

Warning
Waterford Annual Town Meeting
Waterford School
March 3, 2026

The Inhabitants of the Town of Waterford who are legal voters in said town are hereby notified and warned to meet in the auditorium of the Waterford School on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at which time the meeting will be conducted to vote the following Articles of business:

Town clerk Deb Benoit opened the meeting at 6:00 pm with a moment of silence for those lost this past year and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Scott Beck was invited to speak. Montpelier is quiet. Topics that are at the forefront of conversations are affordability, Land Use, Act 250, Education/Redistricting/Reform.

Deb Powers, our House Representative, was invited to speak. She said it has been an honor to serve, and she welcomes all residents to connect with her if they want to discuss the issues. Goals in Montpelier are discussion of affordability – rural – concerns about education – property taxes/hold on to rural town schools. Healthcare committee member – prescription bill was passed for a prescription card that is discounted. AI use in healthcare field.

Article 1: To elect a Moderator for the year ensuing: Shawn Hallisey nominated Maurice Chaloux. There were no further nominations. Maurice Chaloux declared the nominations closed. Maurice Chaloux was elected by a unanimous voice vote in the affirmative.

Article 2: To elect the following Town Officers:

Town Clerk for a term of three years. By ballot. Mike Keach nominated Deb Benoit for town clerk for a term of three years. Mike Barrett seconded the motion. David Morrison motion to seize nominations and for the Selectboard Chair Ron Gray to cast one ballot for Deb Benoit.

Town Treasurer for a term of three years. By ballot. Chris Durkin nominated Heather Gonyaw for Town Treasurer for a term of three years. Mike Barrett seconded the motion. David Morrison made a motion the seize nominations and for the Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Heather Gonyaw.

A Selectboard member for a term of three years. By ballot. Will Jones nominated Shawn Hallisey for Selectboard member for a term of 3 years. Gerald Jones seconded the motion. David Morrison made a motion to seize nominations. The moderator declared the nominations closed and asked for a voice vote. Shawn Hallisey was declared the winner by the moderator.

A Selectboard member for a term of one year. By ballot. Sukey Watson nominated Kathy Hodgdon for Selectboard member for a term of one year. Will Jones nominated Wade Cochran for Selectboard member for a term of one year. Clem Gray nominated Patrick White for Selectboard member for a term of one year. The moderator declared the nominations closed and asked for a vote by paper ballot after giving each candidate a chance to make a short statement to those in attendance. Ballot results were 53 votes for Wade Cochran, 36 votes for Kathleen

Hodgdon, and 16 votes for Patrick White. Wade Cochran was declared the winner by the moderator.

A Selectboard member for a term of one year. By ballot. Tim Yarrow nominated Ron Gray for Selectboard for a term of one year. Ron Gray declined. Clem Gray nominated Patrick White for Selectboard member for a term of one year. Warner Hodgdon nominated Kathleen Hodgdon for Selectboard member for a term of one year. The moderator declared the nominations closed and asked for a vote by paper ballot. Ballot results were 58 votes for Kathleen Hodgdon, 48 votes for Patrick White. Kathleen Hodgdon was declared the winner by the moderator.

A Lister for a term of three years. By ballot. Richard Kozlowski nominated Mike Keach for Lister for a term of three years. David Morrison made a motion to have the Town Clerk cast one ballot for Mike Keach. Mike Barrett seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

An Auditor for a term of three years. By ballot. David Morrison nominated Donna Rae Heath for Auditor for a term of three years. Will Jones made a motion to close nominations and have the Town Clerk cast one ballot for Donna Rae Heath. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

A Collector of Delinquent Taxes for a term of one year. Pam Bullock nominated Marcel Lapierre for Delinquent Tax Collector for a term of one year. The moderator declared nominations closed, and a unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

A First Constable for a term of one year. David Morrison nominated Tom Lawrence for First Constable for a term of one year. The moderator declared nominations closed. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

A Second Constable for a term of one year. Heather Gonyaw nominated Clem Gray for Second Constable for a term of one year. Ron Gray nominated Mike Laska. Mike Laska withdrew. The moderator declared the nominations closed. A unanimous affirmative vote passed the motion.

