

Selectboard Meeting October 5, 2026

Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2026, 6:00 PM

Present: Vice-Chair William Perkins, Select Board Members Isaiah Casey, Miriam Simonds and Jason Petrarca. Also present were Treasurer John Zimmer and Town Clerk Elaine Cashin. Public present: Peggy Zimmer, Carmen Anderson, Ellie Majchrzak, Deb Smith, Tim Hayes, Bob Kennedy, Pam Kennedy, Carol Davis, Gabrielle Gervais. Donna Dzugas and Art Zweil were admitted via Zoom. Absent: David Stevens

Bill called the meeting to order at 6:01PM. He announced that tax bills have been sent and are due at the Town Office by 4:00 PM on October 20, and that postmarks are not accepted under any circumstances.

The Town Clerk reported that General Election ballots have been mailed. Voters who have not received one should wait another week because of state mailing problems, then call the Clerk's office to request an absentee ballot. The Clerk also announced a separate November 3 ballot on merging the elementary and high school boards into one school district. This ballot will not be mailed to every voter. It must be requested and either picked up or mailed to the address on record, and the Clerk expected to have the ballots that week.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA?

The Town Clerk reported late correspondence: notices from VLCT, a public hearing notice for Barton Electric, and a court update on the ITW tower from Cindy Kriebel. Jason motioned and Miriam seconded to add items to the agenda. Motion passed.

TREASURER

Fundraising and Donation Policy and List of Donations for Selectboard review

Treasurer Zimmer presented the revised policy. It incorporated attorney Jim Barlow's language ("to the extent permitted by law," "will not voluntarily disclose information"). The Selectboard may accept or deny donations. Donors may designate a purpose, and undesignated gifts go to the general fund or another use chosen by the Board. Because donations are tax deductible, acknowledgment letters containing the required IRS language will be sent this year.

Isaiah motioned and Miriam seconded to approve the revised Town of Westmore Fundraising and Donation Policy Purpose Statement as written as well as the list of donations to date that was attached to the Statement. Motion passed.

Vt Rte 5A Scoping Study -Draft Press Release for grant award from Vermont Community Foundation for Selectboard review.

Treasurer Zimmer explained that the Vermont Community Foundation's \$5,000 award is paid up front and requires a press release as one of the requirements. Bill motioned and

Jason seconded to accept the award, issue the draft press release as drafted by Peggy Zimmer and post it on the Town website. Motion passed.

VTrans Grant in Aid (GA1402) Invoicing Spreadsheet: Signature Needed.

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to authorize the Chair to sign the invoicing spreadsheet for VTrans Grant in Aid GA1402. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Town Plan Survey

Zoning Chair Bob Kennedy reported on the NVDA regional planning meeting he attended. Staff departures at the regional commission may delay the regional plan, which has a December 31 deadline, and he planned to attend the October 15 meeting. He said the Westmore survey indicated that respondents overwhelmingly favored preserving land. Residents may still submit comments and attend planning meetings before the plan is adopted. The Town Clerk will post the results of the survey to the Website. No action was taken.

Taplin Portable Toilets- Price Increase

With a recent notice of price increase, John noted that Taplin will charge \$160 per toilet per month effective October 1, up from \$135 at the start of the year and \$145 on April 1. The Town rents six to seven units in summer. Service includes cleaning and pumping, with extra charges for additional pickups. With no current competition, the Board agreed to explore alternative vendors over the winter before next summer.

LWCF Outdoor Recreation Grant: Discussion North Beach - Bathroom Facility

Treasurer Zimmer reported that the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant requires a minimum \$25,000 request with a 50 percent match, and a bathroom alone would not qualify. The Town could instead pursue a comprehensive North Beach improvement project covering traffic flow, safety, a bathroom facility, lighting, ADA compliance, crosswalks and parking. The pre-application is due November 20, the full application is due January 31, and awards are expected around 2028. Elaine noted that the LWCF Funding was involved in the purchase of the North Beach property in the 1970's. Treasurer Zimmer planned to attend a remote seminar the next day. Members discussed the program's perpetual public-use requirement and its rules on resident and non-resident fees. The Board agreed that a special meeting would be needed later in the fall or winter if the pre-application advances. Food truck policy was also raised for inclusion in the planning. Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to authorize the Treasurer to move forward with the LWCF Outdoor Recreation Grant process with North Beach improvements in mind. Motion passed.

