

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes**  
**April 21, 2025 Regular Meeting**  
**Held at the Meeting House and on Zoom**

**Present at the Meeting House**

Kord Scott, selectboard chair  
Michael Pelton, selectboard  
Mary McCoy (Mac), sb clerk  
Cynthia Stoddard, NEMRC  
Cathy Fales  
Pete Newton

**Present on Zoom**

George Dutton, selectboard  
Jim McCandless  
Ginny Crittenden  
Tom Widger  
Maureen Bell  
Imme Maurath

Crystal Corriveau  
Abby Pelton  
Bill Dunkel  
Tan Bronson  
Barbara Jean Quinn  
Pat McLaine

**1. Start Recording and Call to Order --** Kord called the meeting to order and started the recording at 5:30 PM.

**2. Additions/deletions and/or changes to agenda –** It was agreed that the selectboard would go into Executive Session whenever Cynthia Stoddard arrived to talk about issues related to the Town Treasurer.

**3. Announcements –** Michael said there was a Fire Alert in place. Also, he said there will be a Solid Waste Management meeting on 4/29 and 5/1 at Neighborhood Connections. Mac said that 15 town officials registered to take the Open Meeting Law webinar, which was an excellent representation from Windham. She also thanked all those who contacted her and Michael Simonds and offered help when their dog Obie went missing.

**4. Act on the minutes from the April 7, 2025 Selectboard Meetings**

**Motion:** To approve the Selectboard meeting minutes from April 7, 2025; Michael moved, and all agreed.

**5. Public Comments –**There were no public comments.

**6. Correspondence –** An email was received from Countney Roth, saying she needed to resign as Town Treasurer, due to time constraints in her life.

**7. Payroll/Bills –** There was no warrant for payroll and bills.

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

A) Road Foreman – Richard Paré was unable to attend. George reported on the meeting to look at the damage on West Windham Road. Some of the problem is off the right-of-way, and we need to find funding for that. Imme Maurath said the grant received for \$198,000 is to stop erosion on the road. Michael said water quality is an issue as the brook is filled with sediment and no longer meets the Class A standards. The matter is on hold until full funding and a repair plan are determined.

B) Grant Strategist – Cathy Fales reported on various projects. (1) The Phase 1 study of the Schoolhouse has been completed and posted on the website. This allows the transition of ownership of the Schoolhouse to move forward. (2) As part of the offer Imerys has made for the town to take over Trout Meadows, they agreed to provide a payment to make up for the taxes the town will lose when the company no longer owns the property. (More about this will be reported in Old Business E.) (3) Work for the Meeting House improvements may be impacted by the current turmoil in the federal government, as the Bruhn Preservation Trust is funded by the U.S. Dept. of Parks. The grant from Bruhn would be paid to us after the work is completed, so we need to know that money is secure before starting that

work. The Vermont U.S. legislators are involved in trying to maintain that funding. (4) The MERP funds are not in question, as that money is already with the State and will be paid to us in advance of the work. We can go ahead and start work on the geothermal heating system and improved insulation. The ARPA funds are also intact, as are the Friends' financial contribution, the \$3500 remaining from AARP, and the Meeting House M&I funds. What will be on hold are the historic renovations to the front of the building. (5) Receipt of funding is helped by the Meeting House hosting activities. Cathy has organized, with support from the MH Committee, a summer series of three events – a presentation by Bill Dunkel on the involvement of Windham residents in the Civil War, a presentation by Cecilia Deitrick on Windham's night sky, and an old-fashioned talent show that features local talent. Imme said she had heard that the Military Memorial in front of the MH might be moved. Cathy said that was part of a conversation with the Bruhn representative, but it would only happen if moving the memorial created significantly more parking places.

C) Grant Administrator – Imme Maurath reported that a requirement for the Local Emergency Mediation Plan (LEMP) was changed, and she updated our plan. She needs Kord's signature, allowing her to spend up to \$200 in an emergency. She plans to meet with Town Clerk Bea Eliastam and Cathy Fales regarding a way to get more information from town folks, including a comprehensive email list. A notice will be put in the News & Notes. Imme is also talking to Tan about emergency radio messages.

D) Listers – Antje Ruppert was unable to attend.

E) Planning Commission – Bill reported on hearings. (1) The PC approved changes to the zoning regulations. The Selectboard needs to set a date for their hearing on the topics. (2) The Zoning Board of Adjustment has approved, with conditions, the Friendly Gathering at Timber Ridge. The conditions relate to sound levels and camping issues. The Selectboard will hold a public hearing on the matter on May 5 at 4:45 prior to their regular meeting. (3) The ZBA heard a request by the Faircloths regarding their plans to build on Edson Drive, and the ZBA approved the request. No Selectboard hearing is required. (4) Bill said the PC is through making their recommended changes and asked where the Selectboard would like for them to focus now. Michael suggested that they look at policies for those who provide short-term rentals. There was brief discussion about whether this is a problem in Windham. **Next Steps:** The Selectboard will discuss whether policies are needed for short-term rentals.

F) Zoning Administrator – Will Goodwin was unable to attend.

It was agreed to move to **9. New Business D) Discuss Pete Newton's proposal for managing work on the Meeting House**

**Motion:** George moved to approve Pete's proposal to oversee the work on the Meeting House as defined by the funding sources. Discussion followed. Pete said he would see that the work is done in a timely and professional way. He has worked with Cathy Fales on the grant preparations and would see all obligations are fulfilled. Cathy said the pay for Pete's services are part of the grant, with no funds required from the town.