A Library Trustee for a term of three years. Erin Dimick nominated Jeremy Goetz for a term of three years. Lyn Fleming nominated Colleen Kozlowski. Colleen Kozlowski withdrew. The moderator declared the nomination closed. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

A Library Trustee for a term of three years. David Morrison nominated Colleen Kozlowski for a term of three years. The moderator declared the nominations closed. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

A Library Trustee for a term of one year. Erin Dimick nominated Robin Migdelany for a term of one year. The moderator declared the nominations closed. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

An Agent to Convey Real Estate owned by the Town for a term of one year. David Morrison nominated Rosemary Gingue for Agent to Convey Real Estate owned by the Town for a term of one year. The moderator declared the nominations close. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 3: Will the Town authorize the Selectboard to borrow money to defray expenses until taxes are collected? David Morrison made the motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 4: Will the Town vote to have the Town and Caledonia Cooperative School District taxes paid to the Town Treasurer on or before **October 15, 2026**, with an 8% collector's fee to be added thereafter? **Taxes must be paid on or before the due date. Title 32. Postmarks will be honored as timely payment.** David Morrison made the motion as warned. Chris Durkin seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 5: Will the Town levy an interest charge on all delinquent taxes on real and personal property of 1% per month or fraction thereof, as provided in 32 VSA Section 5136? David Morrison made the motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 6: Shall the Town of Waterford vote to apply any surplus from the current fiscal year general fund to reduce taxes in the next fiscal year? David Morrison made the motion as warned. Jeremy Goetz seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 7: Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$ 35,500.00 to the Davies Memorial Library for the maintenance and operation of the library? Tim Yarrow made the motion as warned. Ron Gray seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 8: Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$ 400.00 to Rural Community Transportation? Chris Durkin made the motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 9: Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$ 500.00 to Catamount Arts? Mike Barrett made the motion as warned. Ron Gray seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 10: Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$ 1250.00 to Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice to be used in providing health care services? Marilyn Morrison made the motion as warned. Jeremy Goetz seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 11: Shall the Town vote to appropriate and expend the sum of \$ 1000.00 for the support of Umbrella to provide services to residents of the Town? Chris Durkin made the motion as warned. Eva Goetz seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 12: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$ 1104.00 for the operation of Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium during the ensuing year, in exchange for free unlimited general admission to the Museum for all Waterford residents? Mike Barrett made the motion as warned. Colleen Kozlowski seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 13: Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$ 500.00 to assist the NEK Council on Aging in providing services to senior citizens in the ensuing year? David Morrison made the motion as warned. Shawn Hallisey seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 14: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$ 750.00 to support the programs of Northeast Kingdom Youth Services? Eva Goetz made the motion as warned. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 15: Shall the Town vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1159.00 for the support of Northeast Kingdom Human Services Inc. to support community members who cannot otherwise afford care? Dustin Kelley made the motion as warned. Ron Gray seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 16: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$ 200.00 to the Northeast Kingdom Learning Services Inc.? Ron Gray made the motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 17: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$ 500.00 to the Kingdom Animal Shelter to assist in maintaining services for the animals in their care? David Morrison made a motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

Article 18 Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$1,000 to Riverside Rescue to help us continue caring for the dogs and cats coming from your community as a stray or owner surrender. Robin Migdelany made the motion as warned. Mike Keach seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 19: Shall the Town vote to appropriate \$500.00 to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont (PCAVT) to assist their programs?

Tim Yarrow made a motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion.

Article 20: Will the Town accept the proposed Highway Department budget of \$850,367.34 with other revenue of \$65,000 and with \$785,367.34 to be raised by taxes? David Morrison made the motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 21: Will the Town accept the proposed Town budget of \$673,191.14 with other revenue of \$115,127.06 and with \$558,064.08 to be raised by taxes? David Morrison made the motion warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. Sue Hayes asked to amend the budget to: Will the Town accept the proposed Town budget of \$602,116.31 with other revenue of \$115,127.06 and with \$493,691.94 to be raised by taxes? David Morrison seconded the amendment. Town Treasurer was then asked for the correct numbers. The correct numbers are a proposed budget of \$608,819 with revenue of \$115,127.06 with \$493,691.94 raised by taxes. The total budget will be \$1,651,668.76. This motion failed. Mike Keach made the motion warned. Debra Williams seconded the motion. A affirmative voice vote passed the motion

Article 22: Will the Town accept the proposed Fire Department budget of \$ 192,482.42 with no additional revenue and with \$192,482.42 to be raised by taxes? David Morrison made the motion as warned. Eydie Aremburg seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 23: Beginning January 1, 2027, all Town of Waterford employees enrolled in the Town's health insurance shall contribute ten percent of the premium cost for the coverage they select. Then beginning January 1, 2028, they shall contribute twenty percent and shall continue to contribute this amount each year after. Mike Barrett made the motion as warned. Wade Cochran seconded the motion.

