



Minutes of the Waterbury Selectboard Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 15, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.
28 S. Main St. and on Zoom

[[Zoom recording](#) | Passcode: !@*.t26z]

Selectboard attendance: Martha Staskus, Sandy Sabin, Roger Clapp, Evan Karl Hoffman, Don Schneider

Staff attendance: Cheryl Casey, Graci Zeiger

Public attendance: Bill Shepeluk, Chris Viens, Sally Dillon, Gary Dillon, Mike Bard, Jake Ferreira, Mike Dacey, Lisa Scagliotti, Erika Linskey, Dana Allen, Jake Ferreira, Rick Weston

Public on Zoom: ORCA Media, Mal Culbertson, Nita Hulstrom, Anne Imhoff, Laura, The CReW, Blake Cote, Wes Pollock, 18027933647, Ana Shelley, Anne Imhogg, Carrie MacMillan, Emily Gilde, Evan Karl Hoffman, Jen McCabe, Karen Petrovic, Kathy Mackey, Michael Miller, Neal Leitner, Rebecca Mead, Tessa Yip, Valerie Rogers

CALL TO ORDER, 6:30 p.m. by M. Staskus

AGENDA

→ **Review and approve [meeting agenda](#)**

D. Schneider requested to make an addition to the Steele Room discussion to include “room arrangements.”

Motion by R. Clapp to approve the agenda as amended; seconded by S. Sabin.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVALS

→ **Minutes of [September 1, 2026](#)**

S. Sabin noted that the special meeting minutes of August 18 have not yet been approved. The selectboard agreed those would be approved at the next meeting.

Motion by S. Sabin to approve the minutes as written; seconded by D. Schneider.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

→ **Consent agenda items**

None.

TOWN BOARDS/COMMITTEES REPORTS

→ Fire Department

G. Dillon, Fire Chief, reported that the department has increased its membership a little bit.

- Some of them are still in high school, which is great for building the department.
- Apparatus is in decent shape. The tower truck was out for a period of time, but everything is good to go now.
- Call volume over the summer was atypical. In the past, calls have been down over the summer.
 - Smoke detector activations are typical types of calls.
 - There are a fair number of cell phone crash detections, which are often sent by accident (if a phone is dropped, for example).
 - In response to D. Schneider's question, there has not been an increase in crash calls.
- Today, the department is 50 calls higher than the same day last year. The projection is 320-330 for the year, compared to a total of 235-240 last year.
 - In response to R. Clapp: The greatest effect the call volume has on the department budget is in payroll.
 - Responding to M. Staskus regarding what kinds of calls are contributing to the higher volume of calls: there isn't a straightforward answer because the system provides generalized data.
- The blood drive took place last week. They were shorthanded and behind, with some people waiting hours. It was the 15th year they have done the blood drive.
- Upcoming training next month, through the Fire Academy, for live training.
- Hosting an arson investigation training for the National Fire Academy Vermont fire departments.

G. Zeiger said that in her meetings with other Town Managers in the area, everyone has praised the Waterbury Fire Department as one of the best.

→ CReW

M. Dacey, Executive Director of [CReW](#), gave background on the organization's role and history in flood recovery efforts in the last few years.

- Two years out from the July 2024 flood, they are taking stock of their efforts. He presented a stat sheet with 2024 flood data for the five towns they serve (Waterbury, Middlesex, Moretown, Bolton, and Duxbury).
 - The organization does not have access to people who call FEMA, but does coordinate with the State about people who call 211 for assistance.
 - Middlesex and Waterbury were the most affected towns.
- Their work includes supporting homeowners with FEMA appeals, direct home repair grants, cleanup and debris removal, insurance claims, construction management, and SBA loans.

