

WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Remote and in person at Westminster, VT Town Hall

Selectboard Present: Craig Allen (chair), Real Bazin (vice chair), Stephen Major, and Charles (Chuck) Lawrence – Jason Perry was absent

Staff Present: Millie Barry (clerk), Lou Bordeaux (town manager)

Others Present: Nancy Dalzell, Tim Jones, Carol Weston, Betsy Thurston, Cameron O'Brien and Marsha Stern – by Zoom, Arthur Dufresne

1. **Call to Order:** Craig Allen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
Information to access a future meeting using a remote connection, when available, is on the Town of Westminster website or by contacting the Westminster town hall.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** April 22, 2025 – Real Bazin moved to accept the minutes of April 22, 2025, Stephen Major seconded, motion carried by voice vote, (Allen, Bazin, Major), Lawrence abstained due to absence.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** – None
5. **Unfinished Business:** (Discussion/Action)
 - A. Grout Avenue engineering – no update
6. **New Business:** (Discussion/Action)
 - A. Tim Jones – Green Mountain Power – Tim Jones a part of Green Mountain Power's executive leadership addressed the board regarding the name of their program now granted by the SOV (State of VT) Zero Outage Initiative giving Green Mountain 2 years, through the fall of 2026 to identify, prioritize, and rebuild or build new overhead or underground infrastructure basically covering the southern half of the state. Mr. Weston said based on the 20 worst circuits, Green Mountain looks at the line miles in the community, history, intensity, and duration of outages affecting the number of customers, giving the company a ranking system for the 20 circuits. Westminster is probably the middle of the group of the 20 circuits. Where possible, when going underground, they will run communication innerduct working with joint utility and telecom partners in an effort to run the underground lines together.
 - B. Betsy Thurston: Route 121 Safety Plan – Betsy Thurston presented information to the Board following up on her first presentation in February. Rockingham received funds from Safe Streets and Roads For All, SS4A program. The purpose was for Rockingham to work with Westminster to do a collaborative paving project to re-do, reconstruct Route 121. To be eligible for a grant for implementation, Rockingham was required to have a safety action plan. Rockingham decided to focus on 121 to enhance biking and walking safety capabilities from the red light in Bellows Falls to Saxtons River. She presented data from VHB from 2015 to 2024 of travel incidents, minor fender benders to deaths, noting the crash history in North Westminster/Gageville was 28. Recommendations and suggestions in the plan for North Westminster were guardrails, reduction of speed to 40 mph on the west end parallel closest to Rockingham, 25 mph in the village of North Westminster, widening the shoulder 2-5 feet outside of the village and inside the village installing

curbs and a 5-foot sidewalk to connect to the Bellows Falls sidewalk. Also, repaint faded edge lines and extend curbs through excessively wide driveways and intersections. The report detailed suggestions for the intersections of Sabin Avenue, Back Westminster Road and Route 121 and several crosswalk installations. Chuck Lawrence questioned the infrastructure to maintain (plow) and replace, in 5-10 years, sidewalks if installed. The Board noted the plan utilized Church Avenue, and the new bridge (to be constructed) would have 3-foot walkways and the plan detailed 4-foot bridge walkways. Ms. Thurston said the Board concerns would be conveyed to VHB and believed implementation funding with shoulder widening and guardrails including the plans safety recommendations, where possible, and that Rockingham would be eligible for funding. Ms. Thurston recommended Westminster apply for safety HSIP grant funds of approximately \$50,000.00 available per town with zero match for edge lines, rumble strips and signs.

C. FY25 Financial Report – Tabled

D. Meeting with other boards and commissions. Mr. Allen said nineteen groups applied for or were approved for Town funds at the annual meeting. He suggested inviting representatives of The Visiting Nurse Association, Women's Crisis Center etc., to present information. Also, to include the Development Review Board, Planning Commission and other Town committees to present updates.

E. Town Manager's Report –

- Windham Regional will be the vendor to draft Westminster's new town plan. The proposed start date is July 1, 2025, completion of the draft plan to be September 1, 2026 and tentative Selectboard adoption of December 1, 2026.
- The legal opinion on the North Westminster Community House is: The article cannot be taken up again due to the voters act of tabling the article until the 2026 Westminster Town Meeting Day. The Selectboard can discuss the sale of the property and work with a proposed buyer in anticipation of the voters passing the article in 2026. Craig Allen noted the North Westminster Community House would be an automatic article on the 2026 Town warning.
- Meetings were held with the road foreman to discuss road conditions, conduct employee evaluations and interview applicants for an upcoming vacancy on the highway crew. Also, the format was changed for inventory and replacement schedule.
- Attended the grand opening of the Windham Solid Waste District's new composting facility.

F. Executive Session (if needed) None needed

7. Other Business:

Chuck Lawrence noted a fence on River Road was in the Town road right of way. Also, on Sand Hill Road a property owner has removed rocks in the ditch diverting drainage on the right side of the

road to the middle of the road. Mr. Allen requested these two items be noted on the May 27, 2025 meeting agenda.

8. Executive Session: None

9. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. by voice vote, (Bazin, Allen, Major, Lawrence).

Clerk

Minutes composed by Millie Barry

Date