

Wallingford Selectboard

Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2025

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

Others Present: Sandi Switzer, Julie Sharon, Jill Stone Teer, Cecile Betit, Todd Galiano, Joyce McMahon, Michael McMahon, and Greg McCormack from Peg TV.

R. Barker called the regular meeting to order at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Amendments. None.

Executive Session. A. Awad made a motion that was seconded by G. Mayer to enter executive session at 6:31 p.m. with Julie Sharon and Jill Stone Teer for the appointment, employment, evaluation of an employee as allowed under V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). Motion carried (4-0).

G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to exit executive session at 6:40 p.m. Motion carried (4-0). G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to accept Julie Sharon's resignation (retirement) as Town Clerk and Town Treasurer effective August 30, 2025 and to post the vacancies for a period of two weeks. Motion carried (4-0).

Minutes. G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to approve the 07/21/25 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried (4-0).

Pay Orders. G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to approve the 08/05/25 pay order total of \$23,943.62. Motion carried (4-0).

Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon provided an overview of the VT Community Foundation Arts Grant with \$822.32 in unspent funds. J. Sharon said those funds may be rolled into the Wallingford Day Fund per a grant representative. She added the 06/30/25 pay orders would have to be amended to include this action.

G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by A. Awad to authorize the grant balance of \$822.32 be placed in the Wallingford Day Fund and to amend the 06/30/25 pay orders to \$111,486.81. Motion carried (4-0).

Year End Financials FY'25 and Municipal Tax Rate for FY'26. J. Sharon provided an overview of the year end financials for fiscal year 2025 featuring a \$137,239.39 surplus. G. Mayer asked if the surplus could be used for Capital expenses. R. Barker said it must be used to lower taxes since a Sinking Fund had not been established. J. Sharon said the Board would have to place a special article on the Town Meeting ballot to pursue voter approval for a Sinking Fund.

J. Sharon said FY'26 taxes to be raised was \$1,081,721 minus the surplus carryover of \$137,239.29 for a total of \$944,481.61. She said this would require a municipal tax rate of \$.4005 – down five cents. The Local Agreement tax would be \$.0064. The Fire District tax for 1 and 3 would be \$.1094.

G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to set the municipal tax rate at \$.4005. Motion carried (4-0).

J. Sharon said Town auditors would be auditing the books on Thursday.

Homestead Declaration Late Filing Penalty. By consensus, the Board approved assessing Homestead Declaration late filing penalties to property owners who failed to file a timely Homestead Declaration. J. Sharon said the Board of Civil Authority would decide on any waiver requests.

Road Commissioner Report. Road Commissioner Phil Baker said there were a number of mechanical issues with the 2016 Kenworth - bad cylinder, clutch and hydraulic. He said a new cylinder would cost \$3,100.

Mr. Baker said Road Foreman Steve Lanfear had been brush hogging Route 140W. He anticipated having his own roadside mower operational by mid-week to assist with roadside mowing. He said a used roadside mower would cost \$15,000 and up, while a new one would be \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Mr. Baker provided an estimate of \$5,075 for equipment and labor for Phil Baker and Sons to assist the road crew in repairing Tifft Road. Board members reviewed Dept. of Environmental Conservation River Engineer Josh Carvajal's stream alteration permit detailing work allowed on the Tifft Road embankment near a stream. Mr. Baker estimated an additional \$2,000 in materials.

Mr. Baker advised installing signage warning motorists to use the road at their own risk and signage the road was not maintained from November 1 to April 1. R. Barker said the Town should make improvements to create a safe road for motorists. A. Awad said fallen trees had destabilized the embankment and there were a number of other trees that could impact it in the future. Joyce McMahon asked about access to her property on Tifft Road without winter maintenance. Mr. Baker said the Town would maintain the road just past her driveway. A. Awad said the Town should balance the obligation to repair the road with short and long-term expenses. She noted the Town had the legal right to close it. Michael McMahon said Tifft Road was in better shape now than years ago.

After further discussion, A. Awad made a motion to approve limited repairs to Tifft Road with the signage recommended by the road commissioner – Use Road at Own Risk; Road Not Maintained from November 1 to April 1. Motion died for lack of second. G. Mayer questioned the legality of the signage.

G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt authorizing Mr. Baker and the road crew to proceed with repairs as described in the Stream Alteration Permit for an estimated \$7,500 time and materials. Motion carried (3-1). A. Awad voted in the minority.

Honorable Mentions. Dennis Duhaime for repairing the Town Hall basement exit door.

Public Comments. None.

Wallingford Day Reimbursement Request. Wallingford Day member Todd Galiano said the Whirlies World invoice for bounce houses, chairs, tents and staff for the annual event totaled \$3,554 with a portion donated leaving a \$1,054 balance. Mr. Galiano said he covered the balance out of pocket and wanted to be reimbursed. Board members were provided copies of the invoice. A. Awad said Wallingford Day committee members approached the Selectboard in the spring with a request for bounce houses donated to the event and staffed by the owner. She noted items in the invoice were not included in that presentation. Mr. Galiano said the committee was not aware

of the cost of the trained staff required for operations. He said moving forward, the committee would like to be in charge of deciding how funds raised for the event would be spent. Mr. Galiano reported that the Wallingford Day Committee, at their most recent meeting, had approved his request to go before the Selectboard to seek reimbursement for covering the Bouncy House costs.

After further discussion, G. Mayer made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to add the Whirlies World invoice to the August 19, 2025 pay orders. Motion carried (3-1). A. Awad voted in the minority.

Telecommunication Survey Results – Final Report. Cecile Betit provided a final report and overview of a telecommunication survey. She said telecommunication becomes more central as an information key. She noted the flash flood event in Texas made her think about methods for alerting vulnerable populations in the event of an emergency, especially during power outages. She said citizens should be aware of the VT Alert system and the enrollment requirement.

Ms. Betit said there should be a way for East and South Wallingford residents to voluntarily register telephones in order to be notified of emergency evacuations. She said other topics to consider include installing electrical panels in buildings on upper floors rather than basements. She suggested establishment of a local group to conduct a needs assessment on a variety of safety topics like notification systems.

Sand Shed Bid(s) Opening. Board members opened and reviewed the two submitted bids – BreadLoaf (\$999,000 for design, demolition/site work, concrete, and new construction) and Green Mt. Welding (\$214,241 building w/hot dip galvanized primary framing and installation, no concrete or foundation)- for replacement of the Town's sand/salt sheds. Mr. Galiano said he did not bid on the project as the Request for Proposal (drafted by a former Selectboard member) would not result in equal bidding or "apples to apples." G. Mayer asked if the RFP should be revised to include exact specifications. Mr. Galiano agreed. He said the Board should first go to voters seeking approval to finance a new sand shed. R. Barker said a special article could be included on the March ballot. Mr. Baker said a revised RFP should not be issued until voters approve funds. J. Sharon provided bond bank interest rates and loan payment details depending upon the amount borrowed and the repayment period. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer strongly urged the Board to consider hiring a project manager to oversee the project from issuance of an RFP through completion of construction. Mr. Galiano agreed.

After further discussion, the Board by consensus tabled action on the sand shed bids.

Opioid Settlement Notice. By consensus, the Board agreed to opt-in to new requirements as part of the national Opioid Settlements case.

Conservation Commission Work Day. A. Awad said she attended the July 28th Conservation Commission meeting as the Selectboard's liaison. She said commissioners were considering a workday in the village in October using Green Up bags and wanted permission to dispose of the refuse at the transfer station at no charge. By consensus, the Board agreed.

Agenda Building. None.

Selectboard Concerns. None.

Other Business. R. Barker said the Board received a thank you card from Sasha Auer for the Town scholarship awarded in June.

R. Barker explained a representative from VT Dept of Forests, Parks and Recreation inspected the recreation area off Meadow Street on July 29th as part of a state requirement for recreation grants. Inspection results included requirements the Town install a small Land and Water Conservation Fund sign and remove/repair the scoreboard in right field by the basketball court. The town administrator said she installed the sign. By consensus, the Board directed the road crew to remove the scoreboard.

R. Barker noted G. Mayer and the town administrator attended a site visit on July 29th for the Elfin Lake erosion reduction implementation project.

R. Barker explained Tyler McNaney, CEO of Filabot and Massive Dimension based in Barre, VT, was interested in providing 3D printing services for the Boy With the Boot and would like to make a presentation to the Board. By consensus, board members agreed and set the presentation date for the September 2 meeting.

A.Awad made a motion that was seconded by G. Mayer to adjourn at 8:36 p.m. Motion carried (4-0).

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 18th Day of August in the year 2025:

Wallingford Selectboard

Anne Awad _____

Rob Barker _____

Carolyn Behrendt _____

Kathy Luzader _____

Glenn Mayer _____