

Waterford Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 12, 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Davies Library

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

Ron Gray called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Modifications to Agenda

- No modifications were made.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Sue Hayes moved to approve the minutes as amended of the December 1, 2025 meeting. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.
- Will Jones moved to approve the minutes as amended of the December 8, 2025 meeting. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Fire Truck Financing (Discussion/Action)

- Town Treasurer Heather Gonyaw shared that the delivery of the fire truck is expected between the end of this month and the beginning of next month. The bill has come due.
- Heather recommended an offer from Passumpsic Bank with a 4.58% interest rate over five years. The payment would be \$62,782.42 per year. Choosing the five year loan would save about \$20,000 in interest but increase the yearly payment by about \$11,500 compared to the seven year loan. The payments for the seven year loan were previously used in the 2026 Town Budget, so it would need to be amended to accommodate the rates of the five year loan.
- The old fire truck has an estimated value of about \$50,000 and will be placed for sale as soon as possible. The Selectboard can decide if earnings from the sale of the old fire truck go towards the general fund or towards the principle of the loan. Fire Chief Colin Fuccie recommended using the money to start a fund for a new fire engine that will need to be replaced in about eight years.
- Will Jones moved to accept the five year loan offered by Passumpsic Bank. Tim Yarrow seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.
- Will Jones moved to increase the Fire Truck Purchase line item of the 2026 Town Budget to \$62,782.42, increasing the total to 1,681,550.80. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Payroll Policy (Discussion/Action)

- Will Jones moved to adopt the Payroll Policy as presented. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. All Board members signed the document.
- Sue Hayes volunteered to ensure the Payroll Policy and the Personnel Policy are in alignment.

Town Meeting Warning (Discussion)

- Town Clerk Deb Benoit explained that the Town Meeting Warning cannot be signed by Board members until January 15. She agreed to send it to the Town Moderator Maurice Chaloux for his feedback before final signatures.
- Will raised a concern that Article 22 may not be legally binding because decisions on payroll are at the authority and purview of the Selectboard. Chair Ron Gray said it would still provide useful feedback to the Board regarding voter sentiment on the issue.
- Pre-Town Meeting will be held on February 24 at 6pm in the Waterford School gymnasium.

Liquor License- Rabbit Hill Inn (Discussion/Action)

- Rabbit Hill Inn applied for their usual first class, third class, and outdoor liquor license.
- Sue Hayes moved to approve all 2026 Rabbit Hill Inn liquor licenses. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Certificate of Highway Mileage (Discussion/Action)

- Road Foreman Jim Hayes and Town Clerk Deb Benoit confirmed there were no changes made from last year.
- Will Jones moved to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. All Board members signed the certificate.

Review Recommendation for 2026 Fire Chief (Discussion/Action)

- The Board received a letter from Assistant Fire Chief Will Rivers recommending Colin Fucci to be the 2026 Fire Chief.
- Will Jones moved to accept Colin Fucci's nomination for 2026 Fire Chief. Tim Yarrow seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Emergency Operations - VT Alert, Memorandum of Understanding (Discussion/Action)

- Emergency Management Coordinator Roger Leroux reported on recent updates.
- VT-ALERT is a state funded program used by the state and local responders to notify the public of emergency situations. Those include, but are not limited to, evacuation information. Waterford is currently participating as taxpayers, but not as recipients.

- Anyone can sign up online to receive either texts or emails from VT-ALERT free of charge.
- The Selectboard will need to identify who should have the authority to post on VT-ALERT. There is a 45 minute training required before posting rights are granted.
- The Emergency Operations Center is being changed to the Fire House. The current generator can't power the whole facility, so a grant was applied for to upgrade to an appropriate generator.
- Waterford phone systems are being upgraded to voice over IP systems. Roger recommended moving one digital IP to the Fire Station to facilitate liaison as the Emergency Operations Center. He suggested conducting a tabletop exercise once everything is in place to get people familiar with what their roles are in an emergency.
- An MOU will need to be sent to UBC and CCSU. It will be on the agenda for the Regular Meeting in February.

