

Minutes of the Waterbury Selectboard Regular Meeting
Monday, February 2, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.
28 N. Main Street and on Zoom

[Zoom recording here](#) | Passcode: Sbg5!0E1

Attendance: Roger Clapp, Bill Woodruff, Alyssa Johnson, Cheryl Casey, Tori Taravella, Kane Sweeney
Not present: Mike Bard

Public attendance: ORCA Media, Sally Kulis, Pete Martel, Tom Rogers, Amy Erle, Wilson Ring, Chris Viens, Matthew Kelly, Sidney Kelly, Steve Hagenbuch, Billy Vigdor, Pegeen Mulhern, Valerie Rogers, Bill Shepeluk, Martha Staskus, Joe Camaratta, Evan Karl Hoffman, Carlton Ardens

Public on Zoom: ORCA Media, STowe Land Trust, Sandy Sabin, Harry Shepard, Anne Imhoff, Evan Karl Hoffman, Amy Marshall-Carney, Carrie MacMillan, Elizabeth Brown, Katie Clark Johnson

CALL TO ORDER, 6:38 p.m. by A. Johnson

AGENDAS

Meeting agenda

Motion by T. Taravella to approve the agenda with the removal of the outstanding special event permit; seconded by R. Clapp.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously, 3-0.**

Consent agenda

Motion by T. Taravella to approve the consent agenda; seconded by R. Clapp.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously, 3-0.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

W. Ring, husband of owner of Black Cap Coffee & Bakery, said he was pleased the special event permit pertaining to the union-organized event has been withdrawn because closing Rotarian Way would hurt the business. He requested that the business be informed if similar event permits are submitted in the future.

R. Clapp –

- Thanked everyone who came out for Waterbury Winterfest. There was nearly record turnout for almost all events. He also thanked the Town and the community organizations who participated. It was a great showing of how community-oriented we are.
- Revitalizing Waterbury is prepared to come to the next selectboard meeting to discuss their budget and the two part-time staffers currently filling the place of the economic development coordinator position.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Stowe Land Trust presentation

A. Johnson introduced the group and noted that they have been making presentations to selectboards in the area to discuss their strategic planning and priorities.

T. Rogers, M. Kelly, and A. Erle, staff at Stowe Land Trust, presented to the selectboard.

- Their strategic plan includes expanding their conservation region in the valley and have started servicing the Town of Stowe plus 2 miles, and hopefully beyond.
- Access is a major value; they have just created two new trail networks that are universally accessible.
- Community, sustainability, innovation, equity and inclusion, and collaboration are other key values.
- They have recently expanded to 6 full-time staff.
- They are expanding because the concerns are shared valley-wide (pressure on popular trailheads, wildlife protection, universal access, development, and affordability, as examples)
- Their conservation region is “from the Rivers to the Ridges” of Winooski River, Lamoille River, Green Mountains, and Worcester Mountains.
- Working farms, working forests, wildlife/biodiversity, recreation, and flood resilience are the categories of conservation values they are working with.
- They select projects with GIS analysis and according to community priorities and landowner goals
- The methods of conservation are either fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.
- Other opportunities come through community support and partnerships with conservation-focused organizations.
- They are an accredited land trust organization.
- Community input is key to their approach, especially for Stowe, Waterbury, and Morristown. They are setting their goals around residents’ values and priorities.

A. Erle reviewed responses they have received so far to their community survey, which overall show Waterbury residents are invested in land conservation.

T. Rogers explained the next steps, which include facilitating community meetings to finalize their new strategic conservation plan. Partnerships with other organizations will be central to anything they do.

Discussion

A. Johnson encouraged Stowe Land Trust to keep putting the survey out there to gather more responses.

T. Rogers noted that their purpose this evening is to share information and raise awareness about their work in the area.

R. Clapp asked if there were any Waterbury residents on the board.

- T. Rogers said one Waterbury resident served for 9 years and is now an emerita member. A member of Waterbury Land Trust has been invited to

R. Clapp asked about their experience working with Waterbury on the Shutesville wildlife corridor.

- T. Rogers said working with Waterbury has been fantastic. A lot of the work on the Waterbury side has been done by Vermont Land Trust, so he hopes that Stowe Land Trust and partnering organizations can play a larger role there.

T. Taravella invited the Stowe Land Trust to speak to the Waterbury Rotary Club.

M. Staskus, Chair of the Waterbury Planning Commission, invited SLT to speak to them as they work on the new town plan; natural resources and conservation are significant chapters. She also pressed for them to engage with the landowners as much as possible, through as many avenues possible.

C. Viens asked if the land trust is capable of keeping up with the excessive costs of property to make conservation appeals to landowners, and other issues around real estate and the crisis of affordability.

- T. Rogers said their two most recent projects were collaborations with Downstreet Housing; conservation of places to live that are affordable are just as important.
- Raising money is a double-edged sword right now because at the same time that most people are just scraping by, there are some very well-off people who hold the values of conservation and are making large gifts.
- They will never compete with affordable housing opportunities if that is what the land is best suited for.

