

TOWN OF WHEELLOCK
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 3, 2026

Call to Order: Peter Miller called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There being no objection, State Senator Scott Beck was recognized. He thanked citizens for contacting him throughout the year. Citizens shared questions and comments on the topics of the school district transformation and high taxes.

ARTICLE 1: To elect a moderator for the ensuing year.

Peter Miller was nominated by Erin Swigart. The motion was made that nominations cease and the clerk cast one ballot for Peter Miller by Preston Smith; motion carried.

ARTICLE 2: To hear the reports of the Town Officials.

The motion was made to accept the written reports of the town officials by Marina Cole; motion carried. Ann Lawless summarized the Selectboard Report. In response to a question, the Board shared information related to their decision to purchase a backhoe and clarified that the backhoe will be used to dig and clean ditches.

There being no objection, State Representatives Marty Feltus and Beth Quimby were recognized. Representative Feltus shared that the major issues before the legislature were education transformation, Act 181 (land use), health care, and housing availability. State Representative Beth Quimby stated that she had served on the Education Committee and the School Redistricting Task Force. Beth and Marty listened to citizens' concerns about Act 181 and possible restrictions and regulations related to land use.

ARTICLE 3: To elect all Town Officials:

Town Clerk for a 3 year term

Erin Swigart was nominated for Town Clerk by Helene Millas. Kim Crady Smith made the motion that nominations cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Erin Swigart; motion carried.

Treasurer for a 3 year term

Erin Swigart was nominated for Treasurer by Lorraine Poulin. Kim Crady-Smith made the motion that nominations cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Erin Swigart; motion carried.

Selectboard for a 3 year term

Mike Richardson was nominated for Selectboard by Helene Millas; Kim Crady-Smith made the motion that nominations cease and the Clerk case one ballot for Mike Richardson; motion carried.

Lister for a 3 year term

The motion was made to pass over this article and request the Selectboard appoint a lister by Eileen Boland; motion carried.

Auditor for a 3 year term

Enid Ellis was nominated for Auditor by Kim Crady-Smith. The motion was made for nominations to cease and the Clerk to cast one ballot for Enid Ellis by Marina Cole; motion carried.

Delinquent Tax Collector for a 1 year term

Teresa Stimpson was nominated for Delinquent Tax Collector by Bobbi-Jo Norcross. Carol Rossi was nominated for Delinquent Tax Collector by Ann Lawless. Carol declined the nomination. Kim Crady-Smith made the motion that nominations cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Teresa Stimpson; motion carried.

Emily Purdy was thanked for her years of service.

First Constable for a 1 year term

Owen Montgomery was nominated for 1st Constable by Marina Cole. The motion was made that nominations cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Owen Montgomery for 1st Constable by Linda Rhodes; motion carried.

Second Constable for a 1 year term

Shane Lanpher was nominated for 2nd Constable by Marina Cole. The motion was made that nominations cease and the Clerk cast one ballot for Shane Lanpher for 2nd Constable by Mike Richardson; motion carried.

ARTICLE 4: Shall the voters authorize general fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$308,162.76 of which \$214,568.76 shall be raised by taxes and \$93,594.00 by non-tax revenues?

The motion was made to authorize general fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$308,162.76 of which \$214,568.76 shall be raised by taxes and \$93,594.00 by non-tax revenues by Marina Cole; motion carried.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters authorize highway fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$558,502.40 of which \$449,466.40 shall be raised by taxes and \$109,036.00 by non-tax revenue?

The motion was made to authorize highway fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$558,502.40 of which \$449,466.40 shall be raised by taxes and \$109,036.00 by non-tax revenue by Mike Richardson; motion carried.

The highway department crew was thanked for their work.

School Director Norma Twombly was recognized . Norma stated that the only way to reduce the proposed school budget was to reduce teaching positions. The percent of education funding raised through property taxes in Vermont is 17% higher than the percent raised through property taxes in other New England States.

ARTICLE 6: Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for deposit into the Bridge Repair and Replacement and/or Major Road Repair Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a)?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for deposit into the Bridge Repair and Replacement and/or Major Road Repair Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a) by Michael Richardson; motion carried.

The Selectboard was asked if they had plans for the use of the town's unassigned funds. There was a brief discussion of the new state legislation that now defines any year-end surplus as unassigned funds under the control of the Selectboard unless otherwise voted by the town. The Board reported that some of the funds have already been used as a down- payment on the recently purchased John Deere grader.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for deposit into the Road Equipment Replacement Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a)?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for deposit into the Road Equipment Replacement Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a) by Chuck Dill; motion carried.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for deposit into the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance and Repair Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2804(a)?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for deposit into the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance and Repair Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a) by Lorraine Poulin; motion carried.

In response to a question about plans for long term maintenance and repairs, the Board shared their plans to complete window restoration and electrical work with funding from an energy efficiency grant. The needs for a new roof and exterior cleaning and painting for the Town Hall were mentioned. The Board explained that the ditch lines behind the Town Hall and on Sutton Road have been improved to reduce the risk of flooding in the basement of the Town Hall.

ARTICLE 9: Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 for deposit into the Town Hall Project Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a)?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 for deposit into the Town Hall Project Fund, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804(a) by Chuck Dill; motion carried.

ARTICLE 10: Shall the voters establish a reserve fund to be known as the Disaster Reserve Fund to be used for highway fund expenses resulting from a significant disaster event in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804?

The motion was made to establish a reserve fund to be known as the Disaster Reserve Fund to be used for highway fund expenses resulting from a significant disaster event in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec 2804 by Kim Crady-Smith; motion carried.

ARTICLE 11: Shall the Selectboard transfer \$30,000 from unassigned funds into the Disaster Reserve Fund?

