

WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

Tuesday, May 27, 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 (6:40 p.m.), Charles (Chuck) Lawrence, and Jason Perry (clerk).

Staff Present: Millie Barry (clerk), Lou Bordeaux (town manager), and Ben Masure (road foreman)

Others Present: – Lachlan Francis and Dan Austin - by Zoom, Kiah Williams

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:** May 13, 2025 – Real Bazin moved to accept the minutes of May13, 2025, Chuck Lawrence seconded, motion carried by voice vote, (Allen, Bazin, Lawrence), Perry abstained due to absence.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business:** (Discussion/Action)
 - A. FY2025 Financial Report – Craig Allen noted Chip Stearns (NEMRC) New England Municipal Resource Center would be invited to the next Board meeting to review numbers. Included in the packet is a financial report for the Board to review.
 - B. Road concerns – River Road and Sand Hill Road – Ben Masure said the posts in the town roadway on River Road had been pulled and the area had been seeded and mulched. The landowner will move the posts back about four feet when the fence is reinstalled. On Sand Hill Road, the cutouts have been opened up.
 - C. Grout Avenue engineering – There are no updates from Phil Savoy. Item tabled to another meeting.
6. **New Business:** (Discussion/Action) –
 - A. Dan Austin – Green Mountain Power – Information included in packet - Jason Perry stated due to a conflict of interest, he would not comment or vote on the item. Mr. Austin said a plan had been developed to rebuild the line from the Back Westminster Road intersection east on Route 121 towards Bellows Falls. This will be overhead for the majority, except underground under the Interstate bridges. Real Bazin suggested that if Green Mountain Power was installing line underground or through a culvert, the culvert could require replacement, and the road materials should be put back according to grade. Real Bazin motioned to sign an agreement with Green Mountain Power dated May 19, 2025, titled 'Notification of Pole and Wire Locations.' Chuck Lawrence seconded, motion carried by voice vote (Bazin, Allen, Major, Lawrence). Perry abstained.

- B. Lachlan Francis – Planning Commission/Town Plan. Mr. Francis reviewed ‘Scope of Work’ included in the Board packet and the ‘Agreement Between Windham Regional Commission and the Town of Westminster.’ He said the Town Plan expired in 2023, was adopted in 2015, and most of the source text had not been updated since 2005 and 2010. He noted census data indicated that the Town had lost 10% of its population since 2000 and believed one need was a choice of attractive housing for seniors, single-story options without stairs, lawns to mow, etc. This would free up larger homes for families, reversing the population decline, and bring in residents and taxpayers. Mr. Francis also noted getting to updating zoning bylaws, land use planning to allow for development in the right context, or a designated village or town center required a Town Plan. Jason Perry motioned to authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the agreement between Windham Regional Commission and the Town. Stephen Major seconded; motion carried by voice vote (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major, and Lawrence).
- C. Trespass Policy – Information included in packet. Lou Bordeaux said Town legal counsel had drafted the trespass policy and advised that the plan itemized restrictions on non-civil behavior for the protection of employees or others, setting a benchmark for expected behavior. Stephen Major motioned to post the policy on the Town website for two weeks and review the policy at the next Board meeting. Chuck Lawrence seconded; motion carried by voice vote (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major, Lawrence).
- D. Status of ball field behind Westminster Institute. Craig Allen said he wasn’t sure if people knew who could and could not use the field. Real Bazin noted the Kurn Hattin maintenance department had mowed the field for many years. Jim Matteau, representing the Westminster Institute, said the field could be used in most instances by contacting the Westminster Institute. A certificate of insurance is required from schools and some other users. Mr. Matteau said the Institute had no plans to change the conditions of use.
- E. RFB (request for bid) for 550/5500 series dump truck – Information regarding the bid request was included in the packet. The Board reviewed the process to submit bids, specifications, warranty, etc., to be submitted to dealers.
- F. Town Manager’s Report –
- Following Betsy Thurston’s presentation on safety improvements to Route 121 at the last Board meeting, Meghan Brunk from VTrans said the grant discussed covering some improvements had not been funded for several years. Mr. Bordeaux is exploring other options to fund some of the safety upgrades.
 - The position of assistant town clerk has been posted on the Town website.
 - In the past two weeks, all regular employees have had their performance reviews.
 - Representatives from social service organizations receiving monies as part of the annual budget will be invited to present information at a future Board meeting.
 - At John Ewald’s request, research was completed regarding the merger of the Village of North Westminster and the Town and ownership of the North Westminster Community House.
 - A representative from Invest EAP presented information to highway and town hall employees detailing a resource through VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) providing to employees and those living in their household, short-term

confidential counseling, information, and resources about financial, legal problems, substance abuse use, grief, loss, and other issues. The resource is at no cost to employees and is bundled with VLCT PACIF (property and casualty) insurance.

G. Executive Session: None

- 7. Other Business:** Chuck Lawrence questioned if the work had been completed on the wall of the New Westminster Cemetery due to the presence of sandbags and the cemetery vault door being off. Also, to prevent small animals from entering and plugging pipes, drain caps can be placed on the pipes.

In another matter, Jason Perry acknowledged the pending retirement of assistant town clerk, Pauline O'Brien, for her years of service and wished her well in her retirement.

- 8. Executive Session:** None

- 9. Date of Next Meeting:** June 10, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

- 10. Adjournment:** At 7:40 p.m. Real Bazin motioned to adjourn, Stephen Major seconded, meeting adjourned.

Clerk

Date

Minutes composed by Millie Barry