

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes  
February 17, 2025 Regular Meeting  
Held at the Meeting House and on Zoom**

**Present at the Meeting House**

Kord Scott, selectboard chair  
Cathy Fales

Due to bad weather, George Dutton, Selectboard, was stuck in Brattleboro and unable to connect via Zoom

**Present on Zoom**

Michael Pelton, selectboard  
Mary McCoy (Mac),  
selectboard clerk  
Antje Ruppert  
Ginny Crittenden  
Maureen Bell  
Tan Bronson  
Becky Phillips

Hunt Fales  
Tom & Louise Johnson  
Gail Wyman  
Barbara Jean Quinn  
Tom Widger  
Ellen McDuffie  
Bill Dunkel  
Abby Pelton

**1. Start Recording and Call to Order** -- Kord called the meeting to order and started the recording at 5:31 PM.

**2. Additions/deletions and/or changes to agenda** – There were no changes to the agenda.

**3. Announcements** – There were no announcements.

**4. Act on the minutes from the February 3, 2025 selectboard meeting**

**Motion:** To approve the Feb. 3, 2025 selectboard minutes; Kord moved, and Michael agreed.

**5. Public Comments** – Antje said she has written a letter to our state governmental officials regarding the unfair tax situation in Windham due to the townwide reappraisal that greatly increased property taxes. This has caused a hardship for many people, especially lower-income residents who were taxed more than 5% of their income, which is contrary to Vermont law. She asked for help in distributing the letter to government officials. Ellen said she would send the letter out in an email blast and ask people to add their names to the letter as endorsers.

**6. Correspondence** – There was no correspondence on a topic that was not included on the agenda.

**7. Payroll/Bills**

**Motion:** To approve the check warrant reports from the town treasurer. Michael moved, and Kord agreed. Kord will sign these.

**8. Staff Reports with Discussion and Possible Decisions**

A) Website – Due to the bad weather, Bea Eliastam was stuck in Brattleboro and unable to connect via Zoom.

B) Grant Strategist – Cathy Fales said Diane Abate was also unable to connect from Brattleboro, so she could not present her organization’s report on possible options for the schoolhouse. It was hoped she could connect later in the meeting, but she could not. This topic was discussed later in the meeting, but it is recorded here. Cathy said it was an excellent report with information about its objectives, Windham’s demographics, a facility analysis, and the town folks’ ideas. Cathy said she would send the report to the Selectboard later this day, and she asked them to give themselves a week to digest the report before discussing it and having it presented during the next Selectboard meeting. The selectboard will then know their recommendation before Town Meeting when the topic will be considered by the voters.

**Motion:** To hold the next regular Selectboard meeting on February 24 so Diane can present her report at that time. Kord moved and Michael agreed.

**Next Step:** Cathy will send the report to the Selectboard, and they will review it. It will be presented at the next meeting for those in attendance to review, and it will be posted on the website. Meanwhile, Cathy will explore possible funding options.

C) Planning/Energy – Bill said there will be a public hearing on Tuesday, February 25 regarding the request from the Friendly Gathering for a conditional use permit to have loud music playing. Bob Fisher, our town attorney, said that if the permit is approved by the Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Adjustment, the Selectboard must also sign off on it.

A public hearing will also take place on Monday, March 10 regarding changes to the town's zoning regulations. Some changes are mandated by the state, and other changes correct unclear or contradictory language. Bill said he does not believe these changes will be controversial. Two other changes are more substantive. One relates to historic districts. Now inground pools and tennis courts are permitted, but barns are conditional. The PC recommends making pools and courts conditional and barns permissible. The other change relates to recreational vehicles. Currently, RVs cannot be parked on property for more than 90 days without a wastewater permit. This is a problem for people who park their RVs on their land when not traveling or staying elsewhere. The revised reg says if an RV is occupied for more than 60 days per year, it needs a septic permit.

Bill also said the Window Dressers will be here again this autumn.