Discussion

M. Staskus asked for more information about the event with Treasurer Pieciak.

- M. Dacey explained that the treasurer was conducting a roundtable with several communities around the state with regards to the climate superfund—putting a dollar amount on damage that can be attributed to climate change.
 - The visit was also a temperature check with communities about the recovery response and process.
 - A key objective for Treasurer Pieciak was information gathering.
- D. Schneider asked how many of the 69 assisted recovery sites were still open cases.
- M. Dacey replied that only 1 in Waterbury was still open.
- M. Dacey also described
- some of the workshops they conduct;
 - their presence at Waterbury Arts Fest to give demonstrations of some approaches to mitigation and their benefits/drawbacks; and
 - their latest initiative, “[Culvert Crawlers](#),” a training to help community members monitor culverts and recognize potential problems early.
- R. Clapp congratulated M. Dacey for calling attention to the need for a resilience plan for Waterbury. He asked if someone from the team would be interested in participating in developing that plan.
- M. Dacey confirmed that someone from CReW would like to be part of that team. Barre did a great job with their plan that we might learn from.
 - M. Dacey added a request to have resiliency efforts be a standard agenda item for the selectboard.
- M. Bard asked the cost to the town to assist the 69 households that CReW engaged with.
- M. Dacey said that was very tricky to calculate because of the level of volunteerism.
 - CReW staff keep a rough tally of how many hours they spend on an individual case. Some cases take many more hours than others. He estimated that the cost to the taxpayer is negligible.
 - B. Shepeluk added that most of the money comes through the Vermont Community Foundation.

TOWN MANAGER UPDATES

→ Introduction of the ‘27 budget process

G. Zeiger explained she reached out to all of the department heads to start scheduling meetings, review their historical budgets, and build out the next budget from there. Each of the departments will also meet with the selectboard.

- The loose schedule is:
 - October 6: Cemeteries, Solid Waste
 - October 20: Fire Department & FD Capital Fund, Public Safety
 - November 3: Library, Planning & Zoning
 - November 17: Parks/Recreation & P/R Capital Fund
 - December 1: Highway & HW Capital Fund
 - December 15: General Government, Municipal Building
- M. Staskus requested the schedule in advance for selectboard agendas.

G. Zeiger said there have been requests for LOT money to be allocated across more projects. R. Clapp said the selectboard has been trying to keep the town level-funded because of extensive increases on the education side, but inflation will catch up to us at some point. We need to discern what the needs are and act accordingly.

→ **Project updates**

Randall Meadow: G. Zeiger said the official subdivision approval is still waiting for the Attorney General to sign off.

- C. Casey said that the statutory deadline of 180 days to submit the final plat passed on September 5, which voids the subdivision permit.
- G. Zeiger added that the corn in Randall Meadow is due to be cut in October, and the environmental assessment is underway.

Woody Avenue:

- G. Zeiger reported that the project team is holding weekly meetings.
- A subgroup met earlier in the day to discuss the public outreach and engagement plan. There is no timeline on that yet.
- Public stakeholders have been identified. There are no dates set yet, but there is a priority list for outreach.

Stanley Wasson: G. Zeiger said the market study is coming to an end, and that report should be available to share with the selectboard and public soon.

FEMA: G. Zeiger reported that 1634 Rt. 2 along with 38 and 40 Union St. appraisals are in progress. The appraisals will be based on pre-flood values. 33 and 35 N. Main St. are slightly ahead in the process, and the hope is that those structures can be demolished in the spring.

General Public Works updates:

- Sidewalk work on Elm St. has begun to widen a length of sidewalk just after Cask & Cork.
- Twin Peaks gravel resurfacing will begin in the coming weeks.
- Downtown Transportation grant work still requires a contractor to complete a boundary sidewalk and parking. There is one historical light fixture still to be replaced, and some wayfinding signs will be installed next week.
- Class 4 work on Woodward Hill is going well, and paving on Lonesome Trail is completed.

Discussion:

S. Sabin asked when the trees will be cut back at the Waterbury Center Triangle, as voted on last month for the Better Connections demo project. G. Zeiger will follow up.

M. Dacey noted the importance of making sure people are aware of the deadlines associated with FEMA forms.

- He is aware of folks in other communities who were feeling very under pressure to complete the paperwork within a two-week window after waiting for almost two years for things to move forward.
- The forms are located in a section of the website labeled “joint property owner and municipality forms.”
- G. Zeiger said she is the point of contact for anyone who comes to the municipal offices with questions about the forms.

SELECTBOARD MATTERS

→ Adoption of [resolution](#) for Land Use Review Board Tier 1B designation

M. Staskus summarized the purpose of the resolution as a request for Waterbury to be qualified for Tier 1B status, which means an expedited permit review process with Act 250.

Planning Director Neal Leitner detailed the two parts of the resolution that were amended:

- The fifth “whereas” was deleted because it addresses flood zone bylaws, which Waterbury does not have. Rather, Waterbury’s regulations use a flood hazard overlay zone, which doesn’t meet the higher standards of review for flood zone bylaws.
- The reference to river corridor bylaws was deleted in the fourth “whereas.”