S. Hagenbuch said the Waterbury Land Initiative is very excited about Stowe Land Trust's expansion. WLI is a small, volunteer-run non-profit and they can do so much more in collaboration with Stowe Land Trust.

A. Marshall-Carney said she was also surprised there was a survey out there, and the town is really emphasizing outreach around the new town plan as the focus.

- She hopes to stay connected with Stowe Land Trust to address any possible contradictions in our own planning.

R. Clapp asked what Stowe Land Trust calls "this valley" between the Green Mountains and Worcesters. It's not quite the Winooski or Lamoille Valley as a whole.

- T. Rogers said they don't have an answer to that, but it has prompted thinking about whether they should change their name to reflect their inclusiveness.

Interim municipal manager updates

B. Woodruff said he's been catching up on what the selectboard has been up to. The next meeting will come with a few requests, but he's just getting his feet wet for now.

Review next steps and updates for flood mitigation projects, including Randall Meadow bond vote

D. Allen reported no substantial updates since the last meeting. His recent work includes:

- A presentation for the Randall Meadow bond vote.
- The environmental release that must be done as part of the Randall Meadow grant conditions. The State is giving very helpful guidance.
- The Woody Avenue planning grant requires the same environmental release as the Randall Meadow implementation grant.
- The RFP for the design work on Randall Meadow.
- The RFP for the Woody Avenue design plan.

Discussion

R. Clapp asked about the Clean Water Fund grant.

- D. Allen said the design work will provide the data needed to be eligible for as much funding as possible. That is why he wants to prioritize the RFP on Randall Meadow. We have to get the environmental release before we can do any other work. In an ideal world, we have decent data to apply for the grant in the fall, and the Clean Water Fund is a rolling application—they usually review quarterly.
- R. Clapp said the timeline of accessing other funding would be helpful to see laid out as part of the bond vote.

C. Viens asked if there is any funding to help with the removal in an ongoing maintenance process.

- D. Allen said there is a phosphorus “budget” for any site. We are removing so much material that it is going to take a lot of flood events to have an impact on the void left by the initial phosphorus removal.
- Typically these Clean Water Fund projects expect 15-30 years of no significant accumulation. He’s not aware of funding for eventual removal after the 30-year timeframe. The likelihood of having to worry about removal before that timeframe is up is very low.

Review next steps and updates for Stanley Wasson property

R. Clapp said there is an offer from DEW, and a number of community members do have feedback to provide. We should understand that feedback by holding a public hearing before Town Meeting.

Discussion

P. Martel requested that this discussion be bumped to the next selectboard because 4 people will be stepping off the board in just a few weeks.

B. Shepeluk recommended calling the discussion a “public information meeting” so as not to trigger certain warning deadlines.

- A. Johnson noted that the selectboard isn’t tied to (or tying a future selectboard to) any action from a public information meeting.

R. Clapp asked if DEW has put any time constraints on the offer.

- B. Woodruff said he didn’t see any.

The selectboard agreed to hold a public information meeting on Wednesday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m.

- R. Clapp offered to reach out to the Fire Department to reserve the second floor room.

A. Johnson will find out if an unredacted or lesser-redacted version of the DEW proposal can be made available.

Consider reaffirming Waterbury Housing Trust Fund Allowable Uses

A. Johnson pointed out some clerical updates in the document. She summarized that this document had been referenced a number of times when creating the articles pertaining to the housing trust fund. The document was originally drafted by the Housing Task Force.

Discussion

K. Sweeney said reaffirming the allowable uses after making the clerical updates made sense to him.

R. Clapp confirmed that there are two applicants for the housing improvement grant program, and he wants to make sure nothing we do will prevent the applicants from receiving the money.

- A. Johnson said there shouldn’t be any difficulty in accessing those funds because it fits the allowable uses that we will reaffirm.

A. Johnson suggested striking a couple of sentences in the background statement for the founding of the trust fund and determination of allowable uses.

- K. Sweeney asked if we should be striking anything from the document.
- R. Clapp said striking some content provides a useful update.

A. Marshall-Carney suggested being more explicit about “long-term” rental housing. The selectboard accepted the suggestion.

S. Sabin asked for the second paragraph to be modified or struck from the document because it is misleading about the establishment of the trust fund.

- She also expressed concern about always needing a third-party program to administer funds; that might be limiting for future projects or initiatives.
- Finally, the document doesn't say anything about rehabilitating housing or supporting affordability of current housing stock.

K. Sweeney said at the time of discussing the Waterbury housing improvement program, the town manager was very hesitant about having the town administer the funds, as it blurs the line between government and developer. His concern is the ability of the town to administer the funds in a way that makes sense, and in a way that is cost effective.

