

Waterford Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 09, 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Davies Library

In Attendance: Sue Hayes, Ron Gray, Tim Yarrow, and Wade Cochran. Attendance list attached.

Ron Gray called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) - Personnel

- Sue Hayes moved to enter Executive Session. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.
- The group tabled Executive Session at 7:07 pm to begin the Regular Selectboard Meeting.

Modifications to Agenda

- Traffic Study was moved to begin before Memorandum of Understanding
- T-Shirts will be included during Personnel Policy

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Sue Hayes moved to approve the minutes as amended of the January 26, 2026 meeting. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

Driveway Permit Process (Discussion/Action)

- Town Clerk Deb Benoit confirmed the updated Driveway Permit form has been posted to the town website.
- Deb gave a summary of the order of operations. When a permit application is received, it is first sent to the Road Foreman who conducts a site visit to go over the tentative plans. Once the Foreman grants his approval, the application is sent to the Zoning Administrator. If the ZA grants approval, the application is sent to the Selectboard for approval before construction begins. The Foreman conducts a final site visit after completion and final approval is given by either the Foreman or Selectboard thereafter.
- Tim Yarrow met with Deb to look through past driveway permits. They found a number of permits that need to be revisited for the final review and signature.
- The Board will have a discussion with Road Foreman Jim Hayes to ensure the updated process is followed for driveway permits.

Driveway Permit (Discussion/Action)

- Road Foreman Jim Hayes and Zoning Administrator Matt Walsh had granted approval for Bill Piper's driveway permit.
- Sue Hayes moved to approve Bill Piper's driveway permit. Tim Yarrow seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. Chair Ron Gray signed the permit.

Town Garage Project (Discussion/Action)

- Will Jones wrote a statement about his research regarding the Town Garage project. Ron Gray read the statement in Will's absence.
- Will looked into the Town of Cabot and discovered their Town Garage construction happened much longer ago than anticipated, so insights from their process would not be adequately relevant to today's circumstances.
- Will contacted the Town of Barre who were very pleased with how their Town Garage construction turned out. They shared what companies they worked with and highly recommended them. The Board will reach out to the recommended companies.
- Will reached out to a few other local towns but did not get any responses.
- Ron Gray spoke with Roy Ward at EH Danson in St. Johnsbury. They can provide an estimated price per square foot for building a new garage, but the price is changing regularly. They cannot provide an estimate for renovation costs and recommended using a third party.
- Assistant Treasurer Marcel Lapierre met with the VT Bond Bank earlier this week. They gave a rough estimate of \$500,000 - \$1,500,000 at 2% for a 10 year loan. They require plans to be in place before they can begin talking about specifics. Bonds are grouped together and bid twice a year- January and August. He volunteered to speak with Ruggles Engineering regarding Waterford's upcoming project.
- Tim Yarrow recommended the Board begin to organize a Feasibility Study. He will not take action until they have the results of the study.
- Tim Yarrow spoke with staff members from both the Town of Burke and Sheffield. He shared some information he gathered about the towns' respective projects. Burke's Zoning Administrator Mike Harris stepped in as Project Manager to lead the effort for their town garage. Mr. Harris offered to attend a Waterford meeting to have a discussion with the Board about his experience.
- The Town of Sheffield is paying for their project of \$3.2 million over 10 years using a loan from town investment funds. The garage they built houses their Highway Department, Fire Department, and Town Office.
- Dave Morrison reminded the Board that Tim Yarrow and Will Jones are the only Selectboard members whose position is not up for re-election this year. Tim volunteered to follow up with the Town Garage project.

Traffic Study – VT 18 (Discussion/Action)

- The Board received an email from Ben Salomon who requested a speed study and speed limit review on Route 18. He shared his address and his experience with dangerous conditions leading to accidents on the road near his home. Route 18 is a State Highway and therefore outside of Selectboard jurisdiction. Marcel Lapierre volunteered to contact Kristen Driscoll who works with the VT Dept of Transportation to see if the town can request a speed study.
- Dave Morrison shared his idea of alternate interstate exits that would eliminate the use of the Route 18 bridge and allow for reduced speed in that area.
- Robin Migdelaney requested a sign be installed that tracks speed and flashed when a driver is above the limit. She gave an example of one installed in St. Johnsbury near Maple Grove Farms which seems to be successful.
- Wade Cochran confirmed Waterford's contract with St. Johnsbury Sheriff Dept allows the town to decide what areas get patrolled. He volunteered to speak with the Sheriff to request increased patrol in that area.

Memorandum of Understanding (Discussion/Action)

- The town is interested in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Union Baptist Church and the Caledonian Cooperative District that owns Waterford School to ensure their respective facilities can continue to act as Emergency Relocation Sites outlined in the Emergency Management Plan.
- Sue Hayes moved to approve the Emergency Management Coordinator Roger Leroux to contact both entities regarding the MOU. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.
- Sue Hayes volunteered to reach out to Roger to explain the Board's decision and request that he continue his efforts in pursuing the MOU.

Personnel Policy (Discussion/Action)

- Sue Hayes reviewed the Personnel Policy to ensure it is in accordance with the newly approved Payroll Policy. She shared the inconsistencies she found that need to be addressed.
- The Board discussed possible solutions and heard comments from citizens and town employees. Sue volunteered to draft amendments to the areas that need corrections.
- Town Clerk Deb Benoit calculated that 50 t-shirts should be purchased for highway department and transfer station employees, and to have extras on hand. She shared cost estimates gathered from two companies that offer the required quantity. Option one includes a reflective strip and would cost \$1,130.25. Option two does not include a reflective strip and would cost \$533.50.

- Tim Yarrow moved to approve the purchase of 50 t-shirts with reflective strips from option one for a total of \$1,130.25. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.
- The Treasurer's Office requested the Board determine what line item of the budget to take the funds from. They chose Operating Supplies which was budgeted for \$15,700.

Waterford Town Investment Fund (Discussion/Action)

- Tim Yarrow shared more information about how the Town of Sheffield funded the construction of their Town Garage. Sheffield used their remaining profits from Kingdom Power to create an investment fund for the town. It has about \$4.7 mill with an average return on investment of 12%. The town makes purchases by taking a loan from the investment fund with 3% simple interest paid over 10 years. The process is significantly more cost efficient and time efficient than going through a commercial bank for a loan.
- Tim spoke with Margaret Vlad from VLCT who found that an investment fund is one of the best ideas the town could pursue.

Citizens' Concerns

- Deb Benoit reminded the Board that the dinner hosted before Town Meeting has traditionally been served by Selectboard Members. Dinner begins at 4:45pm on March 3, Town Meeting Day. Board members should arrive by 4:30pm. The menu is chili and cornbread.
- Robin Migdelaney had concerns about what local citizens should do in an emergency situation of extreme cold temperatures. Tim Yarrow volunteered to connect her with Emergency Management Coordinator Roger Leroux to learn more about when the cold is considered an emergency and how it is managed.
- Dave Morrison shared his concerns about efforts from Victor Yenessa to reopen the further end of High Ridge Road to the town line.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- The Board agreed not to hold a meeting before the upcoming Town Meeting Day.

Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) - Personnel

- The Group returned to Executive Session at 9:23 pm.
- The Group exited Executive Session at 10:27 pm.
- Tim Yarrow moved to hold a Special Selectboard Meeting on Monday, February 23, 2026 at 6:00 pm. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

Adjourn

- Sue Hayes moved to adjourn the meeting. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 pm.