Discussion

S. Sabin asked for an explanation of what Tier 1B means.

- N. Leitner explained that the downtown designation classification is being replaced by a new classification system by “tiers.” Tier 1B designation allows for a certain number of housing units to be built in the downtown, not including the flood zones, without Act 250 requirements, up to a certain threshold.

C. Viens said he watched a video of a similar discussion in a nearby town, and they seem to have been focused on distinguishing between different areas of town and the flood zones.

M. Staskus said these maps include several layers to determine what areas specifically can be developed with greater municipal control and less Act 250 oversight. These tiers are extremely specific.

Motion by E. Hoffman to adopt the municipal resolution to apply for Tier 1B status for the designated areas; seconded by R. Clapp.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

Additional discussion

C. Macmillan asked whether the motion addressed the amended version or the version presented to the selectboard in the packet.

- M. Staskus responded that the board intended to approve the amended version because some of the original content did not apply to Waterbury.

D. Allen and C. Casey suggested process steps to ensure the integrity of the selectboard vote.

Motion by R. Clapp to amend the Tier 1B municipal resolution to remove the phrase “except those areas....” and “Whereas the municipality has adopted...”; seconded by E. Hoffman.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

Motion by E. Hoffman to adopt the municipal resolution to apply for Tier 1B status for the designated areas as amended; seconded by R. Clapp.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

→ **Update on Steele Room audio/visual systems improvements and room arrangement**

D. Schneider reported he has one bid at present to update the video equipment in the room (about \$17k, with the television screen being the biggest driver of the cost), but the audio system currently installed is functioning fine with new batteries.

- He recommended the board try using the microphones we currently have. He would like to start using them at the next meeting.
- For the arrangements, he recommends a V-pattern for both the selectboard and other speakers to be able to face the public.
- He noted that the length of wires needed for some computer connections do have to be taken into account.

S. Sabin said that presentations are made to the board, not the public. The board should have priority for line of sight to presenter and presentation.

D. Schneider disagreed, saying everything the selectboard does is for the public, and the public has every right to have priority access to the information.

E. Hoffman said it can't hurt to try it out for a meeting or two. R. Clapp agreed.

Discussion

C. Viens supported the approach of trying different options to see what might work best.

The selectboard agreed to try the new arrangement at the next meeting.

→ **National Parks Service [“Resilient Pathways” initiative](#) and Oct. 23 charette**

R. Clapp summarized the National Parks Service involvement with Waterbury and four other VT towns on an initiative to promote recreational opportunities.

- The Rec Committee has also been doing work that parallels this initiative, so they have joined forces to form a steering committee to work with NPS on developing and implementing a plan for Waterbury's pathways.
- After this introduction to the initiative, R. Clapp stepped back from the discussion due to a conflict of interest.

J. Ferreira, Rec Committee member, said the committee has been leaning into strategies of connectivity in pathways and trails within the municipality.

- He named the Planning Commission, Discover Waterbury, Conservation Commission, Public Works, and Recreation Committee as entities potentially interested in this kind of initiative.

- Ultimately, since the Rec Committee is an advisory committee and the Rec Director has many duties on her plate, the need for a steering committee involving different stakeholders makes a lot of sense.

E. Linskey, Rec. Director, said a steering committee will ensure community input is prioritized while the Rec Department itself is focused on the facilities management and programs it offers throughout the year. She strongly supports the initiative.

- J. Ferreira added that the Rec. Committee has been liaising with the NPS on the [Randall Meadow design charette in October](#).

Discussion

M. Staskus said the proposed steering committee composition doesn't show the balance she thinks would be more appropriate, such as the planning director, a community member, and others just identified as stakeholders.

- J. Ferreira noted that the Planning Commission said they were unsure if they had the bandwidth, and he is very open to recommendations on what stakeholders should be included on the steering committee.

D. Schneider agreed with the suggestion from M. Staskus and suggested keeping the steering committee to about 8 members for efficiency in decision-making.

C. Casey recommended reaching out to the Conservation Commission because many of our recreation spaces border or are within floodzone or wetland areas.

