

Minutes of the Waterbury Selectboard Special Meeting
Friday, January 30, 2026 | 9:00 a.m.
28 N. Main St. and via Zoom

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Attendance: Alyssa Johnson, Cheryl Casey, Kane Sweeney, Roger Clapp, Tom Leitz, Bill Woodruff, Tori Taravella, Mike Bard, Carol Dawes

Public attendance: Valerie Rogers, Carrie MacMillan, Lisa Scagliotti, Amy Marshall-Carney

Zoom attendance: Evan Karl Hoffman, Sandy Sabin

CALL TO ORDER 9:04 a.m. by A. Johnson

AGENDA

Motion by K. Sweeney to approve the agenda as presented; seconded by M. Bard.
No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Johnson acknowledged that this meeting had to be rescheduled from yesterday at the last minute because the warning still needed review by counsel.

V. Rogers asked for an update on Revitalizing Waterbury's budget request. They were supposed to come back to a public meeting with updated and clarified numbers. She does not find this funding area transparent.

- T. Leitz said that funding has been put in the general budget request, which is part of article 9, and is a line item in that section of the budget

M. Bard commended the Winterfest group on an excellent wassailing event last night.

R. Clapp gave a reminder that Elm St. will be blocked off tonight from 4:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. for a Winterfest Block Party. Neighbors have been notified with a flyer. He recognizes the inconvenience.

- In that vein, the antique car show said they won't be requesting the closure of Stowe St. and Black Cap Coffee owners have expressed concern about the event request that would include closing off Rotarian Way.

Review and approve 2026 Town Meeting warning

A. Johnson summarized: Articles 9-13 were updated after the last meeting of the selectboard and a review by counsel. Both Article 9 and Article 10 can be made much shorter.

T. Leitz said the estimated tax rate increase is 2.71%

Discussion

K. Sweeney stated he didn't think Article 15 needed the entire list if it is included in the Town Report already.

- R. Clapp expressed agreement. The information can be displayed on a page in the report, as a reference.
- A. Marshall-Carney said it isn't easy for everyone to just read reports in such a large volume. Literacy is one of the topics under discussion by the Town Meeting Study Committee as a potential roadblock to engagement.
- M. Bard and T. Taravella agreed with the concern about literacy.
- R. Clapp reversed his position after hearing these comments.
- A. Johnson added that the legal review recommended streamlining the language because the budget is so complex already, just to be clear about why this was a point of discussion in the first place.
- A. Marshall-Carney said the lawyer is not the public that the selectboard serves.

T. Leitz advocated for streamlining the language in Article 9 because the current sentence construction is very complex as well as full of large numbers to calculate; streamlining would more align with A. Marshall-Carney's point about literacy.

- M. Bard expressed agreement with this reasoning.
- R. Clapp said the way the article is written does provide more detail, which could be important.
- L. Scagliotti said this article doesn't really tell people how much the budget is without a calculator or finding the numbers buried in the report. As a reporter trying to interpret the information for the public, it's already a little confusing. People want to know, what is our budget this year?
- E. K. Hoffman said making things clearer doesn't mean making things shorter.
- A. Johnson said the bottom line number is useful and she is comfortable with making the article shorter. When the assigned selectboard member presents the article, they can point to the specifics in the town report.

Motion by R. Clapp to replace article 9 with the proposed language by T. Leitz, adding the word "anticipated" prior to "non-property tax"; seconded by K. Sweeney.

"Shall the voters of the Town of Waterbury adopt the proposed operating and capital budgets, which contain \$6,567,486 in expenses, of which \$4,585,774 is to be raised by property taxes and \$1,981,712 is to be funded by anticipated non-property tax revenues."

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

- L. Scagliotti suggested adding "subject to the approval of subsequent articles."
- T. Leitz said that can be up for discussion at Town Meeting rather than something stated in the article.

Motion by M. Bard to approve the warning of the annual Town Meeting of the Town of Waterbury on March 3, 2026 as previously amended; seconded by K. Sweeney.

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

Review and consider approving Letter of Support for Waterbury Pathways project planning grant application

R. Clapp recused himself as the executive director of RW and drafter of the letter, but he could speak to the project as needed.

- The pre-application was approved and the completed application is due this Sunday at midnight.
- Former Recreation Director Katarina Lisaius recommended this grant for maintenance of trails prior to her departure.
- The grant is for planning the maintenance, not implementation.

Discussion

M. Bard said he was concerned that eventual implementation would increase town expenses for maintenance.

- It would be good if RW or some other organizations does maintenance, similar to what the Waterbury Rotary does for Rusty Parker Memorial Park.
- He supports the planning grant as is, but looking long-term, maintenance should be done by a volunteer group.
- R. Clapp agreed and said the planning piece includes discussions about who will maintain different sections of trail.

A. Johnson said the Town still contributes to upkeep, but volunteers do help keep the cost as low as possible. The Town should be included in the planning conversations.

R. Clapp also noted that two members of the Recreation Committee are involved in advising on the application.

A. Marshall-Carney said some of the language is problematic, including putting together a grant for something we don't yet own (Randall Meadow), referring to Bill Woodruff as interim town manager (which he isn't until after this grant application is due), and phrasing that binds the planning to the implementation phase.

- The work plan template doesn't provide project details, only the schedule. Much of the information provided at this stage is too vague, bringing up questions of governance and fiduciary responsibility.
- This selectboard should be leading this grant application; there is real risk of having a separate non-profit directing town priorities.
- She asked the board to pause and not issue this letter of support, requesting the grant application be a selectboard process.

B. Woodruff said a number of grants in the past have been pushed through by RW with staff support from the Town.

- A. Marshall-Carney said she appreciates that, but that doesn't make it right. Further, this grant is localized, unlike other conservation-related grants supported by the selectboard.

A. Johnson said it would be reasonable to make a motion that covers the necessary bases and the selectboard is authorized to do so.

Motion by K. Sweeney to approve the letter of support as drafted and have it signed by A. Johnson as Selectboard Chair; seconded by M. Bard.

No further discussion; **motion passed 4-0 with 1 (R. Clapp) abstention.**

Sign Ratified Collective Bargaining Agreement

T. Taravella and A. Johnson were given thanks for the time they spent reading closely through the agreement.

Consider updating Municipal Authorizing Official Agreements

Motion by M. Bard to approve interim Town Manager Bill Woodruff as a Municipal Authorizing Official; seconded by R. Clapp.

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

Motion by R. Clapp to adjourn the meeting; seconded by K. Sweeney.

ADJOURNMENT, 10:00 a.m.

Next meeting of the Waterbury Selectboard: Monday, February 2, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Casey.