

Wallingford Selectboard

Meeting Minutes

July 7, 2025

Selectboard Members Present: Anne Awad, Rob Barker, Kathy Luzader, and Glenn Mayer. Carolyn Behrendt did not attend.

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Phil Baker, Julie Sharon, Jill Stone Teer, Joseph Elwell, Don Spruit, Margaret Hough, Chris Riccio, Mark Sheffer, Eric Davenport, Mark Tessier, John Bloomer, David Cornwell, Sandra Hochberg, Grey Wicker, Sarah Wicker, Heather Johnson, Jennifer Bloomer, Naomi Bombardi-Wilson, and Greg McCormack from Peg-TV.

Site Visit. A site visit to Tifft Road started at 5:30 p.m. and included approximately 18 visitors, four Selectboard members and the town administrator. The site visit concluded at 6:10 p.m.

K. Luzader called the regular meeting to order at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Amendments. None.

Minutes. G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to approve the 06/16/25 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried (4-0).

Pay Orders. R. Barker made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to approve the 07/08/25 pay order total of \$35,469.60. Motion carried (4-0).

Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon provided a preliminary fiscal year 2025 report featuring a \$248,726.20 surplus less \$107,864.49 in transfers (Records Restoration, Boy With the Boot Reserve Fund, Newsletter Reserve Fund, Wallingford Day Reserve Fund, Reappraisal Fund) and Highway Department expenses (paving and culverts) leaving a surplus of \$140,861.71.

G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to approve the 06/30/25 pay order total of \$107,864.49. Motion carried (4-0).

Road Commissioner Report. Road Commissioner Phil Baker said the road crew had been cleaning and clearing ditches. He said the Town has taken possession of the used Volvo dump truck recently purchased.

The Board followed the road commissioner's recommendation to forfeit the Better Roads grant for a Senecal Way culvert replacement project after a VTrans hydraulic report (provided to the Town after the grant award was announced) would require a box culvert nearly triple the amount of the award. Mr. Baker said he talked to a grant official and the funds could not be transferred to a more affordable project.

The Board tabled action for a future meeting on a North Main Street crosswalk request at this time after learning from VTrans Sommer Bucossi the Town would be required to install the crosswalk, ramps, and curbing at state specifications. The road commissioner said the road crew would not be part of the project and it would have to be contracted out. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer said she had been in contact with Rutland Reg. Planning Commission's Ethan Pepin on a grant (with a 50/50 local match) for this project. They offered to assist. The deadline would be in July of 2026.

Mark Tessier asked when the Cook Drive culvert would be replaced as residents would need ample notification. Mr. Baker said he would alert residents a month ahead of time and estimated it would be replaced this fall.

By consensus, board members authorized K. Luzader to sign the Pike's sand bid at \$9.54 per ton.

Mr. Baker asked about a partial discontinuance of Tifft Road to enable a landowner, Steve Chmielewski access to a portion of his property. A. Awad said she appreciated the large attendance at the site visit and noted a majority wanted the road closed. K. Luzader said the one resident who favored keeping it open did not live on Tifft Road or in the surrounding neighborhood. She said 95 percent of the traffic is through traffic. R. Barker indicated it was the Town's responsibility to maintain roads and closing the road would impact emergency responders as well as the potential for future development. G. Mayer said it would be helpful to get an estimate to repair the road and revisit the matter at an upcoming meeting.

Eric Davenport asked about roadside mowing on East Street. Mr. Baker said he would not be available for roadside mowing this summer, but he offered to explore options.

Honorable Mentions. Special thanks go to Sandra Hochberg for reporting ballfield vandalism to the Town; Jill and Walter Teer for recovering the vandalism videos, Larry Sharon for retrieving the top of the picnic table thrown under the bridge; David Cornwell for repairing signage at Elfin Lake public beach; Brenda and Dick Kendall for their decades of cleaning West Hill Road and recovering the "Entering Wallingford" sign; Todd Galiano and Wallingford Day committee members for donating their time and money to repair the ballfield water spigot vandalized recently.

Public Comments. Grey Wicker said he was opposed to spending large sums of money on crosswalks at this time.

Revised Animal Control Ordinance Concern. John Bloomer raised concerns about the recently amended Animal Control Ordinance, notably the barking dog timeframe of 60 minutes. He said it might be reasonable under some circumstances, but not other circumstances depending on the time of day. He also noted labeling an animal a working farm dog "does not give you a get out of jail free card" for things like barking at people or chasing cars.