C. MacMillan asked for clarity on where this steering committee falls in the committee and board org chart.

- E. Linskey said this steering committee is not a subcommittee but separate and independent of the recreation department.
- M. Staskus confirmed the steering committee would be subject to open meeting law.

Motion by D. Schneider that the Waterbury Selectboard recognize the Waterbury Pathways Steering Committee with an amendment to the membership to add three members to the list: Planning Director, member of the Conservation Commission, and a member of the community at large; seconded by E. Hoffman.

Additional discussion

E. Linskey suggested the revised wording might hamstring the committee in involving stakeholders.

C. Casey suggested: "with an amendment to allow for the addition of three stakeholders to the membership" to create some flexibility.

L. Scagliotti asked for clarification on the structure and role of this committee in the grand scheme of town committees and their general model of term lengths, rules of procedure, etc.

- D. Schneider noted the proposal indicates that such rules of procedure need to be developed.

M. Staskus asked how the mission of this steering committee was different from the charge of the recreation committee.

- J. Ferreira said feedback from a wide range of stakeholder groups indicated the need for a municipal-wide committee with a different kind of decision-making or advisory authority that is broader than what the rec committee is afforded.

C. Macmillan said she continues to be confused about this steering committee and the duplication of work and purpose it could create. She also noted that the rec department already relies heavily on taxpayers for its funding.

- J. Ferreira said the proposal is not for a recreation group but a connectivity and pedestrian-focused group.
 - The Rec Committee is studying the town pool, the parks master plan, and the potential for a new recreation committee.
 - He sees this steering committee more as a transportation group.

D. Schneider and E. Hoffman withdrew their motion and second, respectively, and requested the group flesh out their document a little bit more for clarity.

→ **Amendment to Selectboard Rules of Procedure**

[[current rules of procedure](#) | [proposed amendment](#)]

M. Staskus introduced the proposed amendment.

Discussion

E. Hoffman said he isn't comfortable with taking away a whole week to work on documentation and other preparations before the next meeting.

- M. Staskus said it isn't fair that the community doesn't have enough time to review the material.

S. Sabin said there is no requirement to provide the meeting materials to the public; they do it as a courtesy. If there is going to be a deadline, it should only be for actionable items.

- M. Staskus said she is getting feedback about meeting materials being a moving target.
- S. Sabin said the agenda doesn't need to be warned until Sunday, by statute.

In response to E. Hoffman's concern, D. Schneider said overhauling or starting from scratch to present to the selectboard in only two weeks' time doesn't sound like a reasonable ask anyway.

Motion by R. Clapp to adopt procedural amendment; seconded by D. Schneider.

No further discussion; **motion approved 3-2 (E. Hoffman and S. Sabin opposed)**

→ **Discussion of [elected v. appointed](#) Town Clerk/Treasurer positions**

E. Hoffman presented the summary of the process so far and proposed next steps.

- Appointing the town clerk and treasurer is allowed by state law.
- There are both merits and potential drawbacks to moving to the appointment model.
- The current system has no oversight that would uncover improper behavior; nor is there a mechanism to address it at the local level.
- He concluded that the current model is already undemocratic. The history of town clerk elections in Waterbury shows that since the election moved to Australian ballot in the

1970s, there has only been one contested election for town clerk and three for town treasurer.

- Moving these positions to appointments must go to the voters in a Town Meeting Day special article.
- Implementing the change has a lot of moving parts. He presented a timeline to bring the issue to a vote at Town Meeting 2027. [see slides 10-14 in linked presentation]
 - The decision about whether to use the Australian ballot is a floor vote at a special town meeting.
 - For town meeting Day, an Australian ballot statistically gets greater turnout, which would maximize public decision-making.
 - The charter change (slide 13) is not a necessary component of the process, but E. Hoffman argued it is an important piece of the larger picture in this issue.
- All mentions of meetings/hearings in the timeline refer to *public* meetings/hearings.

E. Hoffman posed to the board the question of whether they are interested in pursuing this initiative.

Discussion

M. Staskus asked how the charter change relates to the process of determining elected v. appointed.

- E. Hoffman said procedurally, the charter change is entirely separate; conceptually, he sees the two issues as intertwined because they both entail issues of selectboard accountability.

R. Clapp asked if Waterbury would be the first municipality to pursue this change.

- E. Hoffman said somewhere in the ballpark of 60 municipalities have made the change for town clerk and 90 municipalities have made the change for town treasurer.

