

Town of Woodbury Select Board Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2026

Attendees

Select Board Members: Diana Peduzzi, Lizzy Higgins, Chris Casey

Town Officials: Robin Durkee (Town Clerk), Lilly Baron (Town Treasurer) Skip Lindsay (Recovery Officer); Stephen Murphy (Town Moderator)

Town Employees: Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner); Michael Gray (WSB Assistant/Scribe)

Members of the Public: Nate Sicard (Ruggles Engineering)

Media: Jerome Lipani - HCTV

Call to Order Chris called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Adjustments to Agenda

There was discussion as to whether discussion of the Valley Lake Road culvert replacement bids should be done in executive session as stated in the agenda. The WSB decides to “wait and see” if an executive session would be necessary. No adjustment was made.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the February 9, 2026 Select Board meeting were approved.

Public Comment Stephen Murphy confirmed that he wishes to continue for another year as the town’s moderator and went over the procedure for his election to that position at town meeting. Discussion by WSB and Stephen on when the town’s reps would join the town meeting followed with Stephen advising they be asked to arrive around 12:00. Diana will contact the town’s representatives to make the invitation. Stephen also reminded the WSB of the town government gathering and the informational pre-town meeting forum taking place on Thursday Feb. 26.

Valley Lake Road Culvert Replacement Project with Nate Sicard

Two bids were submitted for the project. One from Alliance Consulting & Excavation and the second from J.A. McDonald. Alliance’s bid came to \$297,582 and McDonald’s bid was \$311,800?

The original estimate from Nate, made in 2024, was for \$278,524. Nate said both bidders were qualified and there was no reason not to award the contract to Alliance, the lowest bidder. The Alliance bid was accepted. Nate will contact both bidders. The Town budget \$75,000 for this match so we’ll have to find \$22,000 more somewhere.

Nate mentioned the two culvert replacement projects on County Road that he was asked to do engineering design work for. Alfie and the WSB confirmed they would like him to proceed with that work, although no funding has been budgeted to implement the projects.

Town Clerk’s Report with Robin Durkee

A question came up about a loan issued to Robert and Susan Pickett years ago, which was never officially “discharged” although it was fully paid off years ago. In the 1990’s the town participated in a home improvement program with

financing through Central Vermont Community Action Council. Homeowners could receive grants or loans depending on their income qualifications. Loans were paid back over the years and the town could use that money to continue the program. This money was the source of the loan to the Picketts, who had repaid the loan in full. The Picketts have passed away and they left two sons, who now are considering selling the property. Their attorney drafted a discharge for the WSB to sign, and it was signed. Robin has a busy week ahead overseeing Woodbury's voter checklist at the MVUSCD board elections on Tuesday evening and the Hazen Union board elections on Wednesday evening. Thursday will be spent at Woodbury's pre-town meeting gathering and Town meeting will be on Saturday. Voting on the school budgets will be on Tuesday March 3, again at the school.

Town Treasurer's Report with Lillian Baron

Lilly presented the review for January, 2026. The fund balances remain stable as of the end of January, with the exception of the FEMA-related accounts. The FEMA 2023 Flood fund is shown with a negative balance due to unreimbursed Category Z administrative expenses that are pending reimbursement. The FEMA Mitigation fund reflects the remaining excess un-obligated funds. The FEMA 2024 Flood fund shows a positive balance, due to additional ERAF funds received from the state – VEM - last month.

The auditor's monthly reconciliation review, for December 2025, showed no discrepancies.

Lilly reviewed revisions she has made to the Budget vs Actual monthly report that presents all line items in the General and Town Highway Budgets with columns that include the actuals for the past fiscal year (FY25) and what was budgeted originally for the current fiscal year (FY26). For January, there are no individual budget line items that require specific attention or explanation.

Lilly met with PACIF, the town's insurer, to better understand the increase in the town's insurance rates. The main takeaway from the meeting is that the significant increase in our Property & Casualty insurance is largely due to the 2023 Fire Department claim. Even though the Fire Department is no longer on our policy, that claim will continue to impact our rates through 2029. For Workers' Compensation, claims affect rates for three years. One option Lilly presented to reduce premiums would be to review and potentially lower the agreed-upon values of Town buildings. This would require negotiations with PACIF and formal appraisals. Lilly offered to gather more information on that process; the WSB decided that this is not worth pursuing. Last year PACIF asked the town to upgrade their building values to assure adequate coverage, and we did. Again the option to find another insurance provider came up. The Board had previously decided not to have Lilly do more research on that option. PACIF is a large insurance pool that specializes in coverage for municipalities and also provides safety trainings and some grants for safety equipment. It is unlikely the town would find a better option.

PACIF also offered to review the town's lease agreement with MVUSD to clarify how liability is allocated between the Town and the MVUESD. Following their review, PACIF provided a couple of suggested amendments to better define those responsibilities. Lilly will bring these suggested amendments to the WSB for discussion at their next meeting. Lilly reported that PACIF informed her that racoons are not considered vermin and therefore the town is eligible to file a claim for the repair of the damage revealed by a pair of racoons falling through the ceiling in the Town Garage. PACIF could cover the repair costs minus the \$1,000 deductible. Alfie suggested exploring the option of an insurance claim and the WSB discussed this. Lizzy feels it is worthwhile filing a claim, though the WSB, in view of increased rates as a result of recent claims, wonders if this would affect future insurance rates. This discussion ventures into the need to replace the entire roof and/or rebuilding a new town garage. The WSB wonders if there might be possible grant opportunities for such a major project. Diana will explore this. Lilly will pursue the claim process. A small error in calculating the employee share of their health insurance premium was discovered. The error will result in total refunds of \$594.26. Lilly also provided a copy of the 2026 health insurance contract, already signed and ready to be sent after WSB review.