**Motion:** To approve the contract outlined by Pete. George restated his motion; all agreed.

**Motion:** To appoint Pete Newton as the Town professional construction project manager. Kord moved, and all agreed. Pete said it was an honor to oversee this project.

It was agreed to move to **9. New Business C) Discuss use of Schoolhouse 6/28 & 29 by the West River Radio Club** – Tan explained that they need 24 hours to test radio equipment. It is a public event for folks to practice using their radios. The School Board has approved this request, which is also being made in other towns. The Meeting House is also available, but the Schoolhouse is considered a better location. The event requires a generator (as

electricity would be out in an actual emergency), and Michael said the generator should be located on the north side of the Schoolhouse, so it does not disturb the neighbors nearby to the south. Tan said other locations are not charging for the building's use.

**Motion:** To approve use of the Schoolhouse or Meeting House by the Radio Club with the generator located on the north side of the Schoolhouse. Michael moved, and all agreed.

**11. Executive Session** – Cynthia had arrived to give advice for this discussion.

**Motion:** To go into Executive Session to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee. Michael moved, and all agreed. Michael placed attendees into the Zoom Waiting Room, and Kord stopped the recording at 6:21 PM.

**Motion:** To return to the regular session. Kord moved, and all agree. The board went back into regular session, returned those who were in the Zoom Waiting Room, and restarted the recording at 7:04 PM. Kord announced that no actions had been taken in Exec. Session.

G) Selectboard Clerk –Mac edited the Parking Lot with Kord and Michael's input. (George deferred to whatever they decided.) The Parking Lot is the list of topics that the Selectboard needs to address. Of the 62 topics listed, 24 were removed as completed or no longer of consideration. The rest were reorganized by whether they were of immediate concern or not. Barbara Jean Quinn asked why signing the State's Declaration of Inclusion had been removed. Michael, Abby, and Crystal said it was divisive and was not needed, and the Selectboard should focus on other matters. Barbara Jean, Maureen, and Mac disagreed, saying we need to declare that we are a welcoming town.

**Next Step:** Mac will revise the Parking Lot as directed. Barbara Jean will send information to the Selectboard about the Declaration for their further consideration.

**9. New Business**

A) Report on Rural Caucus Testimony – Michael reported that he had testified at the Statehouse for the Vermont Rural Development Commission regarding the potential statewide consolidation of schools and how the transition causes problems for towns. He spoke about the situation in Windham, where half of our properties are second homes, which impacts our property taxes. He testified that towns like Windham need guidance and assistance. His testimony is available.

B) Discuss the status of the Schoolhouse and grounds after votes at Town Meeting – Michael said he had talked to Town Attorney Bob Fisher, but he had not heard from the School Board's lawyer.

E) Discuss committees for Capital Planning, Town Property Operations & Maintenance, and Town Programming – Michael said he was presenting an idea for reorganizing some town work in an effort to be more transparent and more efficient and to get more people involved in town activities. He said the Meeting House Committee's work could be expanded and divided to include the Schoolhouse, which will have similar work. Kord said similar work is also needed for the town's garage and roads. Michael explained that a cohesive way is needed to look at all capital planning, property operations & maintenance, and town programming. For example, if a fire inspection is scheduled, it could be for all the town's buildings. If we have a contract for mowing, it could be for all town properties. If an event is to take place in town, the best location could be determined. Maureen said she thinks coordination is good, but she can't be any more involved than she is. Kord said these three committees are also a way to get more people participating in town business.

**Next Step:** Mac will put this on the Parking Lot for further discussion.

F) Discuss funding needed to be set aside for emergencies –Kord said the cost to repair the damage done by the recent ice storm was eligible for VTrans emergency grant funding. He'll ask Imme for an estimate of the typical amount needed for emergency events like that. These would be added to our new Emergency Reserve Fund (formerly the Rainy Day Fund). Some towns set this amount at 17% of their General Fund. Michael said the professional audit will clarify how much we now have as surplus funds, which can be used for this purpose.

## **10. Old Business**

A) Update on Selectboard hearing for interim zoning bylaw re noise and camping – This hearing has been scheduled as Bill stated, for 4:45 PM on May 5.

B) Update on annual ARPA report due 4/30/25 – Kord reported that this will be completed on Monday 4/28/25.

C) Follow up on completion of various fund balance transfers as necessary – Michael reported that Cynthia has established a separate Grant Funds to keep track of our various grants. She needs to transfer \$44,000 for the Meeting House from the General Fund (originally from ARPA) to the appropriate designated fund.

D) Update on annual report and operating fee due to Municipal Roads General Permit (MGRP) – Kord reported that this has been done.

E) Update on Imerys' property donation/Phase 1 Environmental report – Kord said the Phase 1 study was completed, which recommended a Phase 2 study that takes months to complete. Also, the inspection of the pipes did not include the center section. The town does not want to take on any risks, and the State will back us only if all inspections are done. The lawyers are discussing ways to deal with this before the bankruptcy deadline April 30. Imerys is pushing us to come to an agreement.

F) Update on new phone and internet services – George said we need two tiers of service, phone and internet. We need to determine what standards we hope to achieve. He'll send a summary on the internet. He mentioned some options for the phone service. Michael will compare the info to our budget for current services. George mentioned that a cable could be run underground to connect services at the Town Office and Schoolhouse. Tan said that connection could be made through the air, with no cable needed.

G) Update on legal review of the Nature Conservancy offer in lieu of taxes – Kord said Bob is working on this.

H) Update on Code of Ethics and Ethics Training for town officials – George said the State wants us to train all town officials. A code of ethics must be established, and George recommended that we use the State's version.

## **9. Adjourn the meeting.**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 8:04 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk  
*Approved May 5, 2025*