

Selectboard Meeting Minutes Sept 8, 2026

Municipal Building, 30 Hinton Hill Road, Westmore, VT

In attendance: David Stevens, Bill Perkins, Miriam Simonds, Jason Petrarca, Elaine Cashin, Lillian Young, Jen Woolard, Peggy Zimmer, John Zimmer, Carol Davis, Ellie Majchrzak, Erik Townsend

Via Zoom: Britta Milks, Maree Bushey, Donna Dzugas, Chris Venegas

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

Bill motioned and Miriam seconded to add notice that the CSA had an upcoming pop-up flower workshop event the following Saturday for informational purposes. Motion passed.

The Town Clerk announced that tax bills have been sent out. Taxes are due at the Town Office by 4:00 PM on October 20th. Postmarks are not accepted under any circumstances.

Notice from NVDA – Site Visit at South End VTASLA on Sept 23 at 10AM: Information Only.

TREASURER

MERP Update : The Treasurer reported that \$448,000 of the \$496,000 MERP grant had been spent, leaving approximately \$48,000 remaining. All remaining projects must be under contract by September 30th and completed with reimbursement submitted by December 31st. John confirmed that all three items were MERP eligible.

- **Fire and safety bay lighting** (Pierce Electrical): \$5,600
- **Garage doors** (Troy Overhead Door): approximately \$22,000 (updated estimate pending)
- **Municipal Building crawl space insulation** (New England Foam Coating, Saint Johnsbury): \$5,400, including two-inch spray foam on exterior perimeter walls and the existing vapor barrier area, as well as insulation of the utility room

Jason motioned and Bill seconded to approve the three above-referenced MERP-funded projects. Motion passed. John to look at overhead circuits for cord reels in the Fire Department and Isaiah to follow up with Troy Overhead Doors.

Repair to the Municipal Office Floor Joists : The Board discussed deteriorating floor joists and exterior sill conditions at the Municipal Building. Chester Perry (Perry Brothers) provided a verbal estimate of \$35,000, which was lower than a prior quote of \$52,000. The work was previously noted by residents as an item for use of ARPA funds.

Jason motioned and Bill seconded to move forward with the floor joist and foundation repair work at the Town Building. Motion passed. A written estimate and confirmation of insurance from the Perry Brothers were to be obtained prior to commencement.

Donation: Contribution Acknowledgement Letter: The Treasurer reported that donations to the town are tax-deductible for contributors, as confirmed by local tax authority Russell Curtis, provided the funds are used for general public purposes. For donations exceeding \$500, a formal acknowledgment letter is required by the IRS. John offered to draft an acknowledgment letter for the Board's review, to be sent to donors before year-end.

August Financials: Revenue & Expense : The Treasurer summarized financial performance through eight months (66.7% of the fiscal year):

- **Transfer Station:** Year-to-date loss of \$14,000, compared to \$37,000 at the same point the prior year. Usage and revenues are down, suggesting residents have shifted to alternative disposal methods.
- **General Fund:** Revenues at 68% of budget.
- **Town Garage:** Expenses at approximately 68% of budget, generally on track.
- **Paving:** A \$20,000 cost overrun on the Newark Road project is projected to consume the paving fund surplus for the year.

NEW BUSINESS

Jennifer Woolard/CSA: Discussion Recreation & Natural Resources Coordinator

Jennifer Woolard, a Westmore resident representing the Community Spaces and Activities (CSA) group, presented a proposal to explore creating a Recreation and Natural Resources Coordinator position within the town. She cited growing pressure on natural resources, a lack of internal capacity to manage grants and community programming, and the need for a centralized liaison among the town's many active volunteer groups. She suggested external funding sources — including Vermont Outdoor Recreation grants — as a potential means of offsetting position costs. The Board received the proposal as a framework for future exploration. No action was taken; the matter will be considered in future budget discussions.

Transfer Station Building: This item was clarified to have been placed on the agenda in error, referring to the Municipal Building rather than the Transfer Station. No discussion or action required.

Transfer Station Tips : The Town Clerk raised the matter of small cash tips occasionally left by residents for Transfer Station attendants, which the employees have declined to keep personally. The Board discussed options, including holding tips in a separate account and

returning them to employees as year-end gift cards. No formal policy was adopted; the matter was tabled for further consideration.

OLD BUSINESS

Westmore Fire Association – 60 Day Extension Deadline – Contract Determination Tabled for Executive Session

Peggy Zimmer – Update on VT Rte 5A Study Fundraising – Donations: Information Only

Peggy Zimmer, representing the RAMP group, reported on fundraising progress toward the 10% match required for a \$50,000 VTrans scoping study grant. Funds raised to date include \$270 from an ice-out event, \$1,850 in designated donations, and a \$5,000 grant awarded by the Vermont Community Foundation's Northeast Kingdom Fund. The group expressed confidence in meeting the full \$10,000 match. The group is actively researching eligible engineering firms from the state's approved list. The town serves as fiscal sponsor for the grant.

Solar Panel Speed Sign: Conditions on South End Project – Information Only

The Treasurer reported that a solar-panel speed sign, previously committed to the town by the state as a concession related to the South End beach project, had never been claimed. John proposed it be included with the Vermont 5A scoping study results. No action taken.

Loss Control Follow-Up: Crosswalks, Cord Reels for Fire Station Estimate from Pierce – Town Budget, and any outstanding items, etc: Information Only

The Board discussed outstanding Loss Control items. Regarding crosswalks at North Beach, members agreed to defer action and instead pursue a more comprehensive, holistic plan for the North Beach area — encompassing parking, gate placement, and traffic flow — before committing to painted markings or ADA-compliant curb cuts. The Board directed follow-up with passive safety consultant Larry Smith to determine ADA requirements and inform a broader planning discussion over the coming months. Regarding cord reels at the fire station, it was noted that the Pierce Electrical quote includes installation; the Treasurer was directed to confirm with Pierce whether installation includes dedicated electrical circuits.