Community Spaces & Activities- AARP Grant-Request to apply/Oct Calendar

Pam K. reported that AARP invited the Town to reapply for up to \$4,000, with a focus on intergenerational activities. Ideas included a story time, a snowshoe lending program, monthly gatherings, and a stipend for a contractor to run events. She asked the Board to consider plowing the town forest parking area, and the Road Commissioner noted it is already plowed after storms. Liability and waivers for snowshoeing would be reviewed before the next meeting. Pam also invited the Board to the community gathering on October 17 in the Town Cottage and requested \$150 for the CSA Halloween party. The church is donating the space.

Jason motioned and Bill seconded to approve CSA Committee applying for the AARP grant. Motion passed.

Jason motioned and Miriam seconded to approve \$150 for the CSA Halloween party. Motion passed.

Chester Perry-Contract for Municipal Building work-Signature Needed.

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Bill reported that Chester Perry's rot repairs are essentially complete. They included sill, sister-joist and porch rail work, and the contractor recommended removing a 2-inch ledge that traps water and not replacing it. The Board discussed adding gutters in next year's budget.

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to sign the previously approved contract for \$35,000 for sill and joist work on the Municipal Building with Chester Perry. Motion passed.

Request to get a new toilet for Municipal Building: Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to approve the Town Clerk getting an estimate for the purchase and installation of a new toilet in the Municipal Building. Motion passed.

Note: Andy will not be here for Town Meeting-Moderator needed

The Town Clerk noted that Andy will not be available for Town Meeting and that a moderator is needed. The Clerk asked the Board and public to spread the word.

Notice - ACT 250 Public Meeting regarding 351 Blueberry Point-October 15th.

The Town Clerk announced a public meeting on October 15 at 4:30 PM at the municipal offices regarding 351 Blueberry Point. The notice was informational only.

OLD BUSINESS

Response from Jim Barlow on Road Sign

Bill reported that attorney Jim Barlow advised the Town faces no liability, and the decision whether to prosecute for stolen road signs rests with the prosecutor. Members expressed support for prosecution to deter future thefts, noting that other towns had losses in the thousands of dollars.

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded that the Town Clerk would respond to the state trooper and prosecutor that the Town supports appropriate charges for the Westmore property.

VLCT- Update on Paving Deficit

Bill reported that VLCT counsel advised that overspending the budget is not illegal but is not recommended. He clarified that the paving had been tabled, not canceled. Given the late season and poor pavement performance in cold weather, the Board favored waiting. Members noted that Long Pond Road may require grinding next year.

Isaiah motioned and Miriam seconded to cancel the paving of Long Pond Road in 2026. Motion passed.

ROAD FOREMAN

Estimates on Trees behind the Town Cottage: The item was tabled because two additional contractors had yet to submit estimates.

LOCAL CITIZENS and VISITORS: Questions and Discussion

Tim Hayes asked whether the Town could participate in Act 250 and Section 248 proceedings to give residents standing. Bob K. raised concerns about representing the whole Town, the stricter-law rule and limited resources. Donna reported that the Vermont Supreme Court had asked why the Town had not been more involved in the ITW tower case. She said the only town submission was a letter signed by the planning board chair, and she urged more active Select Board and Planning Commission participation. A resident also urged better communication with residents and state agencies. No action was taken.

Correspondence: All correspondence is available in the Town Clerk's office for review.

Northeast Kingdom Human Services (QPR suicide prevention training), Newport Downtown Development (October 16–17 community workshop at the Gateway Center), Northeast Kingdom Community Action (Homestead Declaration and free tax preparation), Thank-you note from Champlain Valley Equipment. A resident spoke favorably of the tax preparation service.

Correspondence from Cindy Kriebble re: ITW Tower Case

The Town Clerk then read the late-added court order, in which the Vermont Supreme Court denied the ITW tower appellants' motion for reargument for failing to identify any points of law or fact overlooked, effectively closing the case.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS: Selectboard Meeting
September 21**

Bill motioned and Isaiah seconded to approve the Sept 21 Meeting Minutes. Motion passed.

REVIEW BILLS and SIGN SELECT ORDERS & PAYROLL #20

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to approve Select Orders #20. Motion passed.

Possible Executive Session

Bill motioned and Isaiah seconded to adjourn at 7:22 PM. Motion passed.

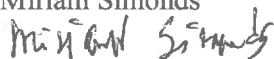
Minutes prepared by Hey.gov and Elaine Cashin

David Stevens: Absent

William Perkins



Miriam Simonds



Isaiah Casey



Jason Petrarca