D) Town Clerk/WCO – Ellen said the Australian ballots for electing town officials have been printed and are available through the town office for early voting. The polls will be open on Tuesday, March 3 from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM at the Meeting House. This is also Town Meeting day. Ellen hopes to set up a voting booth in the sanctuary, so election officials do not miss Town Meeting. Another voting booth will be set up for paper ballot voting. The WCO will conduct a candidates' forum this weekend, day and time to be determined, after Ellen hears back from more candidates.

One appellant who did not attend their scheduled hearing for tax abatement said they did not receive the emailed or snail mailed letter. It was decided to meet with them prior to the next Selectboard meeting. Ellen will contact them by phone.

## **9. Preparations for Town Meeting**

A) Discuss logistics for the day – Kord reported that Robert Lakin from the Sheriff's Dept. will be here, as will the video people from BCTV. Mac suggested having a card available at Town Meeting for folks to give contact information to be used in case of emergencies or to send other information. These could also be mailed to those not in attendance. Maureen said this was done before in 2019 after a request in the News & Notes, but it was agreed that more up-to-date info from more folks was needed, especially from our most vulnerable neighbors. Cathy has a template that can be used. Ellen recommended setting up a database with this info and getting some resources to do that. Michael said information about children should not include their names, as that is protected information.

**Next Step:** Cathy will talk to Imme Maurath, Windham's emergency coordinator, and determine how to correctly gather this information.

Volunteers are needed for Town Meeting day. Ellen said she wants the WCO to manage the traditional potluck lunch or to find others to manage it. Help is needed to set up the tables on Sunday afternoon. She has ordered bottled water. She will send out an email blast to recruit volunteers. Michael said folks coming early can help set up in the sanctuary. George is in charge of AV setup and BCTV, and he needs to ask Johnny to come early to setup. Abby said she looking for help with childcare, as kids should not be left unattended. It was agreed that if someone comes to Town Meeting with kids and wants their kids to stay with them, that is OK.

Abby noted that there is no school on Town Meeting day.

**Next Steps:** Ellen will coordinate the lunch. George will take care of AV and BCTV. Abby will look for childcare volunteers. Kord will see that the heat is turned on.

## 10. New Business

A) Discuss signing Vermont's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Resolution – Michael read the resolution which all towns in Vermont have been asked to support. Mac noted that this celebration in 2027 coincides with the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Meeting House.

**Motion:** To sign the resolution. Kord moved and Michael agreed.

**Next Steps:** Michael will send the full information about the state's anniversary, and the Selectboard will sign the resolution. A committee, chaired by Cathy, will be created for the 2027 celebrations. Mac will assist her.

## 11. Old Business

A) Update on Imerys offer to donate to town Trout Meadows property on White Road – Kord reported that the Phase 1 study will be completed by the end of February, according to Imerys. This will be discussed more in executive session.

B) Update on broken display case at Meeting House – The door to the display case has been repaired by Pete McDonald, who was thanked by Ellen and Abby for his good work. Cathy said she and Pete Newton must ensure that a new display case meets the approval of the Bruhn Preservation funders.

C) Update on State Ethics Liaison – Kord said George told him he has not contacted the state about this, but he will do so.

D) Subrecipient Annual Report due 2/14 to Dept. of Finance and Management – Kord said Imme is taking care of this. The 2/14 due date is not absolute.

E) Update on highway data for the biannual FHWA-536 report due 2/14 – Kord will complete this. There is no problem with it being a little late.

## 12. Executive Session re White Rd. property negotiations and CAC position appointment

**Motion:** To enter into executive session to discuss the negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options and the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee. Kord moved and Michael agreed.

At 6:37 PM, all attendees left the meeting, and the Selectboard went into executive session.

At 7:12 PM, the Selectboard returned to regular session, and Kord announced that no action had been taken.

## 13. Adjourn meeting and stop recording.

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 7:13 PM. Kord moved, and Michael agreed.

**The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for  
Monday, February 24, 2025 at 5:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk  
*Approved February 24, 2025*