PACIF Grant 2026 – 2 Cord Reels for Garage – Road Crew

Jason motioned and Bill seconded to apply for 2 cord reels and installation in the town garage for the road crew through the PACIF 2026 grant. Motion passed.

Town Health Officer: Recreational Water Testing

The Board acknowledged that a volunteer had been informally assisting with recreational water testing at North Beach, but the matter of a formal appointment for a Town Health Officer has not been resolved. The Board noted that the position carries many statutory responsibilities, including oversight of recreational water testing. The matter was flagged for inclusion in the upcoming budget process, with a stipend to be considered.

ROAD FOREMAN

Paving -Long Pond Road

The Board reviewed a Pike Industries contract for Long Pond Road paving. Discussion revealed that the paving fund had been depleted by an unanticipated \$20,000 overrun on the Newark Road project, eliminating the surplus that had been expected to fund Long Pond Road this year. John raised concern that adding Long Pond Road paving this year would create a budget deficit requiring voter approval under statute. The Board noted that Long Pond Road was originally planned for FY2027 and had been moved up earlier in the year at a Selectboard meeting. The matter was tabled pending research into prior meeting minutes and the fiscal authority under which the project was advanced.

NEK Broadband – Project on Mad Brook Road

Erik Townsend, representing NEKCV doing business as NEK Broadband presented a proposal to install underground fiber optic conduit along Mad Brook Road, crossing from Charleston into Westmore to serve approximately four residences. The Board discussed the importance of proper marking and maintenance of markers given past issues with unmarked buried utilities. The project will be placed in conduit with tracer wire and hand holes every 500 feet.

Jason motioned and Bill seconded to approve the project as presented with conditions stipulated that the line be well marked and markers be maintained. Motion passed. A right-of-way permit was signed and forwarded to the appropriate NEK Broadband contact for signature in agreement.

LIQUOR COMMISSION: Liquor Control – Consideration of Liquor Permit Application

The Select Board, acting in its capacity as local liquor commission, considered two temporary event liquor permit applications:

- Three Ponds, LLC at Notch House — September 12, 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM
- Chefworks, LLC at Notch House — October 10, 4:15 PM to 9:45 PM

Miriam motioned and Bill seconded to approve both liquor permit applications as presented. Motion passed.

LOCAL CITIZENS and VISITORS: Questions and Discussion

Jason addressed the board regarding the Vermont Supreme Court's recent ruling to affirm the Public Utility Commission's (PUC) decision to issue a Certificate of Public Good to developer ITW, LLC. for a planned telecommunications tower at 160 Frog Hollow Lane in Westmore. Donna as an intervenor expressed concern about the town's lack of engagement in the PUC process and indicated that grounds for further appeal may exist. The Board acknowledged the information.

The Selectboard finds that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage

PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION: Municipal Fire & Rescue Services – Contractual Obligations under 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(A)

Jason motioned and Bill seconded to enter Executive Session at 6:03PM pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(A) regarding contractual obligations was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Jason motioned and Miriam seconded to exit Executive Session at 6:14PM. Motion passed.

Representatives of the Westmore Fireman's Association Incorporated presented updates on operational readiness since the prior contract discussion approximately 60 days earlier. Key updates included: replacement of Engine 1 with a new Type 2 engine; hose testing and outfitting; acquisition of five new sets of turnout gear with a replacement plan; boat licensing and successful water-access fire training on the backside of Lake Willoughby; hydrant maintenance; side-by-side vehicle tune-up; donation of 16 SCBA packs; a scheduled Project WorkSafe OSHA inspection on October 19th at 9:00 AM at the fire station; execution of a drug and alcohol policy signed by all members; and completion of Emergency Vehicle Operations trainer certification. The Board was invited to attend the October 19th inspection. The Association was confirmed to carry its own VFIS insurance, as required by the contract.

Action Taken: Bill motioned and Miriam seconded to approve and sign the one-year contract between the Town of Westmore and the Westmore Fireman's Association, Inc., effective September 8, 2026. Motion passed. Incorporated, effective September 8, 2026.

A copy of the executed contract was to be emailed to the Association's representative.

PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(E) & (F)

Bill motioned and Miriam seconded to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a)(1)(E) and (F) to discuss pending litigation and confidential attorney-client communications at 8:05PM. Motion passed.

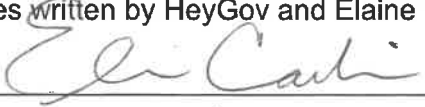
Jason motioned and Bill seconded to exit the Executive Session at 8:14 PM Motion passed. No action was taken. The Town Clerk reported, as per the Plaintiff Donna Dzugas' wish, that Donna had granted an extension to the town's attorney to file a response in a motion on the case. He had experienced a medical circumstance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS: Miriam motioned and David seconded to approve the minutes of the Select Board Meeting of August 24, 2026. The motion passed.

REVIEW BILLS and SIGN SELECT ORDERS & PAYROLL #18 : Jason motioned and Bill seconded to approve Select Orders and Payroll #18. Motion passed.

Jason motioned and David seconded to adjourn at 8:30 PM. Motion passed.

Sept 8 Minutes written by HeyGov and Elaine Cashin

Attest 

David Stevens 

William Perkins 

Miriam Simonds 

Isaiah Casey: Absent

Jason Petrarca _____