Road Commissioner's Report with Alfred Larrabee

The road crew has been pushing back the snowbanks and cleaning up intersections and the village. Alfie noted that it is hard to get road salt; the salt is largely unavailable. Chris suggested that what salt remains be used for the paved section of

Cabot Road and that the paved section of Foster Hill Road be sanded instead of using salt. Alfie has researched the replacement of the 550 (now unusable with exhaust coming into the cab). Estimated repair cost from a Ford dealer is about \$10,000. A new replacement would come to \$160,000. Alfie feels this is not feasible at the moment. He is exploring other repair options. With two part-time drivers in place, the new configuration for the road crew is working out well. Alfie will be away on vacation again next week.

Recovery Officer's Report with Skip Lindsay

Skip reported that he and Chris met with reps from FEMA and VEM/Public Safety to discuss the potential de-obligation of excess funds from the TH23 and TH24 bridge replacements. FEMA/VEM are adamant that they want the total return of any excess beyond the two road repairs. Skip will continue to explain to them why the town should keep the \$105,000 that was used for mitigation projects with FEMA knowledge and according to FEMA guidance. Skip shared email correspondence with FEMA and Senator Welch's office that resulted following this meeting. It was requested by FEMA/VEM that Skip provide a timeline of correspondence that led Woodbury to believe the town had provided the necessary information and to communicate to FEMA the change of work scopes for the projects; Skip has provided this timeline and shared a copy of that in his report to the WSB. Chris shared that he has contacted Senator Sanders office and is waiting for a response. Lizzy suggests the town hire a lawyer to seek legal counsel if we take the appeal option. Skip has found relevant PDFs on VLCT's website but is unable to access them because he is not an elected official. Lilly offers to access these PDFs and send them to Skip for his review.

Updates and Other Business

Swenson Quarry Update

Diana reported that the Town just received notice that the District 5 Environmental Commission (D5EC) has issued a "Notice of Minor Application" and a "Proposed Land Use Permit" which means that they will not hold a hearing unless the Town or another party request a hearing by March 17. This is not what the D5EC indicated in a December 18 memo directing the applicant to provide a statement of support from the Town. The Zoning Board of adjustment will not hold their next deliberative session until March 12. Diana suggests that the best way forward is to speed up deliberations with Swenson, this deadline will give both sides an incentive to come to a negotiated agreement and ask the D5EC to include certain permit conditions.

Bills and Payroll

Bills and payroll orders were signed at the end of the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Signatures and Approval

Chris Casey _____

Diana Peduzzi _____

Lizzy Higgins _____

Date Approved _____

Guide to Acronyms

ACO - Animal Control Officer; **ANR** – Agency of Natural Resources; **AOT** – Agency of Transportation; **AP** – Accounts Payable; **BR**- Better Roads; **BRIC** – Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities; **CDT** – Collector of Delinquent Taxes; **CIP** – Capital Improvement Plan; **CR** – Cash Receipts; **CRC** –Consolidated Resource Center; **CVRPC** – Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission; **DHC** – Department of Health; **EC** – Ethics Commission; **EMD** – Emergency Management Director; **EMS** – Emergency Medical Service; **ERAF** – Emergency Relief Assistance Funds; **ET** –

Electronic Transfer; **EWPP** – Emergency Watershed Protection Program; **FIRM** – Federal Insurance Rate Map; **FPF** – Front Porch Forum; **FY** – Fiscal Year; **GIA** – Grants in Aid; **HED** – Hardwick Electric Department; **HERF** – Highway Equipment Replacement Fund; **HMP** – Hazard Mitigation Plan; **HPD** – Hardwick Police Department; **H&H** – Hydrological & Hydraulic; **LEOP** – Local Emergency Operations Plan; **LHMP** – Local Hazard Mitigation Plan; **MMA** – Money Market Account; **MRGP** – Municipal Roads General Permit; **MOU** – Memorandum of Understanding; **MTSC** – Mountain Tamers Snowmobile Club; **MVUESD** – Mountain View Union Elementary School District; **NEMRC** – New England Municipal Resource Center; **NEWT** – Northeast Wilderness Trust; **NRCS** – Natural Resources Conservation Service; **OSSU** – Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union; **PDM** – Program Delivery Manager; **POC** – Point of Contact; **PR** – Payroll; **PTO** – Paid Time Off; **RBT** – RB Technologies; **REI** – Road Erosion Inventory; **RFP** – Request for Proposal; **SS** – Seacoast Securities; **TAC** – Transportation Advisory Committee; **TAN** – Tax Anticipation Note; **TC** – Town Clerk; **TH** – Town Highway; **THO** – Town Health Officer; **TM** – Town Moderator; **TTr** – Town Treasurer; **USDA** – United States Department of Agriculture; **VEM** – Vermont Emergency Management; **VTRANS** – Vermont Agency of Transportation; **WCC** – Woodbury Conservation Commission; **WCL** – Woodbury Community Library; **W/CFS** – Woodbury/Calais Food Shelf; **WCSD** – Washington County Sheriff's Department; **WHRT** – Woodbury-Hardwick Rail Trail; **WSB** – Woodbury Select Board; **WPC** – Woodbury Planning Commission; **WNRCD** – Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District; **WVFD** – Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department; **ZBA** – Zoning Board of Adjustment

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