

## DRAFT/UNAPPROVED MINUTES

### WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

*Tuesday, April 14, 2026 - 6:30 p.m.*

In person at Westminster, VT Town Hall and remote by FACT TV

**Selectboard Present:** Craig Allen (chair), Real Bazin (vice chair), Jason Perry (clerk), and Stephen Major (arrival 6:37)

**Staff Present:** Millie Barry (clerk), Ben Masure (road foreman), Chip (Willis) Stearns (interim town manager)

**Others Present:** Elisa Underwood, Emily Gibbs and Mike King – remote Kiah Williams

1. **Call to Order:** Craig Allen, chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 6:34 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 the Westminster Town Hall. This meeting was recorded by FACT TV.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** March 24, 2026 – Real Bazin motioned to accept the minutes of March 24, 2026 as printed, Jason Perry seconded, motion passed by voice vote (Perry, Bazin, Allen).
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business: (Discussion/Action) –**
  - A. Campbell Fund/Public fund appointments – Jason Perry motioned to appoint Barbara Taylor for a 1-year term as Trustee of the Campbell and Public Fund, term ending March 2027. Real Bazin seconded, motioned carried by voice vote 3-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen). Jason Perry motioned to appoint Pete Harrison Commissioner of the Public Fund and Campbell fund for a one-year term ending March 2027. Real Bazin seconded, motion carried by voice vote 3-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen).
  - B. Delinquent Tax – Information included in packet - Mr. Allen noted total delinquent tax is \$1,042,000.00 at the end of February 2026. One year ago, Westminster had delinquent tax in the amount of \$1,143,000.00. Mr. Stearns said the verbiage on the last tax notice was provided by legal counsel. If there is no arrangement by the taxpayer owing delinquent taxes by May 9, 2026, with the Town, the property will be processed for tax sale. All lienholders on the property will be notified of the pending tax sale. The Board agreed with the notice wording.
6. **New Business: (Discussion/Action)**
  - A. Windham County Lead Hazard Control – Emily Gibbs and Elisa Underwood addressed the Board noting Windham County was awarded a \$1,100,000.00 3-year federal grant to focus on lead hazard control in Windham County. Specifically, training and certifying contractors to increase capacity for abatement work in VT through free training and engage property owners to build a pipeline of homes in need of assistance. Also, to encourage lead testing in children aged 1 and 2. Though lead testing is required in VT for 1- and 2-year-olds, in 2024 Windham County tested 72.8%, lower than the State average of 85.2%. The program requires a 10% property owner (80% of Windham County's median

income) contribution for inspections and lead hazard reduction work. The Board agreed to post information on Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes capacity Building Program on the Town website. Applications and waiting list can be found at <https://lead.windhamcountyyt.gov>. The Windham County office is located at the Windham County Sheriff building on Old Ferry Rd., Brattleboro, VT.

- B. Annual appointment for DVFiber – Information included in packet - Jason Perry motioned to appoint Arthur Dufresne as Westminster representative to the Governing board of the Deerfield Valley (DVFiber) Communications Union District for a term of one year. Real Bazin seconded, motion carried by voice vote 4-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major). Jason Perry motioned to appoint Adrienne Major as an alternate representative to the DV Fiber board for one year. Real Bazin seconded, motion carried by voice vote 4-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major).
- C. Community Improvement Loan update – Information included in packet – Mr. Allen suggested appointing a committee to oversee the loan fund. The Board discussed the current loan balances and information available in the Town recording database including mortgage amounts, terms and discharges. Mr. Stearns noted some of the terms included in the loan language were a transfer of ownership, assignment to heirs and payment due on transfer of ownership. Stephen Major motioned to discharge the amount of \$54.74 plus interest for a loan issued to Jeanette Staley 4/25/2008. Jason Perry second, motion carried by voice vote 4-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major). The Board agreed to post on the website a description of the loan fund requesting Westminster residents interested in serving on a committee write of their interest to the Board.
- D. Financial Update – Information included in packet - Chip Stearns reported Total Fund Balances are \$2,218,241.31. Large balances include Highway \$597,772.42, Contingency Reserve Fund \$150,000.00, Equipment Fund \$376,264.92, Bridge Rehabilitation \$498,364.92, Reappraisal \$232,914.78. Also, Restoration of Records \$56,936.56 and Community Improvement Loan Fund \$189,185.00. Stephen Major questioned the project timeline of the Route 121 bridge and the bridge at the intersection of Westminster West Road and Patch Road. Ben Masure will check on amount of Town required contribution for rehabilitation/reconstruction of both bridges. He added there is required maintenance and repair of Route 121 Bridge if the bridge repair project is not scheduled by the State of VT (SOV) soon. Mr. Stearns talked about separate, distinct cash accounts for Public Funds. Of interest and part of these funds is the F. Miller milk fund of \$12,374.06 for schools. This fund, as it is less than \$100,000.00, Probate Court could relieve Westminster of tracking the fund and order the fund distributed to an organization providing the service the fund was originally intended for. Mr. Stearns noted a letter dated 10/27/2025 from USPS (United States Postal Service). He stated notice enforced repairs completed of \$4,399.03 deducted from rental payments as the Town of Westminster has not paid or made arrangements for payment of required repairs in accordance with the terms of Lease Maintenance Rider for Westminster Main Office. Interest earnings on checkbook of \$31,000.00 noted, health insurance premium is low due to eliminating some family plan coverage. Computer contract services are over by \$3,000.00 due to contracts signed by previous manager with VC3 to move from server to cloud based services. Mr. Stearns said he believed the entire legal services budget of \$15,000.00 would be spent when all invoices were received. Administrative wages at 94% of budget was the prior town manager pay

