined the previous efforts to ensure that the children were safe from unleashed dogs. Since the incident where a dog was killed, the center has eliminated trips to the Path as part of their daily routine due to safety concerns.

Chris Austin asked if the new leash requirement impacts those owners who have full voice control of their dogs, and Mr. Shupe explained that the leash requirement applies to all dogs, clarifying that if a dog is on private property with permission of the owner, a leash is not required.

Alice Peal indicated that she no longer uses the Path out of concern for the safety of herself and her dog.

Dan Zucker voiced concerns regarding recent posts on Front Porch Forum encouraging people to use pepper or bear spray, or possibly carry a weapon, to deter dog attacks. He noted that use of these items generally serves to make the situation more dangerous, and asked that the Board emphasize this in upcoming public awareness efforts related to dog control.

Mr. Shupe confirmed that Mr. Messer will continue to follow up on these incidents, and suggested putting together a group to discuss public education/outreach. Mr. Messer will reach out to the Chamber regarding being part of that group.

2. Wastewater Municipal Project Manager

Mr. Haverkamp noted that a job description and draft RFQ were included in the meeting materials, and indicated that having a project manager begin working in time to be available for upcoming bid openings and easement work would be ideal. It was agreed that the RFQ should be published in a manner which indicates that both individuals and consulting firms are encouraged to apply.

MOTION: *Mr. Babbott-Klein moved to authorize the Town Administrator to finalize and issue the Request for Qualifications and Quote for a Wastewater Municipal Project Manager, with a submission deadline to be determined by the Town Administrator and Wastewater Team. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

3. FEMA update (Meadow Road Bridge and Culverts)

Mr. Haverkamp reported that the culvert work on Old Center Fayston Road and Center Fayston Road has gone out to bid, that permitting is underway and easement language is being drafted. He indicated that an extension of time for completion will likely need to be requested.

Regarding the Meadow Road bridge, Mr. Haverkamp confirmed that FEMA had agreed to provide the amount estimated for replacing the decking, \$404K, to be but toward bridge replacement, under the condition that the replacement project is underway by July 2028.

Mr. Haverkamp will reach out to Tyler Billingsley in order to determine if he is able to get the project to 30% design, or else assist with drafting an RFP for this design work.

4. Town Garage Construction Manager

It was noted that selection of a Construction Manager would be discussed in Executive Session, that a contract would be contingent upon a bond vote passing, and that full financial information related to the project would be needed in time to appropriately warn the bond vote.

5. Consent Agenda

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

- Approve Bills Payable & Treasurer's Warrants
- Approval of Minutes of June 22 and July 22, 2026

10. Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Haverkamp highlighted some of the information from his written report related to a recent VOSHA visit to Town properties, and noted that he is following up with required documentation as necessary.

11. Selectboard Roundtable

Ms. Ursprung suggested that ideas for streamlining the process of ordinance and policy review be discussed at an upcoming meeting, as the Wastewater Ordinance and others will likely require some detailed consideration. Mr. Shupe pointed out that opportunities for public input will also need to be incorporated into the process, as well as legal review.

The status of East Warren Road striping was outlined by Mr. Haverkamp, who noted that Josh Rogers has had a very busy schedule recently, and that they would be reaching out to get included on an upcoming striping schedule.

The Board expressed their appreciation for the efforts Mr. Rogers has been putting into his Road Foreman position.

Mr. Shupe noted that the Pines picnic area had been greatly improved.

Mr. Shupe asked about the tree removal at the Library; Mr. Haverkamp explained that Adam Whitney is working to schedule the flaggers needed for this project.

Mr. Curtis asked about efforts for notifying the public regarding upcoming paving work; Mr. Haverkamp outlined where he will publish this information.

IV. 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)(2) [Real Estate], 1 VSA §313(a)(1)(A) [Contracts], 1 VSA §313(a)(4) [Employee Discipline], inviting Mr. Haverkamp and Mr. Schwartz to join, passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:06 pm and returned to open session at 9:29 pm.

MOTION: *A motion to contract with Conner Construction for construction management services for the Town Garage project, contingent upon a related bond vote passing in November, passed unanimously.*

V. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary