

Minutes of the Waterbury Selectboard Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 17, 2026 | 6:00 p.m.
28 S. Main St. and on Zoom

[Zoom recording here](#) | Passcode: puCY7!3#

Selectboard attendance: Kane Sweeney, Mike Bard, Roger Clapp, Alyssa Johnson, Tori Taravella

Staff attendance: Bill Woodruff, Cheryl Casey

Public attendance: ORCA Media, Carrie MacMillan, Morgan Griffith, Cheryl Gloor, Joe Camaratta, Billy Vigdor, Chris Viens, Evan Karl Hoffman, Mal Culbertson, Ian Shea, Martha Staskus, Lisa Scagliotti, Steve Martin

Public on Zoom: ORCA Media, Whitney Aldrich, Lindsay Sullivan, Elizabeth Brown, Barbara Barra, Amy Marshall-Carney, Walter Hope, Jeff Doretti, Sandy Sabin, Kenny Ryan, Damian Roman, Don Schneider, Kia Nealy

CALL TO ORDER, 6:04 p.m. by A. Johnson

[AGENDAS](#)

Meeting agenda

Motion by K. Sweeney to approve the agenda with an amendment on the consent agenda, to add a 2nd class liquor and tobacco license for Village Market; seconded by M. Bard.

No further discussion; **motion approved unanimously**

Consent agenda

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

M. Bard thanked the Rotary members for a record-attendance Pie for Breakfast event last Saturday; he also thanked all of the Olympic athletes for Team USA for their dedication and successes.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Debrief of special meeting on Stanley Wasson project

A. Johnson and R Clapp thanked all who participated.

R. Clapp added his appreciation for the civil tone of the meeting.

- His takeaway was that due diligence is most important; some of it is built into the pre-development agreement, while some needs further clarification.
- These items include: the status of the subdivision, the timeline of the marketing study, and more intentional built-in follow-up by the town at various stages in the pre-development process.

T. Taravella said a lot of questions that came up can't be answered without the company doing their due diligence to find out that desired information.

- We can't find solutions or learn the extent of any problems without signing the agreement.

M. Bard said he heard concerns about the pre-development agreement timeline compared to the expiration date of our option to purchase the parcel.

- His impression is that the option to purchase can be extended.

R. Clapp and K. Sweeney said they would be in favor of extending the option to purchase.

A. Johnson said it was very important to share the pre-development agreement, but there certainly was some cleanup to be done.

- This is a worthwhile project; the due diligence and consideration should be undertaken by signing the agreement.

Motion by K. Sweeney to extend the [option to purchase agreement](#) with the State to December 31, 2026; seconded by M. Bard.

Discussion

B. Woodruff said the State has already approved extending this agreement until December 31, 2026.

A Marshall-Carney asked if there are any implications for permits and other pieces of the process if we extend the deadline.

- R. Clapp said there is no scenario in which the Town would be forced into purchasing or not.

M. Staskus recommended extending the purchase option for one year to give DEW and the Town more time to undertake due diligence.

- T. Taravella agreed, noting that DEW requested an 18-month due diligence period. We should request a new deadline of December 31, 2027.
- M. Bard said he didn't imagine the State would pull the plug on this agreement.
- R. Clapp said we should start with the extension the State has already agreed to and return to the table if we need to extend the deadline again. K. Sweeney agreed.
- B. Woodruff said the state has already signed for December 31 of this year, and the town attorney said the interim municipal manager can sign it.

C. Gloor thanked the selectboard to pause on signing the pre-development agreement for the next selectboard, if that is indeed the plan.

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

Recognition of Staff Work Anniversaries

A. Johnson said the new [collective bargaining agreement](#) includes the requirement that the selectboard acknowledge union employees' anniversaries twice a year. This selectboard wanted to do this before the board turnover happened.

R. Clapp read the following years of service:

Hired in 2025

Cheryl Casey, Zoning Administrator

Nanette Rogers, Bookkeeper

Those with 1-2 Years of Service

Carl James, Highway

2-5 Years of Service

Kia Nealy, Utility Billing Clerk

Anathé Parkes, Library
Neal Leitner, Community Planner

5-10 Years of Service

Kyle (John) Creason, Library
Dylan Haskins, Highway
Judi (Judith) Byron, Library
Dan Sweet, Assessor

Over 10 Years of Service

Michael Wilder, Highway
Dustin Mable, Highway
Beth (Elizabeth) Jones, (Assistant) Clerk
Michelle Boisvert-Willey, Library
Pam Pratt, Administrative Assistant
Andrew Abair, Highway

M. Bard said the town staff might not always know how much we value their work.

A. Johnson quoted a previous municipal manager, “None of us are plowing the roads or answering the phones,” so we are very grateful to the staff for the work they do.