out included \$4,600.00 of health insurance value treated as income.

- E. Paving Bid result – Information included in packet – Jason Perry motioned to accept Bazin Brothers 2026 paving bid to include aprons of Davidson Hill, Forest Road and South Road and shoulders should the budget allow, not to exceed \$340,379.00. Stephen Major second motion, carried by voice vote 3-0 (Perry, Allen, Major).
- F. Road Foreman Report – Report included in packet –
- Winter sand is being hauled
  - Grader is working throughout town
  - Road posted signs will be removed week of 4/20/26
  - Ditching, shoulder work and 4 culvert replacements on Route 121 will begin week of 4/20/26 to prepare for paving.
  - Culvert inventory being done throughout town to determine culvert replacement. Inlet and outlets are being dug as needed. Mr. Masure said there were about 880 culverts in Westminster.
  - Grout Avenue 60% design plans have been completed. (information included in packet) Mr. Masure did not know the meaning of “60%” design plans from DuBois & King. The Board discussed the plans presented and determined to meet with engineer at the fire station before the Selectboard meeting scheduled April 28, 2026. Mr. Stearns will check with Dubois & King regarding their availability 4/28/26. Mr. Masure noted the person at Dubois & King he spoke with believed their work was done on the project.

G. Executive Session – None

7. **Boards, Committees and Commissions:** None

8. **Other Business –**

**Mike King – Davidson Hill** - email included in packet – Mr. Allen noted he and the interim town manager visited the site in question. They did not observe people, animals or vehicles. He noted there was a lot of junk and understood Mr. King’s concerns, adding the problem was a health and zoning issue. Jason Perry stated the Windham County Sheriff Department had stonewalled the Town. Mr. Bazin noted the Sheriff required an actual complaint filed and proof the land belongs to the Town of Westminster to act. Jason Perry volunteered to work with someone to find the pins of the property. Mr. King said he would consider buying the property in question for \$1.00 if the property was not in its current condition. Mr. Allen requested Mr. King notify him or the town office regarding stray dogs or difficulty with abandoned vehicles.

**Karol Kawiaka** - Jason Perry and Ben Masure visited the site. Mr. Perry noted he would meet with Karol Kawiaka at the property after 6:00 p.m. on a workday. He added the Town is willing to remove the part of the culvert the Town installed. Also, the drainage is a dispute between landowners and as the road, property is private it does not involve the Town. Ben Masure said a SOV representative indicated to him there was no action the SOV could take.

**River Road Ditch/Post Issue** – Jason Perry visited the site letting the property owner know the fence could not be replaced in the Town right of way. He believed the ditch in the vicinity could be tightened up (not so wide), to make the landowner happy.

**Development Review Board** – Information included in packet - Jason Perry motioned to accept the resignation of Chris Potter with a BIG THANK YOU. Real Bazin second, motion

carried by voice vote 4-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major).

Jason Perry motioned to appoint Adam Hallock to fill the Development Review Board term vacated by Chris Potter. Real Bazin second, motion carried by voice vote 4-0 (Perry, Bazin, Allen, Major).

Selectboard Appointment – Mr. Allen noted Ron BosLun was interested in being appointed to complete the open Selectboard position term to end March 31, 2027.

Mr. Stearns confirmed the open selectboard seat, lister positions would be advertised on the Town website and he would develop a town manager description (based on statute) and salary range. Mr. Stearns said the Town could vote to move to appointed listers at Town Meeting March 2027.

Mr. Stearns confirmed he would determine, dependent on issues at the Town Hall one day of week to be at the Town Hall. He may not attend all Selectboard meetings.

**9. Date of Next Meeting** – April 28, 2026 at **5:30 – meeting to begin at Westminster Fire House –**

**10. Adjournment** – Jason Perry motioned to adjourn at 8:33 p.m. Meeting adjourned by unanimous voice vote.

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Clerk

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Date