

Town of Westmore
Municipal Building
Westmore, VT 05860
March 9, 2026
6 PM

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

In attendance: David Stevens, William Perkins, Miriam Simonds, Isaiah Casey, Jason Petrarca, Carol Casey, Ed Barber, Britta Milks in person and Mary Bushey, Amanda Smith, and Diane Lehder via Zoom.

Call to Order

Chair David called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Additions to the Agenda

Four additions were made to the agenda: electricity at the North Beach (Jason), highway budget discussion, transfer station facility improvement (Miriam), and RAMP group update on lake moorings (Bill).

Motion: Bill made a motion to add the four items mentioned to the agenda. Isaiah seconded. All in favor.

Introduction for our new Selectboard member Jason Petrarca for a 2 year term and Election of William Perkins for a 3 year term

The board acknowledged Jason Petrarca's election to a 2-year term and Bill Perkins' election to a 3-year term for the record.

Reminder: Dog Licenses are due on Wednesday, April 1

Chair David reminded residents that dog licenses are due April 1st, with the town office open from 9 AM to 2 PM. Required documents include neutered/spayed verification and vaccination certificates signed by licensed veterinarians.

Liquor Control: Consideration of Liquor Permit Application-Selectboard acting in its capacity as local liquor commission.

Motion: Bill made a motion to approve both limited event permits for Ryan Cole to be held at The Little Farm a) To begin June 17th at 10AM and end June 20 at 10 PM conditional on Bar Service only on June 20 from 1 PM to 10PM and b) To begin July 22

at 10AM and end July 25 at 10PM conditional on Bar Service only on July 25 from 1 PM to 10PM. Isaiah seconded. Motion passed.

Overweight Permits - JBL Hauling, LLC and JP Sicard, Inc

Motion: Miriam made a motion to approve the overweight permits for JBL Hauling LLC and JP Sicard Incorporated. Isaiah seconded. Motion passed.

Perkins Property Management - Contract for both FY 2025 AND FY 2026

There was discussion about whether cemetery maintenance contracts should go out to bid, with Jason suggesting this might be worthwhile for cost savings. Bill noted that John Perkins also digs graves, which is difficult to find contractors for, and that other towns have had difficulty finding reliable cemetery maintenance providers.

The board determined that cemetery commissioners should actually handle cemetery contracts, not the selectboard, since they are an independent commission. The FY 2026 Contract was tabled.

Motion: Jason made a motion to sign the contract for fiscal year 2025 as the work has already been completed. Isaiah seconded. Motion passed.

Westmore Town Forest Management Plan Long Pond Road

Discussion focused on why the forester (Jared Nunery) requested approval from all five selectboard members when three had approved it at a previous meeting. Board members expressed concerns about getting locked into specific forestry practices without clear understanding of the plan's implications for future sugaring operations, which was the original impetus for the town forest plan. The item was tabled to allow time for deeper review and to invite the forester to explain why full board approval was needed.

Assessment of County Tax for the Year

The board reviewed the Orleans County tax assessment for the Town of Westmore, noting it was for informational purposes only with no action required.

Stormwater Municipal Roads Permit Fee

- **Motion:** Isaiah made a motion to approve the \$500 payment to be made electronically as suggested by ANR and requested by the Town Clerk. Miriam seconded. Motion passed.

Wages for New Lister Amanda Smith

Mary Bushey introduced new lister Amanda Smith and explained wage adjustments needed due to John's resignation and increased workload. She requested moving Susan Blackstone to lister #2 position at \$17.05/hour and setting Amanda's wage at \$16.55/hour. Mary indicated she could manage the increases within the existing budget by adjusting other line items.

Motion: Isaiah made a motion to increase Susan Blackstone's wage to \$17.05 an hour and set Amanda Smith's wage at \$16.55 an hour. Miriam seconded. Motion passed.

MVP Health Insurance Contract Update

This item was noted as information only, with Jacques Roberge to handle.