Housing Task Force update

J. Camaratta gave a brief overview of the housing improvement program, the process, and the results.

- The housing improvement program was intended to improve the rental housing stock at a certain level of affordability, and the selectboard approved the program with Downstreet Housing serving as the administrator.
- The application deadline was set at January 31, 2026. To support the program, the housing task force held a public information meeting.
- He recognized Cheryl Casey for promotion efforts, sharing information on social media, in print materials, and online.
- Two full applications, with both projects located downtown, have been submitted. Downstreet is currently finalizing the legal documents with both applications.
- Some things the task force learned:
 - There is interest in the program. Downstreet received 8 inquiries, two of which converted to full applications.
 - Timing isn’t always right. As circumstances evolve, both in the seasonal and economic conditions, more people might want to turn that interest into full applications. There is a long runway moving a project from awareness to implementation.

Several selectboard members extended their thanks and congratulations:

- K. Sweeney thanked the task force for developing a solution for which the money could be used.
- R. Clapp added his gratitude for the additional work the task force has done on a survey related to workforce housing.
- M. Bard congratulated J. Camaratta on his leadership and the task force for turning ideas into action.

J. Camaratta said the diversity of backgrounds represented on the task force was crucial to its ability to move ideas forward.

A. Johnson noted that the task force’s work was data-driven and well-informed, which advanced its success.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. Johnson formally opened the public hearing for the Randall Meadow Bond Vote, 6:44 p.m. She began the hearing by screening the [video presentation](#) submitted by grant specialist Dana Allen.

- Relevant documents for discussion:
 - [presentation slides](#)
 - [Grant award letter](#)
 - [Randall Meadow report and budget](#)
 - [Randall Meadow hydrology study](#)

A. Johnson pointed out that the bond is Article 4 of the Town Meeting warning and will be voted by Australian ballot on March 3. She also reviewed the award letter from December 2025 and the conditions set for the town to receive the money, including demonstrating that funding is available to the town for the full project.

R. Clapp added that during last week’s informational meeting on Stanley Wasson, a number of people stated their preference for moving the Randall Meadow project forward before Stanley Wasson.

Discussion - Questions and comments

M. Griffith asked if this means the land will not be cropped anymore.

B. Woodruff said the current farmer has a lease with the state, and that lease runs out this year. Once we own it, the parcel would likely no longer be cropped.

D. Roman asked about the status of the items required to be completed

- A. Johnson said some progress has been made but the work is ongoing.

M. Staskus asked whether the grant money would be used first before drawing on the bond. A. Johnson confirmed yes.

W. Aldrich asked about how the water is released as floodwaters recede.

- B. Woodruff said “release” is probably not the proper term; it would be absorbed and directed.
- R. Clapp said the land would be graded down toward the river to direct the water as it recedes.

W. Aldrich asked what would be done with the area.

- B. Woodruff answered whatever the design calls for.
- R. Clapp said the town is working with the National Parks Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program to develop a design plan that is consistent with the hydrology models.

W. Aldrich asked if there will be a cleanup plan for the objects that will inevitably float in and get caught in the area.

- B. Woodruff said unnatural objects would be removed (propane tanks, plastics, etc.), but woody debris and sediment would remain unless it was impeding the design.

H. Shepard noted that the grant is a reimbursement-based grant.

P. Martel said the “up to 1 foot” of mitigation for the 50-year event level doesn’t get to Main St.

- Additionally, only 1-2 inches will be lowered from the river level at 7,000 feet out. This information, from the 2013 study, doesn’t seem to be clearly stated.

C. Viens said this project is only designed to help satisfy part of the flooding issue in a limited area, and is woefully inadequate in his assessment.

- The work done so far is speculative at best because we don't know what mother nature has in mind for us.
- He thinks the lion's share of the cost of this project is going to be the trucking to move the dirt.
- We should be going back to the drawing board to achieve at least a 2 ft. minimum of flood mitigation. More development downtown is going to leave us well short of the needed mitigation.

A. Johnson noted that this selectboard has given a lot of consideration to flood mitigation options to even get to this opportunity to access federal resources to start answering many questions and concerns. And the potential impact of the trucking on municipal roads is on staff radar.

- T. Taravella added that the project might not be perfect at this stage, but the funding will get us closer to a high quality outcome.

K. Sweeney said part of the project funding is for design.

- Additionally, 4" of flood reduction is the difference between a flooded basement and a flooded first floor. The argument against redesigning this project before we even get it off the ground doesn't hold.

M. Bard said he shares some of C. Viens' concerns, but noted that even the Agency of Natural Resources advised the selectboard that no solution eliminates flood problems but these kinds of projects can reduce the damage and protect the community better.

C. Viens clarified that we need to go further on the design in using the \$4.3 million of project money, not forgo raising the money.

- Maximize the amount of flood reduction; if we do it wrong the first time, it will be much more costly and detrimental to this community to do it again.

D. Roman asked if anyone knows how many homes on Randall St. had first-floor damage in the 2023-2024 floods.

- B. Woodruff and R. Clapp said multiple homes on Elm St. and Union St. had first floor damage, but not Randall St. A number of Randall St. basements were flooded.

W. Aldrich remarked via chat (read by A. Johnson) that C. Viens made a fair point to consider taking more material out; approving the bond is a step in the right direction.

H. Shepard, explaining he has worked on a lot of bridge hydraulics and is a civil engineer, said he was initially suspicious of the project but was willing to support it. Now, he is finding that there is a lot in the current presentation tonight that is not consistent with the hydrology study from SLR and the State.

- The cornfield isn't the only variable in the river hydrology, such as the Winooski St. bridge.
- Fifty-year events aren't typically used as benchmarks for projects this large; that's a culvert-project reference point. For 100-year and 500-year events, we're only going to lower the floodwater approximately one inch by removing 100,000 cubic yards from the cornfield, according to SLR.
- There are hardcore misrepresentations about the potential level of flood mitigation in what the town has been presenting. Achieving 2 ft. of flood mitigation simply isn't possible.
- We should make the Winooski St. bridge more hydraulically efficient, getting much more bang for the buck. This project isn't ready for a bond vote.

M. Culbertson said that as a volunteer in the last three floods, she has learned how many people have concerns about what can be done to address flooding, the cornfield being one of the projects that can help us move forward in this area.

- There is no single, perfect solution to this problem, but the Randall Meadow project moves us in the right direction to make progress toward the level of flood mitigation we seek. People need to see solutions materialize.

S. Flanders said he decided not to take the FEMA buyout for reasons of housing availability, but in the last three floods, his first floor was safe by two inches. Inches are important.

A Marshall-Carney read comments from Kathi Grace, who said she supports the project as long as it reduces the amount of water that floods S. Main St.

- Her question was why the town decided to switch hydrologists; in her estimation, there is a conflict of interest of using D. Allen because he is a planning commission member.
- The selectboard noted that the hydrology studies the town has hired for are done by SLR.
- B. Vigdor said the planning commission hasn't done any work on this project. They did provide a letter of support for the grant application, but D. Allen recused himself from that discussion and vote. He suggested following up on the other project ideas that have been proposed, to add to our efforts.
- K. Sweeney noted that we do have several initiatives happening at once. The Volunteer Corps is our failsafe.

T. Gloor said it is a good idea to stay realistic in expectations, per what H. Shepard concluded, and also to follow up on new projects that might be smaller and more achievable. He recommended the selectboard be ready to address questions about how the bond might affect the tax rate in the future.

- R. Clapp said the selectboard did previously engage with the Harvey family because their property was the preferred location to implement mitigation, but the discussions hit an impasse. The conversation went up to the governor, and the governor did not grant eminent domain.

C. MacMillan said the town-wide study undertaken in collaboration with Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission will give us a better picture of our flood dangers and mitigation opportunities

C. Viens said some things have changed at the Harvey property and they may be amenable to reopening discussions.

D. Schneider said it will be important to address the outdated and problematic aspects of the Winooski St. bridge, but that shouldn't stop us from undertaking this project. We need to do a variety of projects.

S. Terrat said this project doesn't just affect the residents abutting the cornfield, but all of downtown.

- Time is of the essence, especially in light of today's news that FEMA funding is going to be slashed by 50%. Anything we can do to mitigate the suffering is a start.

A. Johnson said the selectboard has received a lot of feedback about exploring a diversity of flood mitigation projects, which are taken very seriously, and also needs to acknowledge that resources are limited to do all the things in terms of staff hours and availability.

Revitalizing Waterbury budget presentation

R. Clapp said he will step out of the room because of the conflict of interest.

L. Sullivan, president of RW board of directors, shared the specifics of their strategic goals and project plans for 2026 that are the basis for their budget request in the town budget.

