

WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

Tuesday, October 29, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Remote and in person at Westminster, VT Town Hall

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

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

Others Present: – Tim Lillis and 1 person (briefly), for FACTV

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, can be found on the Town of Westminster website or by contacting Westminster Town Hall. This meeting was recorded by FACTV
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** October 14, 2025 – Stephen Major moved to accept the minutes, of October 14, 2025, Real Bazin seconded, motion carried by voice vote, (Perry, Allen, Bazin, Major).
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business:** (Discussion/Action)
 - A. Hearse Shed renovation – Tim Lillis invoice dated 10-28-2025 and pictures taken 10/29/25 included in packet – Mr. Lillis said he had all frame parts back in except for one knee brace. Black locust will be used for the sills and reclaimed lumber for underroof sheeting. Mr. Lillis confirmed the amount of the invoice, \$9,129.53 was the amount owed to present. Jason Perry said after looking at the current pictures, he believed some significant work had been done and was willing to extend the end date. Craig Allen said there was a contract, a contract was a contract, and the Town had committed money. Stephen Major motioned to authorize Mr. Lillis to continue construction to complete the structure of the project by January 1, 2026 except for the slate roof and to complete the entire project within the budget by May 30, 2026. Real Bazin seconded. The vote was split (Allen, Perry No), Major, Bazin yes). Mr. Lillis and Lou Bordeaux will meet to complete an agreement on payment and construction. This agreement will be presented to the Board at the November 18, 2025 meeting.
6. **New Business** (Discussion/Action)
 - FY27 Budget – first draft – information included in packet indicated items with significant budget change.
Stephen Major questioned the reasoning the Town could not budget for the collection of delinquent property taxes. Mr. Bordeaux said the Town's auditing firm recommends/advises best practice for government accounting, which is to budget the line at zero as there were no guarantees delinquent property taxes would be paid. Mr. Allen requested the manager review the last five years of delinquent property tax collection to find an average amount collected each year.

Revenue:

- Pilot (payment in lieu of taxes) generated from the State of VT (SOV) is from Current Use Program. Proposed FY27 \$75,000.00, FY26 Budget \$54,000.00. Increase based on five-year trend of higher payments.
- Mr. Bordeaux said State of VT Hold Harmless FY25 Actual \$120,031.73, FY26 Budget \$91,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$110,000.00 and Town Clerk General Fees - FY25 Actual \$33,345.85, FY26 Budget \$25,000.00, FY2027 \$30,000.00 research showed increased due to trending higher for the previous 5-7 years.
- Line 34, Interest earnings – FY25 Budget \$41,175.42, FY26 Budget \$25,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$40,000.00. Mr. Bordeaux said he had reviewed the last several years and the increase follows a five-year trend.

Mr. Bordeaux said he had been able to cut the budget by approximately \$21,000.00.

Expenses:

- Mr. Bordeaux believed the social security line had been under budgeted for several years. FY25 Actual \$35,341.50, FY26 Budget \$23,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$36,300.00
- Computer contract services: FY25 Actual \$25,167.43, FY2026 Budget \$30,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$23,000.00. Mr. Bordeaux said FY26 budget was to replace the server and move to the Cloud. The current monthly allocation for computer expense is about \$1,900.00. When the move to the Cloud is complete the expense will be about \$1,750.00.
- Website maintenance, FY25 Actual zero, FY26 Budget zero, FY27 Proposed zero. Mr. Bordeaux said he did website maintenance.
- Administration Wages: FY25 Actual \$219,762.67, FY26 Budget \$238,776.00, FY27 Proposed \$248,250.00. Mr. Bordeaux said the breakdown of \$118,965.00 and \$64,620.00 times two is a placeholder. Numbers included a three percent increase for everyone except Mr. Bordeaux. The social security cost of living index increased 2.7 percent.
- Contracted Services – FY25 Actual \$7,592.50, FY26 Budget \$13,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$10,000.00. Mr. Bordeaux said this covered NEMRC (New England Municipal Resource Center), Chip Stearns services. Ali Bigwood's (assistant treasurer) reliance on Mr. Stearns has decreased.
- Annual Audit and Expense: FY25 Actual \$12,600.00, FY26 Budget \$25,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$15,000.00. Mr. Bordeaux said the decrease is the FY2027 audit will be a review.
- Legal Fees - Zoning Department: FY26 Budget \$3,000.00. Mr. Bordeaux said he had eliminated \$3,000.00 as questions regarding zoning would be reviewed by Mr. Bordeaux and the administrative department.
- Policing: FY25 Actual \$110,000.00, FY26 Budget \$123,600.00, FY27 Proposed \$135,000.00. Mr. Bordeaux said the increase was his forecast on a per capita

basis.

