Town of Woodbury Select Board Meeting Minutes

July 27, 2026

Attendees

Select Board Members: Diana Peduzzi, John Gordon
Town Officials: Lilly Baron (Town Treasurer); Graham Christie (Town Clerk);
Town Employees: Peter Dailey (Road Commissioner); Michael Gray (WSB assistant)
Members of the Public: Larry Ferno
Media: Jerome Lipani – HCTV

Call to Order John called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

Adjustments to Agenda Town Roads and Bridges Standards confirmation statement

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from July 13, 2026 Select Board meetings were approved.

Public Comment None

Road Report with Peter Dailey

Peter has contacted a mechanic who could do the “forensics” on the 550 to determine if McGee Ford might be liable for the motor’s sudden breakdown shortly after McGee returned the 550 to the road crew after repairing the exhaust system. Suspicions were raised when the motor blew and McGee denied any responsibility. Peter wants to know if the WSB would like to pursue this; discussion follows. John asks what the trade-in value would be for the 550 with a blown motor; Peter responds about $7,000. With a new motor, the trade-in is estimated to be $35,000 to $40,000 (Lilly’s research on line.) Larry Ferno suggested a way to proceed to weigh the costs and trade-in values of the 550 to help with the decision to research the cause of the blown engine and then approach Ford. Peter asks if he should hold off on this and John requests that he find out what the trade-in value of the 550 would be if it had a new engine in it.
The road crew has been upgrading culverts on Log Town Road. Peter reported that the cement floor of the salt shed is deteriorated and needs to be replaced. Pieces of cement can show up in the salt spreader, compromising its function. They will have to move the existing salt into a truck body temporarily. He may take up this project while waiting for the Valley Lake Road culvert project, at which time the road crew anticipates working on the section of Valley Lake Road that leads into the village.

Grant Updates: with Michael Gray

The Valley Lake Road culvert replacement project in the village will begin on August 10th. The contractor anticipates it will take 21/2 to 3 weeks to complete. Its possible that the work will not be done before school starts. Logistics are discussed around this work, the closing of the road, detours etc. Michael will oversee the road closure and getting the word out to town residents and the school. A detour route will also be established.
The BRIC Buck Lake Brook Watershed study, with the usual last minute FEMA twists, has made it to the “submitted” phase. There is no anticipated time frame for when an award will be decided.
Michael presents the 2026 Town Road and Bridge Standards letter of compliance, which the WSB signs.

Town Clerk and Zoning Administrator’s Report with Graham Christie

<u>Town Clerk Report</u> – There has been a complaint of a dog wandering onto a neighbor’s property. Graham is informed that the ACO reports to the TC. Graham will contact the ACO and the ACO will then call the neighbor.

ZA Report – Graham would like to update the zoning ordinance (ZO) which is outdated. Graham would like to be working with a ZO that is current with statutes to establish an even playing field for the ZA and town residents. There is a grant, the Bylaw Modernization Grant – from the Department of Housing and Community Development that could help fund the hiring of a consultant to assist the town with the update of its ZO. Diana feels that the town would need to reestablish its Planning Commission, in order to apply for the grant. John is supportive of updating the ZO. The WSB will put out a notice to seek new WPC members.

Town Treasurer's Report with Lilly Baron

Lilly presented a FY 26 year end report to the WSB. The Town completed FY26 with the combined General Fund and Highway Fund on budget. The Town kept expenditures $36,037 below the budget approved by voters at Town Meeting, which more than offset revenues being $35,384 less than anticipated. Available funds dropped sharply – by $1,085,201 – in FY26, from $1,431,004 to $345,803. The causes were FEMA repayment, higher-than-anticipated equipment costs, and the lingering effect of the FY25 tax rate being set too low. The major change from the budget was that the Town collected less revenue than budgeted, by a negative $54,219. Most of this was budgeted delinquent property taxes that did not materialize. This was the primary reason revenues for the General Fund were less than budgeted by $51,893. At year-end, outstanding delinquent taxes totaled $83,507.

The Highway Fund took in slightly more revenue than budgeted, mainly because of residual funding from FEMA 2024, an increase in state highway aid, and a higher than anticipated Swenson reimbursement. Expenditures were slightly under budget though a few budgeted amounts - insurance costs and several unexpected equipment repairs – did exceed what was budgeted. Even with these unanticipated expenses, total expenditures for the Highway Fund remained well below budget.