- Last year, RW requested and was approved for \$95,000.
- This year, the request has increased to \$96,650, which is less than one-third of RW's annual revenue.
- Their programs have grown and diversified, so it is expected that the budget would increase accordingly.

- They operate on a very, very slim margin. Most funding goes to program expenses, and these programs serve the town's economic, social, and cultural vitality.
- Most of the town funds go toward funding the streetscape design, marketing and promotion, the economic development director, and the work that director is charged with doing.

A. Johnson added that the town has provided funding to RW for a number of years. She has previously been employed in the role of economic development director. RW first came to the selectboard with their request on November 17, 2025, and this request was put into the budget that has been warned for Town Meeting Day.

Discussion

K. Sweeney expressed his concern about the revenue/expenses on the Train Station. They are nearly the same.

- L. Sullivan replied that the rental agreement with the current tenant has been scaffolded over four years; next year, they will be paying the full amount, which is quite a bit higher than they are currently paying. The building has also fallen into disrepair and some major replacements have taken place.

A. Marshall-Carney said she greatly appreciates what RW has done for the town. Her concern is directed at governance: A private organization is advancing initiatives that can and will result in municipal spending and other obligations.

- Under Vermont law, fiscal authority and policy direction rests with the selectboard and ultimately the voters. A nonprofit doesn't have the authority to commit taxpayers to costs.
- She asked if taxpayers were asked formally and transparently about these priorities before they were established for implementation.
- She would like to have a look at the MOU between the town and RW. The current structure of the relationship between RW and the town has implications for taxpayers and for policy.

M. Bard responded that he sees the relationship with RW is appropriate because they meet with us several times a year and the selectboard is frequently updated on their work.

- The reason RW has taken over a lot of these tasks is because the capacity just doesn't exist in government.

C. Gloor asked if there is any concern or discussion if RW comes in over budget.

- L. Sullivan clarified that she showed the budget for 2026, and they typically run on a shoestring budget. They never come back to the town to fill budget gaps.
- M. Bard said if this matter concerned tens of thousands of dollars of town funds, he would be concerned.

A. Marshall-Carney clarified that her concerns are about total cost of ownership over projects and other commitments, not just annual budgets.

- The town, and by extension taxpayers, are left with long-term maintenance, upkeep, and management of what RW does for us.
- There is no mechanism for taxpayers to weigh in on RW's priorities.
- Shifting any decision making to a nonprofit entity is dangerous territory.

K. Sweeney said there is so much that RW does that we don't have the capacity to do at the town level, that the small amount of funding the town allocates to them goes to show the importance of this organization to the town. He is critical of some aspects of what RW does, but thinks it is an important asset.

Review Town Meeting motions and assignments for Town Meeting Day

R. Ellis joined the selectboard at the table to review the assignments, in her position as town moderator.

- She added that she went to the VLCT training for town moderators, and they said it was okay for her not to read a full article until it is moved, which helps cut down the number of times she will have to read very long articles 15 and 16 several times already.

Selectboard members volunteered to move and speak to the various articles when presented.

R. Ellis encouraged the public to ask her any questions about how to format a motion if they wanted to make one from the floor.

Consider adjustments to Town of Waterbury [Employee Handbook](#) regarding holidays

A. Johnson said there was a disparity between the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) and the current employment agreement.

B. Woodruff recommended aligning all employee holidays with the CBA.

K. Sweeney stepped out due to his conflict of interest as a union employee.

M. Bard asked if this update would affect the selectboard meeting schedule when Mondays fall on holidays.

- A. Johnson noted the handbook changes are not applicable to the selectboard, but the public has expressed a strong preference for the selectboard not meeting on holidays.

Motion by R. Clapp to amend the employee handbook to reflect the collective bargaining agreement; seconded by M. Bard.

Discussion

T. Taravella disagreed that the “floating holiday” should be included in this update. The floating holiday is considered “Employee Appreciation” for union-position personnel, and that intent should be honored.

- M. Bard said the managers work just as hard to deserve this day off.
- T. Taravella responded that managers receive plenty of other perks.

B. Woodruff noted that the floating holiday not including management could leave a manager left as the only staff on a particular day, which might not be safe.

No further discussion; **motion passed 3-1 (T. Taravella opposed) and 1 (K. Sweeney) abstention.**

Consider adopting Municipal Bridge Standards

[[cover letter](#) and [standards](#)]

B. Woodruff explained that signing off on these standards helps us get grant money. There is only one change from the last time the standards were adopted, which is the sizing of cross culverts from 15” minimum to 18” minimum.