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont- Appropriation Request (Discussion/Action)

- Ron Gray explained that Prevent Child Abuse Vermont sent an appropriation request and read aloud some of the letter. It did not include what amount of money they are requesting or a description of how Waterford would benefit from their services. Chair Ron Gray emailed the Director of Development to get more information. He has not received a response yet.
- This is the first year the organization has requested an appropriation. It is recognized as a resource on training for abuse prevention by the state government's website for the Department of Children and Families.
- Tim Yarrow moved to approve an appropriation of \$500 for Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, adding \$500 to the 2026 Town Budget and including an article for the appropriation in Town Meeting. Will Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-2.
- The 2026 Town Budget total is now \$1,682,050.80.

Town Garage Renovation (Discussion/Action)

- The Board discussed the pros and cons of renovating vs building new, and heard concerns from citizens.
- The discussion will continue during the February Regular Meeting. No action was taken.

Gravel Crushing Bids Opening (Discussion/Action)

- Two bids were received. The first bid opened was from J.A. McDonald, Inc. for option one, which is without delivery. They bid \$10.75 per cubic yard, for a total of \$107,500. The size of the jaw opening was not listed.
- The second bid was from Manchester Brook Materials who bid on both option one and option two. The bid for option one was \$6.43 per cubic yard, for a total of \$64,300.

Option two includes delivery. They bid \$8.43 per cubic yard for option two totalling \$84,300. The jaw opening is 26"x50".

- Road Foreman Jim Hayes believed the savings offered by option one from MBM is worth the cost of delivering the gravel themselves.
- Sue Hayes moved to accept Manchester Book Materials bid for option one. Will Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Smith Road Possible Discontinuance (Discussion/Action)

- Will Jones described the lengthy process of reclassifying/discontinuing roads. A 30 day notice by mail must be sent out to interested persons before the site visit and associated hearing. Three characteristics are used to determine if a road should be reclassified/discontinued: convenience, public good, and necessity.
- There is a 200ft section of Smith Road located in Waterford, and a 600 ft section located in the village of Passumpsic (town of Barnet). Will described the unique challenges this section of road creates for the Town Highway crew.
- The Board debated if the three criteria for reclassifying/discontinuing the road were met. Many concerns were heard from citizens, including resident of Smith Road Melissa Fournier, and Road Foreman Jim Hayes.
- Tim Yarrow and others suggested hiring someone to care for the road to alleviate the struggles posed to the Town Highway crew instead of reclassifying/discontinuing the road. Jim agreed to get estimates of how much that would cost.
- Tim Yarrow moved to table the discussion until Jim gets cost estimates for hiring someone to maintain the road. Wade Cochran seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-1.

Hudson Road Curve (Discussion/Action)

- Wade Cochran reported on a corner of Hudson Road with a tremendous amount of accidents. There have been four reports since mid December of 2025, some with injury and some without. He recommended adding arrow road signs and a curve sign to warn drivers of the dangerous corner.
- Road Foreman Jim Hayes agreed to install the signs as soon as the frost allows. This expense is well within the budgeted amount.

Citizens' Concerns

- Marcel Lapierre requested an accident report be submitted by the Road Crew member who caused damage to the fuel pump. Road Foreman Jim Hayes shared his understanding of the incident and agreed to send the Road Crew member to fill out the incident report.
- Dave Morrison requested the Board consider making changes to the bottom of Duck Pond Road to better accommodate truckers. He explained his suggestion of how to do so.
- Kathy Hodgdon shared her concern over the violation of posting meeting minutes on time. She read the statute that dictates the timeframe for posting. Ron Gray and Will

Jones took responsibility for their role in the recent violations, apologized to the town, and committed to taking measures to prevent further violations.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting- reg meeting feb 9th

- MOU
- Town Garage
- Town Office Water
- Lower Village Road Signage

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

- Will Jones moved to enter Executive Session. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. The group entered Executive Session at 9:08 pm.
- The Group exited Executive Session at 10:05 pm. No action was taken.

Adjourn

- Will Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Tim Yarrow seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 pm.

Selectboard Meeting January 12, 2026

Sign In Sheet

Name

Clem Aray
David E Morrison
Cara Fraw
Boger Leroy
Robin Muzel
Jim Hays
Kathleen Hodgdon
Debra Benoit
Russell Pe
Gary Allard
Jenn Robinson
Melissa Fournier
Stan Robinson

Signature

Clem Aray
David E. Morrison
Cara Fraw
Boger Leroy
Robin Muzel
Jim Hays
Kathleen Hodgdon
Debra Benoit
Dnsella Foster
Gary Allard
Jenn Robinson
Melissa Fournier
Stan Robinson