At the close of FY26, the Town had total cash on hand of $345,803. The General Fund ended the fiscal year with a fund balance of $51,542, while the Highway Fund ended the year with a fund balance of $140,101. Fund balances were impacted by three significant financial events during the year:

- A truck forecast to cost about $200,000 that actually cost about $300,000, resulting in a deficit in the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund. After scheduled transfers, reimbursements, and equipment sale proceeds, the remaining HERF deficit at year-end was a negative $36,874.
- The Town incurred a $104,216 FEMA/VEM repayment after previously receiving authorization to use excess flood recovery funds for additional mitigation projects. After those projects were completed, FEMA and VEM reversed their previous position and required that the funds be returned. (These funds paid for new roofs on the Town Hall and Town Office, and several culvert replacements.)
- The FY25 tax rate error, although resolved during FY26, had already reduced available fund balances and continues to affect the Town's financial position.

Fund Deficit Resolution Lilly then addressed the two outstanding deficits, one with the HERF and the other with the FEMA repayment obligation. Lilly recommended leaving the HERF as is and allowing the deficit to be replaced over time. Regarding the FEMA repayment, Lilly presented two options. Option 1 is to use existing available funds and Option 2 is to file a formal FEMA deficit claim. For the FEMA repayment obligation, Lilly recommends Option 1 – to resolve the deficit using available existing funds, leaving the town with very little cash balance going into tax collection time. She pointed out that the resulting impact would need to be addressed through future tax revenue over multiple budget cycles.

however utilizing available funds would eliminate the outstanding deficit immediately.

Option 2 would be to formally "claim"; the deficit. This one-time option would allow the Town to increase the tax rate in increments of 5% until the full deficit has been recovered. This approach would restore the Town's unassigned fund balance and FEMA deficit in a single year. This would require raising approximately $105,000 more through taxes and would result in an estimated 30% increase in the municipal tax rate. Although this is the quickest way to resolve the deficit, it would also create a significant impact on taxpayers. Again, Lilly recommended the first option. John also favors the first option. John also recommends not budgeting for the delinquent tax revenue as this amount is unpredictable and varies from year to year. No decision is made on the FEMA repayment at this meeting.

Updates on Buyouts with John Gordon

John asked VEM if management of the asbestos abatement would be payable under the grant and was told yes, the grant could cover that. Clay Point Associates, Inc. has offered to manage the asbestos abatement and will prepare the RFP for bidding on the abatement, for a price of $1,===. Once a bid is chosen the town will need to check in with VEM for any needed changes in the budget. Clay Point found asbestos in both of the buyout buildings. Diana made the motion to hire Clay Point to manage the bidding process for asbestos remediation; WSB approved the motion. John asks Lilly if Clay Point has submitted Certificate of Insurance (COI); Lilly answered that they have not and it would be best practice for the COI to be in place before they are officially hired.
The WSB then opened the two sealed bids received for the demolition work on the FEMA buyouts. Bids are reviewed. John points out that only one bidder came for the site visit and that bid is the lowest. The other bid is higher and the contractor did not come for a site visit.. In any case, the low bidder did attend the site visit and the contractor, Larry Ferno, was chosen. Larry suggested that the WSB check the references he supplied with the lower bid and make their final decision at the August 10th WSB meeting.

Personnel Policy with Lilly Baron

Lilly made the corrections that were suggested at the July 13th meeting. The WSB adopted the policy.

Updates and Other Business

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

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Signatures and Approval

Chris Casey ______________________ Diana Peduzzi _________________________

John Gordon ______________________ 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; COI – Certificate of Insurance; CR – Cash Receipts; CVRPC – Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission; DHC – Department of Health; 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; GF – General Fund; GIA – Grants in Aid; HED – Hardwick Electric Department; HERF – Highway Equipment Replacement Fund; HF – Highway Fund; HMP – Hazard Mitigation Plan; H&H – Hydrological & Hydraulic; LEMP – Local Emergency Management Plan; LHMP – Local Hazard Mitigation Plan; MMA – Money Market Account; MRGP – Municipal Roads General Permit; MOU – Memorandum of Understanding; 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; PR – Payroll; PTO – Paid Time Off; RBT – RB Technologies; RC – Road Commissioner; REI – Road Erosion Inventory; RFP – Request for Proposal; ROW – Right of Way; 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; WEC – Washington Electric Co.; WSB – Woodbury Select Board; WPC – Woodbury Planning Commission; WVFD – Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department; ZA –Zoning Administrator; ZBA – Zoning Board of Adjustment; ZO – Zoning Ordinance