Discussion

T. Taravella asked if there were any concerns about our ability to meet these standards.

- B. Woodruff said no, there are no concerns.

Motion by T. Taravella to adopt the municipal bridge standards; seconded by K. Sweeney.

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

Conversation about zoning enforcement

M. Bard said there has historically been little to no follow-up about compliance with permit conditions and zoning regulations. It is an insult to the people who follow rules to know that many violations are happening.

C. Casey said she is aware of violations and the list is growing, but she doesn't have sufficient resources, mostly in terms of time, to prioritize enforcement at this time the way she would like. She is addressing the violations as she can.

M. Staskus said she feels very strongly about enforcement and the zoning administrator's boss is responsible for making sure enforcement is prioritized.

T. Taravella asked if this is a question of capacity, and if a specific member of the DRB can do some of this work.

- A. Johnson noted that the selectboard has increased the legal budget for this area in the past.
- M. Staskus said people can be warned of consequences when the permit is issued.
- H. Shepard, as a member of DRB, said the DRB doesn't see much from downtown anymore because a lot of authority has been turned over to the zoning administrator to conduct administrative review. Enforcement is costly, and the current zoning administrator was only hired recently. Prioritization will be key.
- C. Casey confirmed it was a capacity issue.

M. Bard said to support zoning efforts, maybe we need some money to be put on the legal side to address the serious enforcement issues.

Consider waiving zoning fee for FEMA buyout

B. Woodruff said the town owns the property now and it would be paying the fee to itself.

Motion by M. Bard to waive the permit fee; seconded by T. Taravella.

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

Consider employment agreements

Motion by T. Taravella to find that premature knowledge of non-union employment agreements put the town at a serious disadvantage; seconded by K. Sweeney.

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

Motion by T. Taravella to enter executive session and invite the interim municipal manager; seconded by M. Bard.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Selectboard entered executive session at 9:31 p.m., with further action expected.

Selectboard exited executive session at 9:40 p.m.

Motion by K. Sweeney to accept the proposal from EFUD in regard to Bill Woodruff's salary while serving as interim manager; seconded by M. Bard.

Discussion:

T. Taravella clarified that the agreement is for a \$1200 salary increase to be divided between EFUD and the Town; EFUD approved this arrangement at their last meeting.

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

Motion by T. Taravella to authorize selectboard chair Alyssa Johnson to sign an agreement to that effect; seconded by K. Sweeney.

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

Motion by T. Taravella to approve \$2000 to compensate the interim town treasurer through Town Meeting Day, to be disbursed by the interim town manager; seconded by K. Sweeney.

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

Selectboard and Interim Municipal Manager updates

T. Taravella:

- Stowe Land Trust is holding an information and community feedback session on March 11 at the Grange, for community input on land conservation.
- She thanked the voters of Waterbury for the opportunity to serve on the selectboard. She isn't running again because of personal matters she will need to attend to in the coming year but hopes to have the privilege of serving in public office in the future. She also thanked her fellow selectboard members and wished the next selectboard much success.

M. Bard:

- He echoed T. Taravella's sentiments of gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the selectboard for the last seven years.

K. Sweeney:

- He looked back at his 10 years in Waterbury, where he didn't think he was going to stay, but this community supported him and has put a lot of trust in him. The experience has been defining.

R. Clapp:

- Thanked the selectboard members for the impressive and extensive work they have all put in.
- The Community Volunteer Fair is March 28.

A Johnson:

- Her last Housing Task Force meeting this week.
- She encouraged everyone to attend Town Meeting.
- She is also very embarrassed about the town report dedication and was completely surprised.

B. Woodruff:

- He thanked the selectboard members for all of their work and he was very pleased to write the Town Report dedication to Alyssa.

A. Marshall-Carney added her appreciation for what the selectboard does. While she doesn't always agree with members of the board, it is important to appreciate all who serve the public. Such service is too often unappreciated.

C. Viens conveyed his condolences and appreciation for what the selectboard members have gone through and what they have done.

Motion by T. Taravella to cancel the March 2 selectboard meeting and instead encourage taxpayers to attend the school board meeting instead; seconded by K. Sweeney.

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

Motion by T. Taravella to adjourn; seconded by M. Bard.

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

ADJOURNMENT at 9:55 p.m.

Next meetings of the Waterbury Selectboard:

Town Meeting Day: Tuesday, March 3 @ 9 am at
Brookside Primary School (Polls open 7 am – 7 pm,
including for Randall Meadow bond vote)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Casey.