TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 14, 2026

Draft

Members Present: David Babbott-Klein, Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe, Larissa Ursprung
Staff Present: York Haverkamp, Town Administrator; JB Weir, Zoning Administrator
Others Present: David DeFreest, Peter Edlund, Emma Hanson (Planning Commission), John (MRVTV), Pat Travers, Helen Ward

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)
Review of Minutes was added as item 9A.

2. Public Forum
Lynne Kingsbury expressed her general satisfaction with the work of the Public Works crew, and reported on three items she felt should be addressed: storm drains needing to be raised, the apron on Cross Road being enlarged, and removal of trees which had been cut up and left in the roadside ditch. Mr. Haverkamp indicated that he would address these matters.

Peter Edlund provided some background info on the creation of the Bridge Street pocket park, noting that the five boulders in the park were placed in recognition of the loss of five Harwood students' lives in an auto accident on October 8, 2016. He suggested that the Board approve placement of a plaque at the site recognizing the loss of local youth. Board members agreed to contact pertinent parties and potentially create an ad hoc committee to review this idea, and to hold further discussion of this at an upcoming meeting.

II. Public Hearing

Amendment to the Waitsfield Town Plan
Mr. Shupe opened the hearing and provided some background information regarding the amendments made to the Plan, noting that the narrative and goals regarding child care were updated in order to satisfy Town Plan requirements. Mr. Weir confirmed that approval by both the Selectboard and the CVRPC Commissioners will provide an extension to 8 years of the 4-year conditional approval that was granted, based upon this language being added to the Plan.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Shupe closed the hearing.

MOTION: *Mr. Curtis moved to approve the amended Town Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Babbott-Klein, and passed unanimously.*

III. Regular Business

1. Couples Club Sidewalk

Pat Travers spoke of the drainage problems at the driveway of the Couples Club, explaining that the tilt of the sidewalk toward the driveway, rather than out to the road, has exacerbated the erosion issues. He indicated that the organization does not have the funding to continue paying for the associated repairs, and suggested that the sidewalk be reconstructed so that the water flows to the road side. Board members agreed to gather information regarding this modification, and directed Mr. Haverkamp to obtain some quotes for the work. It was noted that there are likely funds available in the Transportation Path Reserve.

2. Short-Term Rental (STR) Draft Ordinance

The PC had provided a draft of a potential ordinance for Selectboard review. Emma Hanson explained that there is limited information available about STRs in Waitsfield, that there is one known problematic property, and it is unknown what the impacts on long-term rentals are. Therefore, the PC approached this draft with a focus on safety issues for licensure requirements, with the registry aspect intended to help gather data needed for further analysis.

Mr. Weir explained that the draft is based upon a template provided by VLCT, and that the proposal is for STR owners to voluntarily register, with the PC at this point not contemplating the use of registry software. There are minimal requirements to be met for licensure, which would be satisfied through self-verification, and operating without a license is to be considered a violation.

There followed some discussion of approaches taken in other towns and some feedback provided by Board members regarding the PC draft. It was noted that there is different treatment of STR connections in the draft Wastewater Ordinance, indicating that some method of identifying those is necessary. It was agreed that more outreach should take place, and that the Selectboard will hold a public meeting once further information has been gathered. It was also noted that there needs to be development of an application form that ensures that appropriate and desired information is being collected for analysis.

Board members agreed that they would like a synopsis of other towns' approaches, and also suggested that Eric Friedman and STR owners be invited to a meeting to provide further information and feedback; Mr. Haverkamp and Mr. Wier will gather information and arrange for this feedback to be provided.

3. Joslin Memorial Library Park

Mr. Haverkamp reported that he had met with Anna Church, Children's Librarian, who confirmed that holding toddler gatherings in the park area is a challenge, due to children leaving the group and heading up the incline to the sidewalk/road area.

The Board discussed cost, maintenance, and visual impacts of various solutions, and it was agreed that a small committee will be organized by Mr. Haverkamp to meet and discuss this matter.

4. Culvert Engineering: NECE Amendment No. 1

Amendment No. 1 to the New England Consulting Engineers agreement, adding bid-phase and construction-phase services ($27,300 lump sum; revised total

$57,300). Mr. Haverkamp explained that the original contract was signed and complete, and the remainder of the work is to bring the project to finality, from bid opening to construction. He noted that things are lining up for a spring/early summer 2027 timeframe for the culvert installation.

MOTION: *Mr. Babbott-Klein moved to authorize the Town Administrator to execute Amendment No. 1 to the NECE culvert engineering agreement, in the amount of $27,300 for a revised total of $57,300. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

5. Work Plan Review

It was agreed that several items included in the Plan should have their status updated, particularly those which have been completed. The logistics of planning for further review were discussed, along with reminders of items that need to be added to the Plan.

6. Public Works Building (Town Garage) Update

Mr. Haverkamp reported that the team has been meeting regularly, and that Connor (construction manager firm) is currently working to outline the various costs associated with construction. In order to meet certain dates for providing notice of a bond vote, a special Selectboard meeting has been scheduled for September 24. Mr. Haverkamp indicated that there is increasing confidence that the new proposed location on the site will be where the new building is sited. He also noted that environmental assessment results have not yet been reported.

