

Minutes of the Waterbury Selectboard
Monday, October 20, 2025 | 6:30 p.m.
28 N. Main St. and via Zoom

Attendance: Alyssa Johnson, Cheryl Casey, Tom Leitz, Tori Taravella, Kane Sweeney, Roger Clapp

Public attendance: ORCA Media, Carrie MacMillan, Pete Martell, Chris Viens, Valerie Rogers, Sandy Sabin, Chuck Magner, Brian Reilly, Jack Crowe, George Cook, Kay Jostran, Michael Vitti, Evan Karl Hoffman, Harry Shepard

Zoom attendance: ORCA Media, Amy Marshall-Carney, Lisa Scagliotti, Perrin Williams, Evan Karl Hoffman, Anne Imhoff, Eric P.

CALL TO ORDER by A. Johnson, 6:32 p.m.

AGENDAS

Meeting agenda

Motion by T. Taravella to approve the agenda as written; seconded by K. Sweeney.

- **Friendly amendment by R. Clapp to extend the time for the discussion of the Local Option Tax to 7:45.**
- Amendment accepted by T. Taravella and K. Sweeney.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Consent agenda

Motion by K. Sweeney to approve the consent agenda as written; seconded by T. Taravella.

No further discussion; **motion passed 3-0 with 1 (A. Johnson) abstention.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

S. Sabin asked when the public can see a public status update given the changes in staff.

- T. Leitz said that can be available at the next meeting.

V. Rogers said she had a very difficult time getting into the rental registry because the link didn't work and spoke to Neal Leitner about it back in August.

- She tried again last week and the registry wouldn't take her parcel ID.
- Before any further policy about the rental registry is established, it is important that the registry actually works.

C. Viens asked if gaining access to the Bolton Pits materials is possible now that they have re-opened.

- T. Leitz said the town will be buying winter sand from them and will evaluate cost and quality.
- C. Viens is also disappointed about the amount of signage on Guptil Road, saying it ruins the landscape and people need to just drive smartly.

A. Marshall-Carney asked for general information about recent staff departures and how those positions will be filled so there won't be a negative effect on town operations.

- T. Leitz said he can speak more about it offline
- He hopes to make an offer about one of the vacancies this week, with an announcement about other vacancies pretty quickly.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Stanley Wasson update

T. Leitz said he will be meeting with counsel and DEW this Thursday to discuss some sort of development agreement that gives them an 18-month exclusivity period.

- Once that agreement is written, it would come to the selectboard for approval.
- It will likely take one month to six weeks to arrive at a first agreement and bring it before the selectboard.

Discussion

R. Clapp said he asked around to ensure other developers had seen the RFQ

- He was assured the RFQ was widely publicized, discussed, and considered
- Developers decided for cost reasons not to pursue.

P. Martel asked about the Act 250 process.

- T. Leitz said subdividing the parcel from the state is a modification of the state's Act 250 permit.
- Any updated permit for the parcel is on the developer to pursue.
- P. Martel added that if we don't exercise the option to purchase the lot, the legislature would have to pass a new law to sell to a different agent rather than Waterbury.
- T. Leitz said given how the state tends to manage the land it owns, his assumption is that if Waterbury doesn't buy the parcel, the Secretary of Buildings and General Services will go back to the Legislature and ask for a new bill to sell the parcel to someone else.

H. Shepard asked if there will be any additional obligations on the town's part as part of the development agreement.

- T. Leitz said if there is going to be an affordable housing component on that site, the town will likely do grant writing.
- A public park on part of that site will also come at a cost to the town.
- We're only at the very beginning of the process, so there can be unforeseen commitments.

C. Viens expressed his concern about going into deficit spending by creating these projects

- He's particularly concerned about having to spend more on public safety, which will easily surpass the projected tax revenue of the housing units.

V. Rogers asked for clarification about what agreement the town might be signing with the developer.

- T. Leitz said the exclusivity agreement gives the developer time to conduct research and testing without losing out to another developer in the meantime.

R. Clapp brought up a sewer line on Park Row that was reported as failing, wondering if there was an update and whether it would affect this project.

- T. Leitz will circle back with Bill Woodruff and get an update.

Jack Crowe, a resident of Randall Street, asked at what point increased traffic volume would be addressed.

- K. Sweeney said it was brought up at the Oct. 6 meeting and before the 18-month exclusivity agreement is up, much more strategizing would have to occur.

Letters of support for Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) grant applications

[[letter - Colbyville Dams](#); [letter - VLT Easement](#); [letter - Healthy Ecosystems](#)]

D. Allen summarized the three grants available from LCBP:

- Study of dam removals for Colbyville upper and lower dams - to evaluate the flood resiliency of those dams and propose 100% design. Winooski NRC is the applicant and the letter is a show of support from the town to make it a stronger application.
- Partnership with Vermont Land Trust to investigate and potentially place a conservation easement on the Randall Meadow property, with VLT as the easement holder; again, the town would be a partner and therefore needs to show support. The Randall Meadow project is extremely important and expensive. This easement, in addition to the physical changes intended for the property, gives the parcel a phosphorus credit bonus, reducing the cost benefit ratio and making us eligible for more money. Waterbury wouldn't pay anything for the easement except for some admin time; all of the work is from VLT.
- The Healthy Ecosystems program, which he is recommending Waterbury apply for as a town, and relates to survey, model and design (construction-ready plans), as well as outreach on flood resilience for 5 other sites around town: Ice Arena, Moran Field, Duxbury Land Trust, Dascombe Rowe Park, and Wastewater Treatment Plan.

