

Town & Village of Woodstock
Town Selectboard & Village Trustees Special Joint Meeting
January 20th 2026
5:15 PM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present Selectboard: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Keri Cole, Cliff Johnson, Vice Chair Susan Ford

Present Trustees: Chair Seton Mcilroy, Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn, Brenda Blakeman, Lisa Lawlor

Staff: Eric Duffy

Public: Byron Kelly, Nicholas Seldon, Bill Boardman, Roger Logan

Call to order

1. Selectboard

- a. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard Meeting of January 20th to order at 5:15 PM

2. Trustees

- a. Chair Seton Mcilroy called the Trustee Meeting of January 20th to order at 5:15 PM

B. Additions or Deletions from the posted Agenda

~~**Proposed executive session 1 V.S.A 313- Village Conservancy**~~
~~**Vote on Village Conservancy**~~

C. Citizen Comments – Three Minutes per participant

Byron Kelly spoke regarding the security cameras in the building that were recording without notification.

Nicholas Seldon commented on what he described as Woodstock's financial situation, criticizing spending. He raised concerns about the depletion of the village's general fund.

Roger Logan urged the Boards to finalize the Town manager's contract that evening.

Bill Boardman suggested that if the Manager's contract were to be renewed, it should be for no more than one year.

Eric Duffy clarified comments that the \$200,000 legal fees mentioned by a commenter, were split between Town and Village, with approximately \$75,000 for the Water company (approved by the Selectboard), \$30,000 for public records requests, \$30,000 for Community Development and Planning legal fees, and the remainder for a personnel issue.

D. Discussion

FY27 Budget

Eric Duffy provided an overview of the current budget projections:

- Town: 8.2% tax increase
- Village: 10.6% tax increase (potentially reduced to 9.9% if Trustees forfeit stipends)
- Sewer: 9.3% rate increase
- Water: approximately 30% increase

The discussion clarified that even after budgets are approved at Town/Village meetings, the actual tax rate could decrease if the Grand List increases in value. This would be determined closer to when tax bills are sent out in August/September.

Laura Powell raised a proposal for adding a code enforcement officer position within the Community Development and Planning office, which would need to be allocated across Village, Water, and Sewer budgets. She noted this position could potentially generate revenue through fines and fees, particularly related to Zoning compliance (\$200/day) and short-term rental violations (up to \$800/day).

Several board members expressed hesitation about a staff member at this point in the budget process, suggesting instead that current staff might reorganize their time to focus more on enforcement. It was noted that years ago, enforcement was accomplished with fewer staff members.

Eric Duffy clarified that current staff focus has been directed toward housing goals rather than code enforcement, based on board priorities.

Roger Logan commented that the boards should continue their approach rather than reallocating staff from areas like housing development work, and also suggested that in the next fiscal year, the boards should examine how the police force is organized and funded.

E. Proposed executive session 1 V.S.A 313

Motion: by Vice Chair Susan Ford to go into a potential executive session 1 V.S.A. § 313 the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that the public body shall make a final decision to hire or appoint a public officer or employee in an open meeting and shall explain the reasons for its final decision during the open meeting; (5:43 PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Motion: by Chair Seton Mcilroy to go into a potential executive session 1 V.S.A. § 313 the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that the public body shall make a final decision to hire or appoint a public officer or employee in an open meeting and shall explain the reasons for its final decision during the open meeting; (5:44 PM)

Seconded: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Motion: by Laura Powell to exit executive session (6:01 PM)

Seconded: by Vice Chair Susan Ford
Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to exit executive session (6:01 PM)
Seconded: by Brenda Blakeman
Vote: 5-0-0, passed

F. Approval of Minutes

Motion: By Vice Chair Susan Ford to approve the minutes 12.22.25 with the amendment of the attention on Susan Ford being present at the meeting (6:01PM)
Seconded: By Laura Powell
Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Motion: By Chair Seton Mcilroy to approve the minutes 12.22.25 with the amendment of the attention on Susan Ford being present at the meeting (6:01PM)
Seconded: By Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn
Vote: 5-0-0 passed

G. Adjournment

Motion: by Vice Chair Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (6:02PM)
Seconded: by Cliff Johnson
Vote: 5-0-0, passed
Motion: by Chair Seton Mcilroy to adjourn the meeting at (6:02PM)
Seconded: by Brenda Blakeman
Vote: 5-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,
Kitty Mears Koar*