- Visiting Nurse: FY26 Budget \$11,500.00. FY26 Budget \$11,500.00. FY27 Proposed zero. Mr. Bordeaux said per Donna Dawson, the Visiting Nurse Assoc. no longer provides service to Southern VT. Jason Perry recommended researching the process to delete the item from the budget as it was approved by the voters. Stephen Major recommended allocating these funds to Westminster Cares.
- Putney Food Shelf – BF Community Bike Project: FY27 Proposed zero – these entities must petition to be on the Town warning.
- Westminster Gazette is required to petition for additional funding to be warned.
- Collecting Waste: FY25 Actual \$183,718.94, FY26 Budget \$203,100.00, FY27 Proposed FY27 \$213,254.00.
- Disposing of Waste: FY25 Actual \$102,714.57, FY2026 Budget \$95,000.00, FY27 Proposed \$105,000.00. Increase is based on averages of cost per ton.
- Waste Assessment: Mr. Bordeaux said the assessment FY27 Proposed \$21,000.00 is assessed by SOV Statute whether or not a town uses a local facility.
- Mr. Bordeaux reminded the Board in the current fiscal year general fund highway went up 1.6%, fire district went up almost 11% and the school district increased about 6%.

B. Road Foreman's Report: Mr. Bordeaux said:

- Fall grading is complete with a few places to re-grade after rain.
- Highway trucks are being yearly inspected. Truck repairs are being done in house.
- Tractor will be blowing leaves until leaves are down and first snow.
- Highway garage has applied for the 2026 Better Roads Grant.
- Ben Masure and Mr. Bordeaux will meet soon with Scott Pickup and Glen Schreiter regarding Route 121 paving in 2026.
- Small sections of ditching are ongoing.
- Brush and tree cutting will begin soon.
- New radar speed signs are up and operational.
- Jason Perry questioned the Highway budget surplus estimate. He continued, the highway garage was in rough shape and the building contained millions of dollars in equipment. Possibly surplus could be committed to engineering to upgrade the facility. Mr. Bordeaux said he would have the surplus numbers for the meeting November 18th.

C. Town Manager's Report:

- 10-16-25 Ben Masure and Mr. Bordeaux met the Chris River (Dubois & King) to discuss options on Grout Ave. The company was back on site 10/23/25 to dig test pits.
- Contact made to Jeff Blanchard, Right of Way Acquisition Chief, VT Trans to explore the potential to take over the salt shed and adjacent property from

the SOV. The State will perform a formal review, an environmental review, and a federal review. The State is exploring if they can sell the parcel to the Town or if they are required to offer it for public sale.

- Zoom meeting with Sheriff Anderson. Topic was Animal Control with current estimate for FY27 of \$10,597.00.
- Manager's meeting in Windsor was attended 10-23-25. Topics were planning and zoning, housing and its importance regarding local employment.

D. Executive Session: Jason Perry motioned the Board move to executive session, being that premature knowledge would clearly place the Municipality of the Town Westminster or the public body, a person or persons involved at a substantial disadvantage as outlined in 1 VSA 313, Stephen Major seconded, motion carried by voice vote (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major). Mr. Allen noted Mr. Major could not attend the executive session.

E.

7. Boards, Committees and Commissions: None

8. Other Business: Jason Perry recommended the Board consider nominations for the Town Report dedication and Person of the Year. Names to be submitted to Lou Bordeaux, Town Manager.

9. Date of Next Meeting – November 18, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. The following meeting will be **November 25, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.**

The Board moved to executive session at 7:41 p.m.

Jason Perry motioned to return to regular session at 9:10 p.m.

10. Adjournment: Jason Perry motion to adjourn at 9:15 p.m.

Clerk

Date

Minutes composed by Millie Barry