T. Leitz said his only concern about the VLT grant is that the easement adds another layer with federal grants and recommended the letter use softer language about exploring the easement idea but not ready to implement just yet.

Discussion

R. Clapp asked if the easement would preclude the trail development under discussion at Randall Meadow.

- D. Allen responded that pathways and trails aren't a problem.

K. Sweeney asked for an explanation of "flood plain reconnection."

- D. Allen said reconnection refers to lowering the surface of the land such that when the river floods, it can access that flood plain and settle out in a defined, engineered zone.
- The other 5 projects identified for this Healthy Ecosystems grant can look like what we plan for Randall Meadow, but we have to undertake the study to determine if some or all of these sites are eligible for such work.

K. Sweeney asked who picks which of those five are studied in the event of partial grant funding.

- D. Allen said that is up to us as the applicants, since the money is for study, model, and design, not implementation.

M. Staskus echoed the concern about a conservation easement precluding future opportunities for funding.

H. Shepard asked about getting involved with the Colbyville dams when the town doesn't actually own them.

- Dam removals aren't always positive, and other mitigation or structural fixes should be the responsibility of the property owners, not the town.
- D. Allen said neither of the property owners have an interest in the dams or maintaining them.

- He said Bill Woodruff is working on getting letters of support from the landowners to pursue the grant and study.
- Whether removing the dams will be beneficial or harmful is the purpose of the grant. They are partially breached and the grant would give us the resources to get the information needed to decide if it is in the town's best interests to get involved.

R. Clapp asked if the study would address the impact of the dams on the Laurel Lane bridge.

- D. Allen confirmed it would look at that impact.

K. Sweeney spoke to H. Shepard's concerns that the dams are private obligations, noting that if the landowners cannot afford to address those obligations, there are benefits to the town to consider what can or should be done.

V. Rogers reminded everyone about the federal shutdown and we should be mindful of how much we are putting into these grant applications.

- We're investing a lot of resources to submit the applications and they might never come to fruition.

A. Johnson asked about local match requirements.

- D. Allen said no match is required for the VLT or Colbyville Dam grants.
- For Healthy Ecosystems, a match isn't required but looked upon favorably; that match can be in the form of staff or volunteer time.

Motion by T. Taravella to approve the letter supporting the grant application for the study of the Colbyville Dams; seconded by K. Sweeney.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Motion by K. Sweeney for the Town of Waterbury to directly apply for the Lake Champlain Basin Program Healthy Ecosystems grant; seconded by T. Taravella.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Motion by T. Taravella to approve the letter with the municipal manager's revision to support grant application for the study to explore the conservation easement with VLT; seconded by R. Clapp.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Local Option Tax policy (continued discussion)

T. Leitz made some revisions based on feedback provided at the last meeting.

Discussion

K. Sweeney commented that this policy aligns with the goals and aspirations we had when we passed the town charter in the first place.

R. Clapp asked if any of the bullet points differ in any substantial way from what has previously been presented to the town and the legislature.

- T. Leitz said this language aligns with the same messaging we have been using all along.
- K. Sweeney noted that some of the words are just in a different order but otherwise agreed the message is the same.

S. Sabin asked if the policy as written would allow WATA to be given funding like they were last year.

- T. Leitz said it depends on the exact nature of the appropriation request. For example, if WATA wants general, unrestricted funding, that's a matter of warning the appropriation for Town

Meeting. However, if WATA came to the town with a specific project proposal that would benefit the town, that might be another matter for consideration.

- S. Sabin emphasized that whatever the project, the funding should stay in town; the last WATA project funding by LOT took place on land not part of the town.

V. Rogers asked about the resistance to changing “shall” to “will.”

- T. Leitz and T. Taravella said the language of “shall” is the common legal standard for policy and contract documents.

V. Rogers proposed changing aspiration #3 to ensure the public is able to vote on allocating money to the town’s housing trust fund.

C. Viens said the wording in approved uses #2 suggests that the town is in the housing development business.

- He doesn't want anyone, including future selectboard members, thinking we’re going to take taxpayer dollars and build projects to house people and would like to see different wording.
- People are having a hard enough time hanging on to the housing they do have.
- T. Taravella said she would be hesitant to change language that was included in the document put forth to the legislature and approved by the town previously.

Motion by T. Taravella to approve this local option tax policy; seconded by K. Sweeney.