The motion was made to transfer to transfer \$30,000 from unassigned funds into the Disaster Reserve Fund by Mike Richardson; motion carried.

There was discussion of what expenses this fund might cover and of the limitation of this money to the highway fund. The treasurer explained that revenues and expenses had to be assigned to a specific fund. Citizens suggested a second disaster fund be set up for general fund disaster expenses next year.

The current and former Selectboard members were thanked for their many hours of work and all their efforts to apply for and secure FEMA reimbursement for the 2023 and 2024 flooding events.

Discussion occurred in response to questions raised about the possible use of unassigned funds to reduce taxes.

ARTICLE 12: Shall the voters authorize expenditure of \$1,416 to be raised in taxes for the town share of the Planning Grant?

The motion was made to authorize expenditure of \$1,416 to be raised in taxes for the town share of the Planning Grant by Mike Richardson.

The motion was made to amend Article 12 to read: authorize expenditures of \$0.00 to be raised in taxes for the town share of the Planning Grant by Kim Crady-Smith. Motion carried after discussion.

Meaghan Rinehart, on behalf of the Planning Commission, presented a report. Federal and state grants require the requested town match. The commission is seeking community input to be used in the development of the town plan. All residents are encouraged to complete and return the surveys that have been distributed. More information will be coming about community meetings to be held.

After the Selectboard indicated they would be willing to use unassigned funds to cover this expense, the amended motion to authorize expenditure of \$0.00 to be raised in taxes for the town share of the Planning Commission was voted on; motion carried.

ARTICLE 13: Shall the voters authorize the Treasurer to collect taxes on or before October 15, 2026, and with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent (1%) per month, and with a seven percent (7%) penalty charged against them from the due date pursuant to 32 V.S.A. Sec. 5136?

The motion was made to authorize the Treasurer to collect taxes on or before October 15, 2026, and with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent (1%) per month, and with a seven percent (7%) penalty charged against them from the due date pursuant to 32 V.S.A. Sec. 5136 by Chuck Dill.

The motion was made to amend Article 13 to read: Shall the voters authorize the Treasurer to collect taxes on or before October 15, 2026, and with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent for the first three months and one and one-half percent for the months thereafter pursuant to 32 V.S.A. Sec 5136 with an eight percent penalty charged against them from the due date pursuant to 32 V.S.A. 1674 by Teresa Stimpson. Motion to amend failed.

The motion was made to amend Article 13 to read: Shall the voters authorize the Treasurer to collect taxes on or before November 10, 2026, and with delinquent taxes having interest charges of one percent (1%) per month, and with a seven percent (7%) penalty charged against them from the due date pursuant to 32 V.S.A. Sec. 5136 by Suzanne Camber. Motion to amend failed.

A vote was held on the original motion to approve the Article as written. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 14: Shall the town allow a grace period from the due date for current taxes to December 9, 2026, during which the Delinquent Tax Collector shall charge 1% penalty on payments made in full pursuant to 32 V.S.A. Sec. 1674 (3)(B)?

The motion was made that the town allow a grace period from the due date for current taxes to December 9, 2026, during which the Delinquent Tax Collector shall charge 1% penalty on payments made in full pursuant to 32 V.S.A. Sec. 1674 (3)(B) was made by Mike Richardson. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 15: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice to support the provision of services for residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice to support the provision of services for residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Mike Richardson. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 16: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to Darling Inn Senior Meal Site for the purpose of providing meals that are delivered to area residents who are homebound in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500.00 to Darling Inn Senior Meal Site for the purpose of providing meals that are delivered to area residents who are homebound in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Mike Richardson. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 17: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging to support the provision of services for residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging to support the provision of services for residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Kim Crady-Smith. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 18: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,622.00 to Northeast Kingdom Human Services to support the provision of needed services to residents who cannot otherwise afford care pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,622.00 to Northeast Kingdom Human Services to support the provision of needed services to residents who cannot otherwise afford care pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Carol Amos. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 19: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to Northeast Kingdom Youth Services for support of their work with youth and families in our community pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$300.00 to Northeast Kingdom Youth Services for support of their work with youth and families in our community pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Kim Crady-Smith. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 20: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,422.00 to Rural Community Transportation to support the provision of services to residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,422.00 to Rural Community Transportation to support the provision of services to residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Don Bredes. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 21: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$600.00 to Umbrella to support provision of services to residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$600.00 to Umbrella to support provision of services to residents of the Town pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Sec. 2691 by Lorraine Poulin. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 22: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,200.00 for Cobleigh Public Library?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,200.00 for Cobleigh Public Library by Don Bredes. The motion carried.

ARTICLE 23: Shall the voters raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1,133 to support the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium to provide services to resident of the Town?

The motion was made to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$1,133 to support the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium to provide services to residents of the Town by Don Bredes. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 24: Shall the voters raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000 for the support of Powers Park to provide services to the residents of the Town?

The motion was made to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000 for the support of Powers Park to provide services to the residents of the Town by Don Bredes. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 25: To transact any other non-binding business that comes before the meeting.

A question was raised about the change from bags to stickers at the transfer station. It was explained that the intention was to save money (on the expense of printed bags), eliminate the sales at the transfer station, and improve the procedure for reconciliation of funds.

ARTICLE 26: To adjourn.

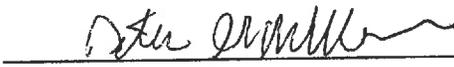
Consensus to adjourn at 11:40am.

Submitted by:



Carol Rossi, Assistant Town Clerk

Approved:



Peter Miller, Moderator