Animal Control Officer Joseph Elwell said this was his first case related to a working farm dog. He said the state should have a better definition. Chris Riccio said she owned the Great Pyrenees being referenced in the discussion. She said its sole breeding purpose was to watch over livestock. She said the dog is not left outside overnight as a courtesy to neighbors. During the day, she said the dog barks if it senses an invader. She said it barks about 15 minutes at the most and never for an hour. Greg Wicker read the state statute related to working farm dogs. The town administrator said board members were provided a copy of the relative statute for review prior to the meeting. Eric Davenport said farm noises were part of living in Vermont and the dog does not bark excessively. Sarah Wicker said it was to neighbors' benefit for the dog to chase off predators.

Mr. Bloomer said the dog had encroached on his property and not in pursuit of a predator. Mr. Elwell said working farm dogs have a job and residents deserve peaceful enjoyment

of their properties. He said it would meet with the town administrator to discuss this matter further.

Investment Options for Bridge Fund. J. Sharon presented the Board with Certificate of Deposit options for the Bridge Fund. Board members agreed by consensus on the Berkshire Bank 6-month CD.

Wallingford Day Request – Police Coverage of Road Closure. Wallingford Day Co-Chairs Heather Johnson and Naomi Bombardi-Wilson requested sheriff coverage on Meadow Street to be closed during Wallingford Day on July 19th from 2 pm to 10 pm. After some discussion, the Board by consensus agreed the Town would pay for four hours of coverage and Wallingford Day would be responsible for the other four hours. A. Awad thanked the Wallingford Day Committee for all of their efforts coordinating the annual event.

Fireworks Permit Revisions. K. Luzader read aloud draft Fireworks Permit revisions. The Board agreed to revisions by consensus with only one change - limiting the displays to 45 minutes or less rather than 30 minutes or less. Revised language included:

OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Fireworks displays shall be less 45 minutes or less in duration and are prohibited after 10:00 p.m. The Person in Charge (noted above) shall provide public notice of the fireworks display as follows: post a notice on the village post office bulletin board (one week before the event) with the location, time and date of the fireworks display; post an item in the local newspaper (Rutland Herald) one week before; post items on Wallingford Front Porch Forum (FPF) (one week before and one day before – contact townadmin@wallingfordvt.com for assistance if you are not a FPF member), post a notice in the municipal newsletter (deadline is the 23rd of each month, contact the Wallingford Town Clerk (802)446-2336 or email townclerk@wallingfordvt.com

The Wallingford Selectboard will not issue a permit when a state or local ban on outside burning is in effect. A permit that has been approved prior to a burning ban shall be suspended. Weekday permits will only be issued in case by case basis with Selectboard preference for weekend events.

School Street Sidewalk Supplemental Funding Request Letter of Support. The Board reviewed a copy of updated School Street sidewalk cost projections and the estimated local match (\$202,100 up \$93,350 from original \$108,750). R. Barker made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad authorizing K. Luzader to sign the Letter of Support and submit the application for additional funding. Motion carried (4-0).

Resignations - Recreation Committee and Development Review Board. By consensus the Board accepted with regret Shannon Pytlik's letter of resignation from the Recreation Committee and Joyce Barbieri's resignation as Development Review Board alternate.

Executive Session. K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by G. Mayer to enter Executive Session at 7:59 p.m. with Recreation Committee members David Cornwell and Sandra Hochberg for a disciplinary or dismissal action against a public officer or employee as allowed under 1 V.S.A. Section 313 4(a). Motion carried (4-0). K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by R. Barker to exit executive session at 8:40 p.m. Motion carried (4-0). R. Barker made

a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to remove Mark Noble from the Recreation Committee. Motion carried (4-0).

Executive Session – Annual Employee Evaluations/Review. K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by G. Mayer to enter Executive Session at 8:51 p.m. as allowed under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) for “the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.” Motion carried (4-0). K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by G Mayer to exit executive session at 8:57 p.m. Motion carried (4-0).

K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by G. Mayer to approve 4 percent raises for Julie Sharon, Jill Stone Teer, Charlie Woods, Stephen Lanfear, Laurie Phillips, Erika Berner, and Sandi Switzer with 10 percent raises for Art Nemeth and Jerry Reynolds. Motion carried (4-0).

Agenda Building. A. Awad added East and South Wallingford Selectboard meeting sites for the 7/21 meeting; K. Luzader added Tifft Road for an August meeting.

Selectboard Concerns. None.

Other Business. None.

A.Awad made a motion that was seconded by G. Mayer to adjourn at 8:59 p.m. Motion carried (4-0).

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 21st Day of July in the year 2025:

Wallingford Selectboard

Anne Awad _____

Rob Barker _____

Carolyn Behrendt _____

Kathy Luzader _____

Glenn Mayer _____