Additional discussion

R. Clapp gave his appreciation for the concerns expressed by the public. It’s important to reiterate that the selectboard doesn’t have any intention of getting into the real estate business.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Conservation Commission [Bylaw updates](#) / Board and Commission attendance policy

A. Marshall-Carney summarized the revisions the Conservation Commission made to its bylaws regarding expected attendance at commission meetings

- The initiative was prompted by particular challenges around attendance that were affecting the commission’s work.

T. Leitz said the proposal from the Conservation Commission isn’t unreasonable and he has no objections to the selectboard taking up the attendance issue as it applies to the Conservation Commission

- He recommended that the selectboard later establish a broadly-applicable policy for all town boards and commissions.

Motion by T. Taravella to approve this change to the Conservation Commission bylaws; seconded by R. Clapp.

Additional discussion

R. Clapp said it is important to the functionality and public service of our boards and commissions to have such expectations in place about attendance.

M. Staskus asked if the Conservations Commission had to be composed of 9 members.

- A. Marshall-Carney answered that they previously had 7 members but have been more effective at decision-making with the 8 that have been consistently in attendance.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

The selectboard agreed that K. Sweeney will organize a discussion with all board and commission chairs to discuss a similar attendance policy.

Capital Soccer lease

T. Leitz said this lease agreement is a renewal, and the only change since the last lease renewal is that the fields have been reconfigured; a FEMA grant has addressed some flood repair, and the new lease would place field maintenance and relevant expenses in Capital Soccer's hands.

Discussion

R. Clapp asked about the new field being graded.

- Mike Vitti explained that the field was previously a corn field that looked flat to the naked eye but needed regrading to level it off.
- It is sized for U-12 competition.
- It will take several years for the turf to establish itself and it likely won't be until 2027 at the earliest for the field to be ready for actual play.

R. Clapp asked about the plan to keep the lower field playable.

- M. Vitti said the plan is to continue with the usual practice of aerating as deeply as possible and using organic material to help the grasses grow.

Motion by K. Sweeney to authorize the town manager to sign the lease agreement between the Town of Waterbury and Capital Soccer; seconded by T. Taravella.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Additional event, entertainment, and liquor permits

Event and entertainment permits for Skatepark Opening on 10/26

- K. Sweeney noted that if a vendor is secured, that vendor would have to apply for a permit, but the selectboard can approve the music and event in general.

Motion by K. Sweeney to approve the event and a deejay on this application, but there is no time remaining for a vendor permit; seconded by R. Clapp.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Maxi's liquor permit

T. Bryant requested the use of Dac Rowe and Anderson Field parking lots

- He will provide staff for monitoring those lots and keeping vehicles off the playing fields.
- The selectboard and municipal manager agreed.

Motion by T. Taravella to approve this permit along with all previous permits submitted for this event; seconded by R. Clapp.

Discussion

M. Staskus asked about post office parking.

- T. Bryant confirmed that for the half-hour overlap when the post office is open, they will be monitoring that parking to ensure there is no conflict.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Municipal updates

- Better Connections grant updates

- T. Leitz said Nov. 2 at noon is the new date for the walkthrough in Waterbury Center with the consultant; the group will meet at the pavilion in Hope Davey Park. The rain date is Nov. 8.
- Waterbury Housing Improvement Program
 - T. Leitz said the agreement with Downstreet is signed and the grant program will go live in one week (Oct. 27). Waterbury's funds will not be available concurrently with the state VHIP program, (which closes on Oct. 24). There is a summary of the information and a link to Downstreet/the application on the [Housing Task Force](#) page.
 - K. Sweeney said he is excited to have this initiative reach the open application phase and how it can help affordable housing construction.
- Town Plan update
 - M. Staskus reported that the town plan is moving along with scheduled meetings with experts and stakeholder organizations with respect to each chapter.

Additional selectboard and municipal manager information updates

R. Clapp:

- The Recreation Committee is meeting next week to discuss a potential partnership with RW on trail network improvement and development.

K. Sweeney:

- Natural Disaster hasn't met yet this month, but given the drought, it might be time to give some attention to natural disaster response other than floods.

T. Taravella:

- The Tree Board has done incredible work with the resources they have, and they might need more resources next year. Inoculating and taking down trees are not cheap initiatives. She missed the last meeting for details on the board's discussion.

A. Johnson

- The Housing Task Force meeting addressed the upcoming housing improvement program and had a preliminary discussion about how to enforce the rental registry.
- Saturday November 8 - Short Term Rental Summit by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and anyone is welcome to attend.

Review of agenda items for next meetings

Joint meeting with the Planning Committee and Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

Quarterly budget update

Stanley Wasson

Short term rentals

Presentation of research on law enforcement strategies in other towns.

Review of how to request funds for Town Meeting warning.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by K. Sweeney to find that premature public knowledge of labor negotiations and personnel would put the Town of Waterbury at a significant disadvantage; seconded by T. Taravella.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Motion by K. Sweeney to enter executive session and invite the municipal manager; seconded by T. Taravella.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

Selectboard moved into executive session at 8:32 p.m.

Selectboard exited from executive session at 9:14 p.m. with no action taken.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:14 p.m.

Next meeting of the Waterbury Selectboard: Monday, November 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Casey.