M. Staskus asked what happens to the elected person after Town Meeting Day.

- E. Hoffman explained that candidates would be elected to a three-year term, but if the move to appointed positions passes, those terms would end in 45 days or when the selectboard makes its appointment - whichever comes first.

D. Schneider suggested having a public discussion on the floor while people are also voting.

- E. Hoffman said it is permissible to discuss Australian ballot items at Town Meeting if they are on the agenda.

S. Sabin noted the selectboard can put these on the town meeting articles as a floor vote without having any of these informational meetings. If no one on the selectboard is interested in doing that, then it seems we are done.

B. Shepeluk said he disagrees that this change is needed right now.

- He thinks with a new selectboard and new town manager, plus a new town clerk in the position, the town should take time to settle.
- Maybe G. Zeiger should be given time to determine the kind of staff she needs.
- He agreed with S. Sabin that if the selectboard wants to bring this item to the voters, just put it in the articles and have a floor vote.
- Petitions can also overturn a floor vote, which would mess with the timeline.

R. Weston said he agrees with moving to an appointed town clerk and treasurer, but also agrees that slowing down the process is a good idea.

- The clerk and treasurer are nonpolitical roles, so electing those positions doesn't carry the same kind of democratic concerns for him.
- He supports the selectboard seriously considering this change, but to do so in a very intentional way.
- The charter change does not seem necessary.
- A legislative body appointing officials to do specific work is within their jurisdiction; he does not see that as undemocratic.

C. Viens asked for confirmation that there is no law giving a municipality the option to vote someone out of the town clerk or treasurer position for egregious action.

- The selectboard confirmed that only the state legislature has that authority.

M. Bard said appointment makes some sense, but this timeline is too rushed.

D. Schneider suggested the board should hold off and take more time on this.

- He thinks it would be interesting to have two community members debate the issue to see what insight emerges.

S. Sabin said she does not support the charter change but would definitely support putting the articles to a floor vote on Town Meeting Day, dispensing with the additional meetings to make the articles Australian ballot.

R. Clapp is favorable to the idea of moving towards appointment.

- He shares concerns about changing up too many things right away at a point when it seems like we're just settling down; taking another year to digest the issue won't hurt.
- He is against the charter change.

M. Staskus reviewed the process and timeline, removing the charter change from the picture.

- She said she would like to hear from some Town Clerks on both sides of this issue to help inform a path forward.

B. Shepeluk said that if the goal is to have an Australian ballot question to do this, a charter amendment can accomplish that goal.

- Charter amendments must be done by Australian ballot.
- He also recommended the charter amendment give the town manager the authority to hire, manage, review, and fire the town clerk and treasurer like any other municipal employee. Stowe took this approach.

The selectboard decided to table the issue to gather more information about the charter change process and to further think through how to communicate the information to the community.

R. Clapp and M. Staskus commended E. Hoffman for the research that he has put into the issue so far.

- R. Clapp added his agreement on hearing from other Town Clerks as part of the information-gathering.

- D. Schneider said that with political divisiveness increasing at the local level, it is worth better understanding if town clerks are better protected via election or appointment as employees.

→ **Request for new private road name–[Hearthstone Circle](#)**

C. Casey reviewed the context that triggered the need for a new private road.

- The single-family home at 73 N. Main St. was moved to the 75 N. Main St. property, which already contains two buildings (one residential, one commercial).
- The third structure triggered the private road. 75 N. Main. St. will be replaced by Hearthstone Circle addresses.

Motion by R. Clapp to approve the new private road by the name of Hearthstone Circle, as located on the provided map; seconded by S. Sabin.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

NEXT MEETING AGENDA

- Town Boards/Committees: Cemetery Commission, Housing Task Force
- Housing Task Force w/ VLCT to discuss CHIP policy options (~30 min.)
- Budget
- Select Board Rules of Procedure revision re: select board agenda and materials posting
- Better Connections (VTRANS grant) final recommendations and adoption

M. Staskus made a reminder announcement about the Municipal Manager Welcome on September 23 from 4:30-6:00 p.m. in the Steele Community Room.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by E. Hoffman to adjourn; seconded by R. Clapp.

Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

Next meeting of the Waterbury Select Board:

October 6 @ 6:30 p.m.
 Steele Community Room
 28 N. Main St. and on Zoom.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Casey.