- S. Sabin said there might be projects in the future that the town could handle appropriately.
- T. Taravella suggested adjusting some of the wording to "may" use a third-party administrator.

J. Camaratta said the spirit of the grant program was always to increase supply.

- Bringing something pre-existing online as a rental rather than a permanent residence is part of the program eligibility. Not all rehabilitations are created equal.

C. Viens asked for clarification on what counts to get the money.

- K. Sweeney said bringing existing rental units up to code or improving existing rental units don't count as legitimate uses.

M. Staskus asked if the use of both "may" and "will" in the document was intentional. She also asked who is determining the qualifications on which the administrator is making decisions with.

- A. Johnson said the appropriate third-party was selected by the town, and there is only one program using a third-party at this time. A different kind of project may call for a different third party administrator.

A Marshall-Carney asked if there was any accountability built into the allowable uses.

- A. Johnson said accountability measures were worked into the specific project.
- A Marshall-Carney recommended having accountability measures articulated in this document.
- K. Sweeney said a future selectboard should have the opportunity to discuss accountability.

A. Johnson read the edits to be made to the document.

- Delete sentences two and three from the first paragraph of "Background."
- Replace "the Town established" with "the Selectboard established" in paragraph two.
- Insert "long-term" before "rental housing supply" in the first sentence of the third paragraph.
- Replace "the Town allocated" with "the Selectboard allocated" in the second sentence of the third paragraph.
- Insert a sentence stating that the voters approved \$75k to be allocated to the housing trust fund at the 2024 Town Meeting before the last sentence of the third paragraph.
- In the section "Allowable Uses," replace "may" with "shall" in the first sentence.
- Add "or municipal staff" after "third-party affordable housing organization" in the next to last sentence of the first bullet point.
- Add the sentence "No more than 10% of the funding would be used for administrative fees" to the end of the bullet point.
- In the final sentence of the document, change "housing trust" to "housing reserve fund."

Motion by T. Taravella to adopt the allowable uses for the housing reserve fund, with the revisions just stated; seconded by K. Sweeney.

No further discussion; motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Review and finalize Selectboard and other pertinent reports for 2025 Town Report

A. Johnson summarized what she had in the report draft so far and asked if members of the selectboard had other recommendations of items to discuss.

- K. Sweeney and B. Woodruff agreed that the new bridge on Stowe St. is a major project to mention.
- R. Clapp said there were two Downtown Transportation grants - one for Better Connections and the other for paving on Bidwell Lane.
- K. Sweeney said a more specific highway capital plan should be included.
- Noteworthy that we didn't have a flood.

Review and consider approving updated Special Event Permit form

A. Johnson summarized some of the updates since the last meeting, which were minor administrative edits.

Motion by T. Taravella to approve the special event permit form as revised by the selectboard chair; seconded by K. Sweeney.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously, 4-0.**

T. Taravella noted that the public entertainment ordinance needs significant updating, since it was last reviewed in 1996. She will draft a revised ordinance before her selectboard term ends, for the next selectboard to consider.

Review and consider adopting policies for Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant compliance, including:

- [Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan](#)
- [Municipal Policies and Codes \(Form MP-1\)](#)

A. Johnson noted that these documents don't apply specifically to the Woody Avenue project, but they are required as part of the grant conditions.

Motion by T. Taravella to adopt the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan; seconded by K. Sweeney.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously, 4-0.**

Motion by T. Taravella to adopt the Municipal Policies and Codes; seconded by K. Sweeney.

No further discussion; **motion passed unanimously, 4-0.**

Selectboard member updates

K. Sweeney said he submitted a resignation letter, effective at the end of the meeting on Town Meeting Day. It has been one of the greatest honors of his life to serve on this board. He will still be fighting for working people, but now as part of his new job.

- A. Johnson said filling the position will be up to the next selectboard, and there are state statutes to inform the process.

R. Clapp:

- The planning grant application has been submitted (Waterbury Trailways)

T. Taravella:

- Cash raffle for Rotary
- Pie for Breakfast, February 14, Rotary event

A. Johnson

- Has mostly been working on preparing for tonight's meeting and finishing the selectboard report for the Town Report

Review next meeting dates and agenda items for upcoming meetings

Informational meeting on Stanley Wasson project and available updates on Woody Avenue project, February 11 at 7:00 p.m., tentatively at the Fire Station.

Next selectboard meeting, February 17, 6:30 p.m.

- Randall Meadow public hearing
- Zoning enforcement
- Holiday alignment for union and non-union employees
- Revitalizing Waterbury budget update
- Assignments to selectboard members for articles and motions at Town Meeting

Motion by K. Sweeney to adjourn; seconded by T. Taravella.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:42 p.m.

Next meetings of the Waterbury Selectboard: *Special Meeting:* Wed., February 11, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.
Public Information Meeting on Stanley Wasson project

Regular Meeting: Tues. February 17, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.
Includes Public Hearing for Randall Meadow bond vote

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Casey.