- Dave Morrison explained that it was non-binding. Board should take in consideration the total compensation and not cut wages. Kathy Hodgdon brought it forward so that employees will pay a portion of the premium. Top insurance, HRA, high budget amount – percentage paid would reduce line item. Employees should not have an increase in the same amount as the healthcare increase.

- Edie Aremburg stated that adjusting salaries to match the 10% and then 20% defeats the point. Doesn't save any money.
- Mike Keach asked if the vote was on the article or the amendment?
- Jennifer Smith - are you being competitive and can you get employees if you make these changes. Wages may not be competitive, and benefits may be a draw. Must look at the whole package.
- Will Jones stated that the highway department employees are on call 24/7. Out in bad weather. We pay a lower wage, and other towns are also having a hard time filling positions. Selectboard reviewed healthcare insurance providers and moved from BCBS to MVP.
- Ron Gray – mixed feelings. He believes optics are better if employees are paying a portion of their health benefits. Maybe in the first year you would compensate the employees but the year after you may not increase by the same \$\$ amount. It would look better to the town's people if employees paid a part of their insurance.
- Beth Kanell stated that the most severe injuries happen on the road crew, and they are the ones that have the health insurance. Cutting costs of the highway department may not be realistic.
- Jon Smith – not written as advisory – Selectboard should take this article up.
- Ron Gray answered Jon's question regarding the research and the article being non-binding per VLCT.
- Erin Dimick – asked how many employees were eligible for medical benefits. The answer is five FTE's. Employees cannot choose their own plans.

A NO voice vote. The motion failed.

Article 24: To suggest members to the Development Review Board for four years.

Article 25: To suggest members to the Planning Board for three years. Roberta Gillott, Robert Cushing and Priscilla Foster

Article 26: To hear reports of Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

- CUD Representative – NEK Broadband – Mike Barrett – Build out – BEAN. Receive federal funding to continue the buildout. Buildout in Waterford – 39 Address to be served. - Remick, Duck Pond, Slate Ledge - 7441 addresses added – 1400 miles of infrastructure. Not supported by town taxes.
- Fire Department – Colin Fucci – 7th year as fire chief. 2025 celebrated the 40th anniversary of the FD. 24/7/365 – time and commitment to town. Gratitude to the town. Celebrate Saturday with bonfire, fireworks, and food. No taxpayer dollars went to the 40th celebration. Pancake breakfast on Sunday.
- The department took 157 calls in 2025.
- The fire department is looking for volunteers. Must be 18 years of age and fill out the application that is on the fire department's webpage.

Article 27: Will the Town accept the Town Report for the year 2025? David Morrison made a motion as warned. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion

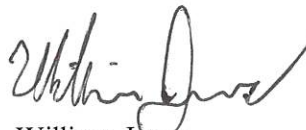
Article 28: At what hour next year do the voters of the Town wish to start the annual meeting? Will Jones made a motion to meet at 6:00 pm next year. David Morrisons seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion.

Article 27: To transact any other non-binding business proper and necessary that may come before said Meeting?

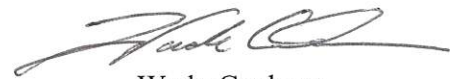
David Morrison made the motion to adjourn. Will Jones seconded the motion. A unanimous affirmative voice vote passed the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.



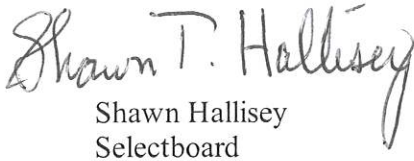
Tim Yarrow
Selectboard Chair



William Jones
Selectboard Vice Chair



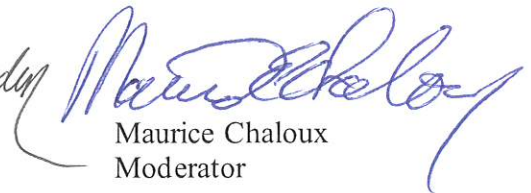
Wade Cochran
Selectboard




Shawn Hallisey
Selectboard



Kathleen Hodgdon
Selectboard



Maurice Chaloux
Moderator



Debra Benoit, Town Clerk
March 23, 2026