

Selectboard Meeting

Meeting Minutes

August 10, 2026, 6:00 PM 30 Hinton Hill Road, Westmore

In attendance: David Stevens, Bill Perkins, Miriam Simonds, Isaiah Casey, Jason Petrarca, Elaine Cashin, Bob Kennedy, Ellie Majchrzak, John Zimmer, Peggy Zimmer, Carol Davis, Andy Berley, Chris Roy

Via Zoom: Britta Milks, Bruce Tanner, Gabby Gervais, Maree Bushey, Kitty Ufford-Chase

David called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

The Chair announced the Primary Election on Tuesday, August 11, 2026, with polls open from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM at 30 Hinton Hill Road.

Town Clerk office hours for the weeks of August 24th through September 4th were noted as Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM.

Additions to the Agenda

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to add the grant agreement (GIA 2027 GA1402), paving update, transfer station item, and North Beach porta potty structure to the agenda. Motion passed.

TREASURER

Scoping Study RFP: Approval needed to proceed with bidding process

John presented the Request for Proposals for the Vt Rte 5 Scoping study. He reported the study is capped at \$50,000, funded by federal funds, requiring at least three bids sourced from a state-provided list of qualified engineers. Because all bids will be at the \$50,000 cap, the selection will be based on qualitative criteria including firm qualifications, personnel experience, project understanding, proposal clarity, and work samples — each weighted and scored by the Select Board as the decision-making team. Three public engagement meetings are required as part of the process. The proposal's due date is October 5th, with bids submitted in six sealed envelopes and opened at a public meeting.

Miriam motioned and Bill seconded to approve the RFP and approval to proceed with the bidding process for the scoping study. Motion passed.

Set the Tax Rate

John reported the municipal tax to be raised was reported at \$897,399.02. The nonresidential education rate came in at \$1.93 and the residential education rate at \$1.6865. Combined with the municipal rate, the Nonresidential tax rate is \$2.4927 (up 3.79%), and the Homestead tax rate is \$2.2476 (up 1.87%). Tax bills were anticipated to go out the following week.

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to set the tax rate as presented. Motion passed.

Tax Anticipation Note Paperwork: Approval needed

A discussion was held regarding a Tax Anticipation Note with Community National Bank, in the amount of \$300,000 needing a signature. The Treasurer reported that the note operates on a nonarbitrage basis, with the bank paying 3.47% interest on funds held. The board moved on to the next item of business with no action taken.

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Violations Discussion: Bob Kennedy, Maree Bushey, Andy Berley

Bob Kennedy, Planning Commission Chair, provided an overview of Westmore's zoning framework, clarifying that the town operates under a single zone with both permitted and conditional uses, all governed by town bylaws. He emphasized the importance of enforcement to protect the environment, neighbors, and the town's future character. Zoning Administrator Andy Berley and Lister Maree Bushey presented concerns about an increasing frequency of minor zoning violations and the growing interest from outside investors in acquiring properties for short-term rental operations. They requested a formal commitment from the Select Board to back enforcement actions, including pursuing fines of up to \$200 per day, placing liens on non-compliant properties, and, if necessary, taking matters to Environmental Court. It was noted that prior Select Boards had supported such enforcement and that without consistent backing, the credibility of zoning enforcement would be undermined. The Board agreed that legal fees should be budgeted for in the upcoming November budget process. Kennedy also announced that the Planning Commission would be launching a townwide survey on August 12th for three weeks as part of the town plan update, with the survey included in outgoing tax bills.

Isaiah motioned and Jason seconded to support the Zoning Administrator and Zoning Board in zoning violation enforcement. Motion passed.

Vermont Heritage Spring Water

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to sign the contract with Vermont Heritage Spring Water for the garage cooler rental. Motion passed.

2027 Appropriation Request Orleans Essex VNA:

Isaiah motioned and Jason seconded to approve the Orleans Essex VNA appropriation request and add it to the 2027 Town Meeting warning. Motion passed.

Deputy Town Health Officer Bruce Tanner Resignation

The Select Board received the resignation of Bruce Tanner as Deputy Town Health Officer. Though the Selectboard may appoint a replacement, the state holds final appointing authority. It was noted that the position carries significant responsibilities and the incoming deputy should be fully briefed on the scope of the role. Elaine will reach out to Monica to see if she is interested.

Isaiah motioned and Jason seconded to accept the resignation of Bruce Tanner as Deputy Town Health Officer. Motion passed.

Claims Loss Detail – Information Only

Any catfish in Willoughby – Information Only

The Board noted a recent inquiry regarding catfish in Lake Willoughby. A response from Judd, fisheries biologist with the Agency of Natural Resources, indicated that extensive fish sampling over the years has never confirmed the presence of catfish in the lake, though he acknowledged they could be present in low numbers. No action required.

Casella: Enhanced digital experience – Information Only

NEK Broadband Pricing for Municipality

The Town Clerk reported on a recent meeting with NEK Broadband regarding pricing for municipal internet service. While the pricing was noted to be favorable, the Town Clerk expressed satisfaction with the current provider (Consolidated for the secure network, Xfinity for the guest network) given the absence of service issues. A recommendation was made to consult with the town's IT contact before making any changes

Discussion of swimming zone

A Board member reported on ongoing issues with the North Beach swim zone, including boats tying to buoys and cutting across the swim area. It was noted that orange buoys do not officially designate a swim zone under U.S. regulations; proper designation requires regulation buoys extending 36 inches above the water marked "Swim Zone." The Board member proposed budgeting for compliant buoys (estimated \$350–\$400 each) for the upcoming year, and noted the potential availability of a Vermont watershed grant through the Department of Environmental Resources, typically due in late February. No action was taken; the item was flagged for the budget process.

Town Cottage Calendar -Information Only

. The Board acknowledged receipt of the calendar.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on goose granular repellent food for North Beach

The Town Clerk reported that after consulting with Larry Smith, PACIF Loss Specialist, use of the goose granular repellent at North Beach was not recommended, as the product contains peanut shell filler and carries labeling advising keeping out of reach of children, making it unsuitable for a public beach. The existing coyote decoys were noted to be ineffective when beachgoers actively feed the geese nearby.

Swim Program Thank You from Jen Woolard

The Town Clerk conveyed thanks from Jen Woolard on behalf of the swim program. Classes were reported to be filled, and the program was well received by families in the community. The final invoice is pending, which will include final enrollment numbers.

Facility Use Policy Amended

Isaiah motioned and Jason seconded to accept the Facility Use Policy with the amended wording replacing all references to the Westmore Association (at their request) with “a representative of the Community Spaces and Activities Committee”. Motion passed.

Donations to the Town – Procedure

The Town Clerk shared best practices information from VLCT and town counsel regarding donation procedures. The Board discussed establishing a formal donation policy that would include a default designation (suggested to be the North Beach, given its use as the primary

venue for donation-generating events) with an option for donors to specify an alternative use. It was agreed that all donations should be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Nominations for VT Community Leadership Summit to be held Oct 6 at Castleton University - No nominations were identified at this time. The Board noted that there is still time to submit a nomination and asked that anyone interested come forward.

LIQUOR COMMISSION: Liquor Control – Consideration of Liquor Permit Application

The Select Board, acting in its capacity as the local liquor commission, considered a catering permit application.

Jason motioned and Isaiah seconded to approve the Request to Cater permit from SIJM LLC for the event at the Notch House on August 29, 2026 from 4:30PM to 10PM.
Motion passed.

Grant Agreement GA-1402

Miriam motioned and Isaiah seconded to sign The Grants in Aid 2027 agreement (GA-1402), in the amount of \$8,000 with a \$2,000 match. Motion passed.

Transfer Station

The Board discussed a request from transfer station staff regarding whether sofas and couches should be charged a flat \$50 fee rather than being weighed. After discussion, the Board determined that the existing weight-based pricing should be maintained for consistency and fairness. The Board also discussed encouraging residents to transport bulky items directly to the Lyndonville NKWMD facility

Porta Potty Structure at North Beach

The Board discussed the deteriorating condition of the old concrete porta potty structure at North Beach. It was noted that PACIF Loss Control had flagged the structure as a potential liability and safety concern.

Isaiah motioned and Bill seconded to demolish the old cement portapotty structure. Motion passed.

Paving Update

The Road Commissioner reported that paving of Long Pond Road is expected to begin the following week. The Board also discussed the possibility of paving a small apron at the end of Stony Brook Lane, which is located on a state right-of-way. Questions were also raised regarding road line painting on the Rte 16 paved road.

Isaiah motioned and Jason seconded to authorize contact with the state regarding paving an apron at the end of Stony Brook Lane. Motion passed.

LOCAL CITIZENS and VISITORS: Questions and Discussion

A public attendee raised the issue of NEK Broadband's follow-up with the Road Commissioner regarding utility pole approvals, noting that multiple messages had gone unanswered. The Board confirmed this item is on the Road Commissioner's agenda for the following day.

Correspondence

- NVDA Public Hearing September 24 for Regional Plan Update — noted for the record.
- Formal Complaint Encroachment on Route 5A — VTrans responded and addressed the matter. . No further action required by the town.
- Rabies Vaccine Bait Drop — An ongoing bait drop is in progress from August through August 31st, with approximately 915,000 blister packs being distributed in the region.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS: Selectboard Meeting June 29 and July 27.

Miriam motioned and Jason seconded to approve the minutes of the Select Board Meetings of June 29, 2026 and July 27, 2026. Motion passed.

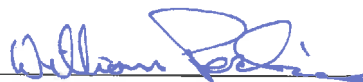
REVIEW BILLS and SIGN SELECT ORDERS & PAYROLL #16: Approval Needed

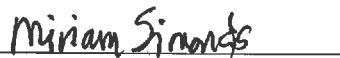
Bill motioned and Miriam seconded to approve the select orders and Payroll #16 was made and seconded. Motion carried.

David motioned and Isaiah seconded to adjourn at 8PM. Motion passed.

Minutes prepared by ClerkMinutes and Elaine Cashin

David Stevens 

William Perkins 

Miriam Simonds 

Isaiah Casey 

Jason Petrarca 