Grant Management Policy Review to prepare for Final Copy to be signed March 23rd

The board noted that attorney Jim Barlow had made substantial changes to the policy. The final version will be ready for signing at the March 23rd meeting. This policy requires anyone applying for grants on behalf of the town to go through proper town approval processes.

Electricity at the North Beach

Jason reported an incident where multiple cars were doing donuts in the North Beach parking lot, and when police responded, they asked about video surveillance. He explained that the electrical power to the cameras failed last fall, eliminating the security system. Jason emphasized the need for both safety and security reasons to restore electricity, especially with planned improvements including potential fee collection and Wi-Fi capabilities.

Dan noted previous bids were around \$7,000-\$8,000 for new electrical installation due to underground line failure. Discussion included upgrading to higher quality cameras and adding Wi-Fi for remote monitoring capability. The board also discussed adding lighting for better nighttime surveillance.

Motion: Isaiah made a motion to put electrical and Wi-Fi installation at North Beach out for bids. Jason seconded. Motion passed.

Highway Budget

Dan raised concerns about significant discrepancies in the highway budget numbers, particularly noting that part-time road crew salaries dropped from \$15,000 in FY25 to only \$5,000 in the new budget, and road overtime dropped from \$24,000 spent in FY25 to \$13,500

budgeted. He also noted no money was budgeted for the International truck maintenance, which historically costs around \$7,500 annually.

Dan expressed concern that these shortfalls would make him look bad when taxpayers question budget overruns during the year. The total shortage appeared to be around \$30,500, representing about 7% of the highway budget. The board agreed to follow up with John Zimmer for clarification on these budget figures.

Dan also suggested using surplus funds to pave Long Pond Road this year at the contracted rate of \$91/ton, rather than waiting and potentially paying \$110/ton next year due to rising fuel costs.

Transfer Station Facility Improvement

Bill outlined plans to improve the transfer station building's functionality for recycling operations. The current basement setup creates bottlenecks, and he proposed installing a floor over one bay to create a single-level operation with multiple collection points that could accommodate more residents simultaneously.

The proposal would allow for better traffic flow, improved worker oversight, and potentially space for equipment storage. Discussion also covered the need for better coordination between transfer station attendants, road crew, and the Waste Management District, particularly regarding waste pickup scheduling and recycling education. Bill volunteered to work with the WMD's new outreach coordinator to improve training and operations.

- **Motion:** Jason motioned to have Joe Blair look at facilities updates to give sketches and options at transfer station with costs. Isaiah seconded. Motion passed.

Ramp Group Working on lake moorings:

Bill reported that the RAMP group is investigating the possibility of establishing moorings on the lake to address the growing number of boats anchored at the south end. The initiative is in early stages and would require state approval and significant planning.

Concerns were raised about the complexity and potential liability issues of establishing a harbor master position, noting that Newport's harbor master makes \$56,000 annually and carries substantial insurance responsibilities. The board agreed to let the ramp group do the research and return with detailed information before making any commitments.

Diane Lehder commented via phone that Newport charges \$750 per season for moorings and that the state has established processes for towns to take over mooring management. She noted this could potentially generate revenue rather than just expense, and emphasized the growing safety concerns with increased boat traffic.

Local Citizens and Visitors: Questions and Discussion

Diane Lehder asked about a PUC email regarding Vermont Wind LLC.

Correspondence

The board noted correspondence available in the town clerk's office including ATV correspondence, a thank you note from Brookfield Service Team for generator installation services, and the PUC email regarding Vermont Wind LLC.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

Motion: Isaiah made a motion to approve the minutes for February 23rd at 5:30, February 23rd at 6:00, and the March 3rd meetings. Miriam seconded. Motion passed.


Review Bills and Sign Select Orders & Payroll #5


Motion: David motioned to approve Select Orders and Payroll #5. Isaiah seconded. Motion passed.

Jason motioned to adjourn at 8:14PM. Miriam seconded. Motion passed.

David Stevens 

William Perkins 

Miriam Simonds 

Isaiah Casey 

Jason Petrarca 