7. Route 100/17 Intersection

It was discussed that there has been correspondence regarding this intersection and the potential for sidewalks/crossings to be installed, but confirmed that at this point VTrans has no funding to complete further studies. VTrans has suggested that the Town seek grant funding to have a study completed, but it was noted that a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant is unlikely to be awarded at this point, due to recent awards being granted for the local area, and there are very few other suitable grants available.

8. Bridge(s) Update

Covered bridge – Mr. Haverkamp reported that the emergency repairs undertaken by the Public Works Crew have been completed, and the urgency to undertake further work has been reduced. An updated proposal has not been received from Miles Jenness, and none of the other builders who had initially expressed some interest in the project had responded to the RFP. Mr. Haverkamp suggested that Mr. Jenness may eventually provide an updated proposal. The Board asked that potential contractors be contacted regarding proposal submissions.

Regarding ticketing, Mr. Haverkamp explained that Captain Meyer (Washington County Sheriff Department) has noted that additional signage is necessary, place in advance of the bridge entrance. Mr. Haverkamp is investigating exactly what is necessary in terms of language and location of this signage, which will also provide for large vehicles turning around or using another route before reaching the signage right at the bridge entrance.

Meadow Road – A new bridge inspection report compiled by VTrans had been obtained by Mr. Haverkamp; the report indicates continued degradation, notes some particularly deteriorated structural issues, and calls for a lowering of weight limits for emergency vehicles, as well as reiterating that if an 8-ton general use limit cannot be enforced the bridge should be closed.

The possibility of installing a temporary bridge was discussed, with questions raised regarding whether the condition of the abutments would allow for support of a temporary bridge in that location, or if it would need to be sited adjacent to the current bridge. There was also discussion of placing additional signage, including posting of the suggested lower emergency vehicle weights.

David DeFreest joined the meeting, and outlined for the Board what his vehicle weights, both empty and loaded, are. He indicated that if the bridge is not deemed to be safe for the 100 trips required to harvest corn in the Meadow Road fields, he would instead travel to Moretown Village and turn around on Hurdle Road to access the fields via Pony Farm/North Road. He explained that this is an added expense, but that his first priority is safety. Board members indicated that the bridge may well not be safe for this amount of heavy traffic; there was some discussion of the difference in weight between the empty and loaded tandems and tractor trailers and how they relate to the suggested emergency vehicle limits. It was pointed out that the corn harvest would be regular heavy use, which may have a different impact than infrequent emergency use.

Board members agreed with Mr. Shupe's outlining that agriculture is important to the community in various ways, and that they would like to make this as least difficult as possible while keeping safety needs at the forefront. It was agreed that Mr. Haverkamp would clarify with VTrans what their weight limit suggestions mean, and Mr. DeFreest indicated that he would study the VTrans report in order to assess the potential for his use of the bridge for corn harvest.

It was agreed that new signage with new posted limits will be put in place, but that the bridge will not be closed at this point. Fuel delivery companies will be reminded to not use the bridge, as the heating season and frequency of deliveries increases.

9A. Review of Meeting Minutes
The Minutes of the August 24, 2026 meeting were amended and approved.

9B. Consent Agenda
APPROVAL: *A motion to approve the Consent Agenda passed unanimously.*

- Approve Bills Payable & Treasurer's Warrants
- Approve amended quote from Kingsbury
- Approve Town property seed and propagules collection by Friends of the Mad River
- Approve fee waiver for Neck of the Woods Certificate of Occupancy and lobby expansion Permit fee
- Approve renewal of Afterthoughts 1st Class, 2nd Class, and 3rd Class Liquor Licenses, and Outdoor Consumption Permit

13. Town Administrator's Report
Mr. Haverkamp offered a reminder that the next day was a date that municipal tax payments were due.

14. Selectboard Roundtable

Mr. Shupe suggested that an acknowledgment of Alice Peal's service to the town should be offered, and it was agreed that her upcoming memorial service would be an appropriate time to provide this, with ideas to be discussed by the Board beforehand.

Mr. Shupe reported that he, Mr. Messer, and Mr. Haverkamp had held a beneficial meeting to discuss public education and outreach regarding dog behavior, and that there would be follow up forthcoming.

Mr. Curtis noted that the Joslin Hill paving had been done well. It was agreed to have the road striped when the line stripers are in town.

Mr. Messer asked for confirmation that there is appropriate signage regarding liability posted at the covered bridge; this was prompted by a recent photo of an individual jumping off the roof of the bridge. It was indicated that there are such signs posted.

Mr. Messer reported that an individual had volunteered to serve as an emergency management coordinator, and was ready to begin training.

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] and 1 VSA §313(a)(4) [Employee Discipline], inviting Mr. Haverkamp to join, passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 10:02 pm and returned to open session at 10:45 pm.

MOTION: *Mr. Curtis moved to authorize the Town Administrator to seek and retain a qualified wastewater engineering firm to review the wastewater project documents before the bidding information is published, at a cost not to exceed $10K. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

V. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary