

Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
January 29th, 2025  
4:00PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Agenda

- A.** Call to order
- B.** Additions to & deletions from posted agenda
- C.** Citizen Comments
- D.** Vote
  - Pentangle – 1<sup>st</sup> Class Liquor License
  - FY26 Town Meeting Signing of Warning
  - Housing Coordinator Contract
  - Pomfret Ambulance Bill
- E.** Discussion
  - Water Ordinance
- F.** Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313
- G.** Approval of Minutes
  - a. 11.19.24
  - b. 12.17.25
  - c. 12.30.24
  - d. 01.07.25
  - e. 01.13.25
  - f. 01.21.25
- H.** Adjournment

This Meeting will be held in person at Town Hall and on Zoom

The link to join us is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84782406503?pwd=UXAzWnJxaEE0MzJaMlBKeHJPUjB6QT09>

or from [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) you can enter these details to join the meeting

Meeting ID: 847-8240-6503

Password: 247624

You can also download the Zoom app on your smartphone



**Application ID:** DLL - Application - 50926  
**Application for:** First Class Restaurant/Bar License  
**Category of Business:** First Class

### Business/ Entity Information

**Business/ Entity Name:** Pentangle Arts Council  
**Business ID:** 0237947  
**Business Address:** 31 The Green,  
Woodstock, Vermont 05091  
**Entity Type:**  
**Management Type if LLC:** Manager-managed  
**Phone:** 8022961421  
**Email:** director@pentanglearts.org

### People Information

- **Person:**  
Deborah Greene

**Business Role:**  
Business Principal

**Email:**  
director@pentanglearts.org

**Business Address:**  
31 The Green,  
Woodstock, Vermont, 05091

**US Citizen?**  
Yes

**Phone:**  
802-457-3981

**Political Position**

**Name:** Deborah Greene

**Office:**

**Jurisdiction:**

### Violations:

Violation ID	Court/Traffic Bureau	Offense	Date of Offense
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### Location/ Premises Detail

**Location Name:**  
Pentangle Arts Council

**Location Address:**  
31 The Green,  
Woodstock, Vermont 05091

**Local Jurisdiction/ Town Clerk:**  
Woodstock

**Do you lease this Premises:**

**Health License:**  
Food:  
Lodging:

**Vermont Tax Department:**

### Education Details

**Student Name:**

**Training Completion Date:**

**Mode of Training:**

**Type of Training:**

### Foundational License (if applicable)

**License Type:**

**License Number:**

**Licensee Name:**

**License Status:**

**Licensee Address:**

**License Start Date:**

**License End Date:**

### Documents Attached

Name	Document Type	Assosicated With
D-21753	Proof of Non-Profit Status	Pentangle Arts Council
D-21754	Proof of Worker Compensation Insurance	Pentangle Arts Council
D-21755	Federal Employee Identification #	Pentangle Arts Council
D-21756	Operating Agreement	Pentangle Arts Council
D-21760	Lease or proof of ownership	LN-033274
D-21760	Lease or proof of ownership	LN-033274

### Payment and Acknowledgement

**Signed by:**  
Deborah Greene

**State of Vermont / DLL Application Fee:**  
115.00

**Date of Submission:**  
2025-01-14 16:30:18

**State of Vermont / DLL Payment Status:**

**Local Application Fee:**  
115

**Local Control Payment Status:**  
false

**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
November 19th, 2024  
6:00 PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

**Staff:** Eric Duffy

**Public:** Megan Landis, Fire Chief David Green, Jill Davies, Antonia Richie, Jon Spector, Greta Calabrese, Roger Logan, Todd Eckert, Joe DiNatale, Reese Brown, Mark Knott, Ben Jervey, Caroline Olsen, Barbara Otranto, Suzanne Wooten, Jeffrey Kahn, Peter Shoemaker, Seton McIlroy

**Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of November 19th to order at 6:00PM

**B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda**

- a. Water Rate Discussion with the Finance Committee
- b. Review water system discussion below Maxham Meadow Way
- c. Discussion about a conservation easement on the Vondell Reservoir
- d. Discussion about December meeting and having our state representatives present to talk about taxes

**C. Citizen Comments – none**

**D. Manager's Report (6:01PM)**

Eric Duffy announced a reminder regarding the bond vote on December 10 to acquire the Vondell Reservoir and infrastructure projects, with absentee ballots available at the clerk's office.

Eric Duffy mentioned an informational session on Thursday December 5<sup>th</sup> at 6PM at Town Hall and on Zoom, before the December 10<sup>th</sup> vote on the bond for the Vondell Reservoir

Wassail weekend December 13-14

Town Hall Closed for Thanksgiving and the day after

**E. Votes**

**Planning Commission – Meghan Landis**

Ray Bourgeois introduced Meghan Landis, who provided a brief background on her architecture and interior design experience.

Meghan Landis expressed her interest in getting more involved with the community and shaping Woodstock's village and town positively.

Ray Bourgeois asked if Meghan Landis has attended any meetings, to which she responds she has attended one planning commission meeting.

Motion: by Susan Ford to appoint Meghan Landis to the Planning Commission  
(6:05PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

**E911 Road Name Change (6:06PM)**

A road name change from Reading Road to Mount Moses Trail is discussed

Motion: by Susan Ford to change the name of Reading Road to Mount Moses Trail.  
(6:07PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

**Route 4- High School sign/speed limit (6:07PM)**

Eric Duffy presented a request from the high school superintendent for signage and reduced speed limits in front of the high school to improve safety.

The board discussed the possibility of adding a crosswalk and flashing lights, with some members expressing support for these measures.

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve the speed limit and signage and considered the addition of a crosswalk and flashing sign (6:12PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

**Ambulance Billing per Capita Funds (6:13PM)**

The board discussed and approved the annual subscription rate for EMS services, with a focus on maintaining consistent rates for member towns.

**Olmstead Contract- For Town Forest**

Eric Duffy presented the Olmsted contract renewal, which includes a request to include road repair costs for heavy trucks using Long Hill.

The board agreed to include language to have them to do repairs to the road if they caused issues during mud season.

**ARPA reallocation (6:18pm)**

Eric Duffy discussed ARPA reallocation mentioning he wants all the contract in by December, including the Thomas Senior Center. Work on the tower is under contract, and funds for IT-websites, updates, permanent software and paychecks software will be spent by the end of the year. He mentioned a bill for South Woodstock beautification which is a painting project that will not be finished before December will be paid from the regular budget.

Motion: by Susan Ford use the unallocated money from the South Woodstock Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements to pay toward the tower, with the understanding that the painting of the tank will be done from general funds.

(6:20PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

#### **EDC – Website subscription funds (6:20PM)**

Jon Spector and Greta Calabrese discussed the need for a technical website maintenance contract of \$2,500 to ensure the website remains functional.

Motion: Laura Powell to approve a \$2,500 allocation for a six-month hourly contract to maintain the website (6:22PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Greta Calabrese presented the case for a new website build, highlighting the current website's high maintenance costs and outdated technology.

The board supported the RFP for a new website build but emphasized the need for the Chamber to meet its responsibilities in maintaining the current website.

#### **F. Discussion**

##### **Water Rate Discussion with the Finance Committee (6:33PM)**

Laura Powell outlined goals for a new water rate card, including incentivizing meter installation, stratifying rates based on usage, and providing subsidies for affordable housing.

The board discussed the challenges of self-reporting usage for non-metered accounts and the potential for charging based on the number of bedrooms.

Eric Duffy suggested reaching out to the water working group for insights on water rate structure.

The board agreed to have the Finance Committee develop options for water and sewer rates, with a focus on gradual change and long-term planning.

##### **Maxham Meadow Way (6:52PM)**

Reese Brown and Mark Knott discussed the need for the town to take over the maintenance of Maxham Meadow Way, citing the road's public use and the current association's inability to manage it.

Laura Powell and Susan Ford expressed concerns about the lack of authorization from the road association and the need to involve all private property owners.

The board tabled the discussion until proper authorization is obtained from the road association.

Motion: by Susan Ford to table the discussion until proper authorization is obtained from the road association. (7:05PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

### **Sewer Update**

Eric Duffy provided an update on the wastewater plant renovation project, mentioning potential cost savings with new technology.

The board agreed to have Hoyle Tanner present at the next meeting to discuss the potential cost savings and seek feedback before moving forward with a bond vote.

### **FY26 Budget discussion**

Eric Duffy discussed the next FY26 budget, mentioning a kickoff meeting with the board and the finance team's revamped budget.

### **Water System Update (7:10PM)**

Susan Ford talked about a separate bond to purchase of the Vondell for \$1.6 million, mentioning conversations with the Vermont Land Trust and potential town forest grants.

Susan Ford explained the Town Forest Grants and the possibility of privately fundraising to help with the purchase.

Eric Duffy seeks clarity on the implications of the town voting to have the land trust involved, and Susan Ford explained the development restrictions and recreation use allowed under a conservation easement.

Barbara Otranto questioned the decision to hold back developmental rights on 80 acres, suggesting that planning for the future should stop any development.

Susan Ford explained the potential future flexibility for the town, including the possibility of selling acreage for development if needed.

Laura Powell supported the idea of pursuing discussions with the land trust, emphasizing the importance of future flexibility.

Eric Duffy clarified that the December 10 vote will be for the bond up to 1.6 million for the Vondell, and the board can decide later if they want to pursue an easement.

Antonia Richie inquired about approaching the Nature Conservancy for potential grants, and Susan Ford mentioned informal discussions.

Antonia Richie also raised concerns about the lack of public discussion on the listserv regarding Vondell, and Susan Ford explains ongoing efforts to inform the community.

Jeffrey Kahn asked about the water section of the Vondell and restrictions in the future, Susan Ford clarifies that the grant previously discussed is a Forest grant, and the language of the grant would allow use of the Vondell in the future for water if needed.

Eric Duffy clarified that the bond for \$1.6 million is for both water and conservation purposes, and the Selectboard is putting money aside for a new well at \$700,000.

Laura Powell emphasized that the bond is for multiple uses, including conservation and recreation, and not solely for water.

Barbara Otranto and Laura Powell discussed the need for clarification on the bond's purpose and the potential development of the land.

Laura Powell presented a new proposal for bond allocation, suggesting that the Vondell be paid for by all taxpayers and the water projects by users only and raising the hydrant fees for all taxpayers.

The slideshow started with the two articles that will be voted on December 10th,

1. The bond purchase of property known as the Vondell for up to \$1.6 Million
2. To finance the debt required to do the following projects for up to \$6.7M
  - a. Replace the water main from the storage tank to the Rec Center bridge (1B) \$5M
  - b. New well and pump to replace well #005 (\$800,000)
  - c. Elm Street water main suspension (\$900,000)

Eric Duffy calculated the annual cost for taxpayers and users, estimating a \$114 increase per year for all taxpayers.

Ray Bourgeois and Peter Shoemaker discussed the impact of hydrant fees on the budget and the need to include public service buildings in the allocation.

Eric Duffy clarifies that hydrant fees are currently paid by all taxpayers and would continue to be under the proposed allocation.

The board agreed to reconvene on Thursday morning to further discuss and finalize the bond allocation.

#### **G. Approval Minutes**

Motion: by Susan Ford to approve the minutes from 10.08.24, 10.15.24, 10.23.24, 11.04.24, 11.08.24 (8:21PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve the minutes from 10.03.24 (8:21PM)

Seconded: by Ray Bourgeois

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

#### **H. Adjournment**

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (8:21PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar



**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
December 17th, 2024  
6:00 PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

**Staff:** Eric Duffy

**Public:** Roger Logan, Susie Stulz, Phil Robertson, Jill Davies, Byron Kelly, Rebecca White, Joe Major, Alison Clarkson, Jon Spector, Jon Olin, Kirsten Dipietro-Worden, Charlie Kimbell, Susie Marco, Marc Weinstein, Linda Willinson

**A. Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of December 17th to order at 6:00PM

**B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda**

**a. Permitting Software**

**1. Website updates**

**b. ARPA Resolution**

**1. Curative Validation Resolution**

**C. Citizen Comments – no**

**D. Manager's Report**

Eric Duffy thanked the Public Works crew for their efforts during the recent weather conditions and welcomed Molly Maxham to Town Hall as the Land Use Coordinator.

Eric Duffy announced the early closing of Town Hall for a holiday party at 2:45PM on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

**E. Votes**

**Permitting Software**

Eric Duffy introduced the recommendation for iWorq software, which will help with online permitting and communication.

Motion: by Susan Ford to approve the iWorq permitting Software (6:04PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Eric Duffy discussed the proposal to redo the town's website by Eco Pixel, emphasizing ADA compliance and improved communication.

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve Eco Pixel website update to make it ADA Compliant (6:07PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

#### **ARPA Resolution**

Eric Duffy explained the need for a resolution to allocate \$20,000 for IT services under the American Rescue Plan Act.

Ray Bourgeois read the resolution for American Rescue Plan Act to allocate \$20,000 for permitting software and website updates from the ARPA funds.

#### **Curative Validation Resolution**

Eric Duffy introduced the Curative Validation Resolution due to a missed publication for the bond vote. It was read aloud.

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve the Curative Validation Resolution (6:15PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

#### **E. Discussion**

##### **Two Rivers- Shared Energy Coordinator program for FY26.**

Eric Duffy requested a vote to renew the agreement with Two Rivers for the Energy Coordinator, with a 3% increase.

The board approved the continuation of the shared Energy Coordinator Harry Falconer for FY26.

Motion: by Susan Ford to continue with our contribution to the shared Energy Coordinator for FY26

(6:19PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

##### **Town Report Dedication**

Eric Duffy asked for a dedication for the town report, with Susan Ford suggesting Eddie English.

##### **EDC's ADU**

Jill Davies announced a grant for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) project, with a rental agreement for three years to a local worker.

##### **Finance Committee Update on "Rate Card"**

The Finance Committee presented the work plan for the Rate Card Project, including gathering information, constructing a financial model, and seeking public input.

### **Hoyle Tanner- Main wastewater plan update**

Jon Olin and Kirsten Dipietro-Worden presented the Wastewater Plant Renovation Project, discussing the need for a new biological process. Three alternatives were considered: A2O process, Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR), and Aerobic Granular Sludge (AGS).

Each alternative is evaluated based on its ability to meet future discharge limits, footprint, operating costs, and complexity.

The board expressed interest in AGS technology and its potential benefits for future growth and reduced chemical use.

The project team will prepare an amendment to the contract and conduct a pilot study if desired

The board appreciated the detailed presentation and the opportunity to consider innovative technologies for the wastewater plant

### **State House Delegation (7:08PM)**

Senator Rebecca White introduced herself and outlined her background and re-election.

Representative Charlie Kimbell and Senator Alison Clarkson also introduced themselves, detailing their respective roles and experience.

Senator Joe Major, the newest member, introduced himself and mentioned his current roles and responsibilities.

Susan Ford asked each representative to discuss their top priorities for the upcoming session.

Senator Rebecca White outlined her top three priorities: lowering property taxes, addressing housing issues, and responding to climate change. She mentioned ongoing work on bills, including reference-based pricing for healthcare and the Kurtz bill for transportation.

Representative Charlie Kimbell shares his journey to running for office and his focus on education financing, school construction, housing, climate change, and healthcare.

Senator Alison Clarkson emphasizes the need for long-term, sustainable education funding, state funding for new school construction, and addressing housing challenges. Alison Clarkson discussed the challenges of education financing and the need for state funding for new school construction. She mentioned the Vermont Housing Improvement Program and the need for regional cooperation on climate change.

Senator Joe Major highlighted the importance of affordability and the need for meaningful dialogue with the executive branch to address these issues.

The conversation shifted to the impact of property taxes on residents.

Susan Ford and Laura Powell expressed concerns about the burden on taxpayers and the need for relief in education funding.

Roger Logan expressed frustration with the lack of urgency in addressing the affordability crisis for middle-class people in Vermont. He emphasized the need for concrete solutions and progress to prevent Vermont from turning into New Hampshire.

Susie Stultz raised concerns about the impact of school board decisions on property taxes and the need for statewide solutions.

A few members of the public called for action on tax rates, housing affordability, and climate change, emphasizing the need for hope and progress.

#### **Water System Ordinances (8:12PM)**

Water System ordinance budget need finalization by early January 2025. Closing for Woodstock Water system will be March or April 2025. Budget needs to be finalized and then voted on in late January 2025.

#### **FY26 Budget Discussion**

Eric Duffy presented the town's proposed budget, highlighting a 9.2% tax increase to create a balanced budget.

Eric Duffy explained the major increases, including salaries, capital reserves for a new fire engine, and maintenance schedules for Public Works.

The budget does not include a planning and zoning director position, but two new staff members have been hired to support the office.

Laura Powell discussed the need for a planning and zoning director and the potential impact on housing and development.

The board discussed Pentangle and the need to revisit the rent and operating budget payments

The discussion included the potential for raising rents for nonprofit organizations and the impact on special articles at Town Meeting.

The conversation concluded with a commitment to continue discussions and find solutions to the budget and affordability challenges facing the town.

Ray Bourgeois emphasized the need to address culture and recreation funding and the potential for raising employee insurance contributions.

Laura Powell expressed challenges with special articles from organizations that have other means of fundraising, for example, the library which has an endowment. And questioned the Village's proposed tax rate.

Eric Duffy explained the shared funding structure between the town and village, highlighting the need for joint meetings to discuss budget impacts.

He suggested the need for joint meetings to align budget decisions and avoid significant impacts on the village budget.

Ray Bourgeois and Susan Ford agreed on the need for another meeting to discuss budget decisions before scheduling a joint meeting.

Eric Duffy confirmed January 30th as the meeting date, with a 4 PM start time, and emphasized the importance of addressing budget questions before the meeting.

Charlie Kimbell raised questions about regional government cooperation and the potential benefits of a grant writer for the town.

Eric Duffy acknowledged the potential benefits of a grant writer and discussed the need for intentionality in setting up such a position.

Alison Clarkson emphasized the importance of maintaining cultural treasures like Pentangle and the need for grant writing to reduce local expenses.

**F. Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313**

Motion: by Chair Ray Bourgeois at go into Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313 to discuss personnel matters(8:44PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed (Returned 8:50PM)

**G. Approval of Minutes**

Motion: by Chair Susan Ford table approval of Minutes for 11.14.24, 11.19.24, 11.21.24 , 12.05.24

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

**H. Adjournment**

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (8:50PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar

**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
4:00 PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

**Staff:** Eric Duffy, Kitty Mears Koar, Fire Chief David Green

**Public:** Tom Debevoise III

**A. Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of December 30th to order at 4:00PM

**B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda**

**Amendment – Wastewater Plant**

**C. Citizen Comments – no**

**D. Discussion**

**Amendment – Wastewater Plant**

Eric Duffy explained the amendment includes an additional \$36,800 for the project, with specific milestones for plan completion.

Motion: by Laura Powell to accept the amendment to the Hoyle Tanner Engineering Proposal (4:03PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion: by Susan Ford to authorize Chair Ray Bourgeois to sign the amendment (4:03PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 4-0-0

**FY26 Budget Discussion**

Eric Duffy outlined the two main changes in the budget: \$120,000 for the water system project and a \$2,000 increase for the Rec Center budget from the previous year.

With those two additions the projected tax rate increase is 11.22%

Susan Ford expressed hope for a lower Vondell Reservoir bond with a meeting with the Land Trust upcoming, and Eric Duffy mentioned efforts to secure a zero-interest loan for Elm Street Bridge project.

Ray Bourgeois suggested increasing rent for Pentangle and the Chamber of Commerce rent by 10%, citing rising costs of heat and electricity.

Eric Duffy confirmed that the Pentangle contract includes annual increases based on New England CPI, which have not been applied since 2017.

Laura Powell and Susan Ford discussed the potential increase in Chamber of Commerce rent, noting the lack of a formal lease.

Ray Bourgeois suggested reducing the clerk's assistant budget by \$13,000, noting a decrease in recording fees.

Laura Powell advocated for adding a Planning and Zoning Director to support housing and development, despite the tax rate increase.

Eric Duffy discussed the potential for funding a Planning and Zoning Director through shared costs with the village and other departments. The board considered the possibility of partially funding the position mid-year and the potential for a larger conversation on departmental budgets.

The board discussed the Town Constable position and if it is necessary.

Ray Bourgeois asked about the Rec Center and if their rates have been increased.

Susan Ford questioned the \$14,000 budgeted for fireworks, suggesting it could be funded by the Chamber of Commerce.

Eric Duffy agreed to explore alternative funding sources and mentions the need for a decision soon to avoid contract issues.

Susan Ford raised concerns about the audit expense and suggests examining other auditors to improve timeliness and efficiency. Eric Duffy agreed that it is time for a RFP to auditors.

Ray Bourgeois proposed increasing employee contributions to 9% for health insurance, citing rising insurance costs.

#### **Nonprofit Funding and Special Articles**

Ray Bourgeois suggested informing nonprofits that they cannot rely on town funding for the next budget cycle.

Susan Ford expressed concern about public response to funding and suggests letting organizations know of the board's intentions for the next year.

The board discussed the potential for reducing the culture and recreation line item in the budget.

#### **Water and Sewer**

Eric Duffy provided an overview of the water and sewer budgets, noting increases in salaries, operating supplies, and utilities.

Eric Duffy mentioned the upcoming closure of the Aqueduct Company and the need for a budget for the final three months of ownership.

The board agreed to meet again to finalize the contract and discuss further budget adjustments.

The board plans another meeting for Tuesday January 7<sup>th</sup> at 4PM

Tom Debevoise discussed the potential for conservation restrictions on the Vondell property and the benefits for fundraising.

David Green emphasized the importance of securing conservation restrictions to maximize private donations and grants.

Susan Ford and Eric Duffy agreed to schedule a meeting with the Vermont Land Trust to discuss the conservation easement and fundraising strategy.

The board discussed the need for a joint meeting with the Village Trustees.

**E. Adjournment**

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (4:57PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar



**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
January 7th, 2025  
4:00 PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

**Staff:** Eric Duffy

**Public:** Jon Spector, Roger Logan

**Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of January 7th to order at 4:00PM

**B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda**

**Deletion of Boiler Purchase for DPW**

**C. Citizen Comments**

Jon Spector shared a story about the lack of financial planning for the new school built in 1958, emphasizing the importance of saving over time.

Jon Spector suggested adding half a percent to the annual budget for capital investment to avoid future financial burdens.

**D. Discussion**

**FY26 budget Discussion**

Eric Duffy confirmed that a version of the budget is available online.

Eric Duffy mentioned that the board hasn't made significant changes to expenses besides increasing rent on Pentangle and the Chamber of Commerce.

The board discussed the potential reduction in the assistant town clerk's budget due to decreased recording fees.

Ray Bourgeois suggested raising the copay for employee health insurance premium from 7% to 9% for insurance.

Susan Ford expressed concern about taking something away from current employees.

Eric Duffy explained that the insurance change would cost employees about \$500 for a family plan.

Laura Powell, other board members and Roger Logan discussed the impact of raising insurance costs on employees

Laura Powell brings up the topic of fireworks funding, suggesting it might be time to stop funding them and let other organizations take over.

Laura Powell suggested the idea of an Economic Development Director.

Eric Duffy confirmed that the town is budgeted for \$14,000 for fireworks, including music and parking costs.

Susan Ford suggested having an agenda item to review the budget and eliminate items that don't meet our goals.

Jon Spector questioned the decrease in permits and fees, and Eric Duffy explained that the local 1% money was taken out of the budget.

Jon Spector suggests creating a reserve fund for future capital needs

Laura Powell mentioned that the fire department and town hall have capital reserve funds, and Eric Duffy confirms the town has about \$2 million in capital reserves.

The board discussed scheduling a meeting to finalize the budget, with Monday and Thursday being potential dates.

The board set a Meeting on Monday January 13<sup>th</sup> at 4PM

#### **E. Adjournment**

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (4:32PM)

Seconded: by Keri Cole

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar

**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
January 13th, 2025  
4:00 PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

**Staff:** Eric Duffy

**Public:** Byron Kelly, Donna Foster, Tony Richie, Seth Westbrook, Kent McFarland,  
Tom Debevoise III, Charles Degener III, Roger Logan

**Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of January 13th to order at 4:03PM

**B. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda**

**Deletion of Boiler Purchase for DPW**

**C. Citizen Comments**

Byron Kelly raised a concern about the timely posting of the budget meeting agenda on the Listserv.

Eric Duffy clarified that the listserv is not legally required to be posted but is an additional posting place.

**D. Discussion**

**Discussion on Vondell Property Potential for Conservation**

Susan Ford thanked voters for approving the bond to purchase Vondell for \$1.6 million and discussed offsetting the purchase price.

Susan Ford mentioned the possibility of conserving the property with the Vermont Land Trust along with grants and private fundraising.

Susan Ford noted that the Selectboard has not yet voted on whether to conserve the property and whether to exempt any acreage.

Susan Ford worked with Pete Fellows from Two River Ottauquechee Regional Commission to identify two parcels for potential development: a 30-acre parcel at Grassy Lane and a 10-acre parcel near the existing parking lot.

Ray Bourgeois suggested having options available for future development. Greg Fullerton agreed with Ray Bourgeois.

Laura Powell supported the idea of conserving the property and asked about the impact on grant funding if certain parcels are held back for future development.

Donna Foster from the Vermont Land Trust explained that more funding would be available if more land is conserved, but it's hard to provide exact figures.

Keri Cole agreed about holding the two parcels back for now to explore options.

Susan Ford mentioned that the Land Trust is exempting the water body and the existing infrastructure.

Tony Richie expressed reluctance to jump into the land trust agreement, fearing it could reduce the property's value for future use.

Tony Richie also requested that the town leave room for a dog park and ensure no restrictions that would inhibit that possibility.

Susan Ford explained the challenges in finding parcels that could be exempted due to vernal pools, wetlands, steep slopes and shallow soils.

Seth Westbrook of the Woodstock Area Mountain Bike Association commented about the Act 250 restrictions being taken into consideration for the property.

Kent McFarland, a conservation biologist, warned about the importance of carefully examining the 40 acres to ensure no endangered species or natural communities are affected.

Eric Duffy mentioned a call he had today with the State Water Development Fund for a very low interest rate.

Motion: by Susan Ford to work with Vermont Land Trust to conserve all the property that they designated, and the 30 acre and 10-acre pieces that the Selectboard have designated. (4:21PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

#### **Disbandment of the S. Woodstock Wastewater Plant Design Committee**

A committee was formed by the Selectboard to improve the appearance of the South Woodstock Wastewater Treatment Plant. Tom Debevoise, Chair of the Committee, stated that the Committee used the ARPA funds dedicated by the town to move the fence and to paint the tank. Even with the fence moved, most people seem happy and the Committee is really done since there are no funds to do anything else. Tom Debevoise requested that the Committee be disbanded.

Motion: by Laura Powell to Disband the S. Woodstock Wastewater Plant Design Committee (4:25PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

#### **FY26 Budget**

Eric Duffy updated the board on the current budget proposal, which includes a 11.22% tax increase.

Charles Degener, the Town Clerk, expressed concerns about reducing the Assistant Clerk's budget by \$13,000, noting the importance of maintaining service levels, there has been at least two assistant clerks in the past.

Charles Degener proposed various adjustments, including reduction machinery and equipment expenses and delaying restoration of records.

Eric Duffy discussed the potential increase in ambulance fees.

The board considered the importance of increasing compliance with fire alarm registration and the potential for additional revenue.

Byron Kelly showed support for the Town Clerk and Clerk assistants and the Town Constable.

Byron Kelly raised concerns about the state of Vermont's handling of educational funding and the impact on town budgets.

Roger Logan raised concerns regarding the police revenue in the Town and the Village.

The Board scheduled another meeting January 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30AM

The board agreed to increase the ambulance budget and restore capital reserves for future ambulance needs.

Eric Duffy mentioned the need to discuss the water budget for the last quarter of the fiscal year and the upcoming special articles for the town meeting.

#### **E. Adjournment**

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (4:51PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar

**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
9:30AM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

**Staff:** Eric Duffy, Stephanie Appelfeller

**Public:** Ben Brickner, Al Alessi, Chris Boyle, Roger Logan, Jon Spector, Jill Davies, Trena Tolliver

**Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of January 21st to order at 6:00PM

**B. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda**

**Pomfret Ambulance Bills**

**C. Citizen Comments – None**

**D. Manager's Report**

Eric Duffy mentioned painting in the Town Hall building, preparations for Town Meeting, and thanking the Public Works crew for their efforts.

**E. Discussion**

**Pomfret Ambulance Bills**

Eric Duffy introduced Ben Brickner, the current chair of the Selectboard in Pomfret, to discuss uncollected ambulance bills.

Ben Brickner explained the contract with Woodstock for emergency services and the significant increase in uncollected bills.

Ben Brickner requested a payment plan or a one-time abatement due to the large amount and the impact on Pomfret's budget.

**On Farm Restaurant Amendment Update**

Laura Powell explained the changes to the amendment, including the removal of the square footage requirement.

Laura Powell mentioned the historical and non-historical farm structures report prepared by Ben Pauley.

Susan Ford raised concerns about enforceability, and Laura Powell explained the enforcement process.

Al Alessi questioned the rationale behind various components of the amendment.

Laura Powell clarified that the Selectboard was tasked with examining the square footage requirement.

Chris Boyle, an attorney representing residents, suggested a holistic review of the regulations.

Motion: by Laura Powell hold a public hearing on the amendment (6:18PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

### **Town Meeting Prep**

Eric Duffy discussed the potential warning for the Town Meeting, including having the Lister's become appointed.

Eric Duffy outlined the articles on the warning, including the creation of a reserve fund and the potential elimination of elected auditor positions.

The board set a meeting for Wednesday January 29<sup>th</sup> at 4PM

All the petitions are in from the nonprofits, there 10-15 petitions.

### **Update on Purchase of the Woodstock Aqueduct Company**

Eric Duffy provided updates on the water system, including the purchase of new technology for meter readings.

### **Water Ordinance**

Stephanie Appelfeller discussed the draft water ordinance and the need for a vote by the end of January.

Roger Logan requested the ordinance to be posted online as soon as possible.

Eric Duffy thanked Stephanie Appelfeller for her hard work on the ordinance.

### **EDC Housing Group**

Jon Spector explained the agenda, mentioning the EDC housing group's updates and the need to halt grant funding while considering guidance for boards and commissions.

Jon Spector highlighted two programs facing funding expiration in six weeks: the marketing program and the housing advisor program.

The marketing program, which costs \$55,000 annually, is recommended to continue with the same process and team.

The housing advisor program, costing \$52,000 annually, is also recommended to continue, with 10% of the advisor's time allocated to administering existing grants.

The RFP process for rebuilding the website is separate from the marketing program, with six proposals received and a review expected in a month.

Jill Davies and Trena Tolliver presented the EDC housing group's performance over two and a half years, highlighting the creation of 17 housing units.

The average grant for each unit is \$10,700, and the average rent is \$1,281, making the program affordable for local workers.

The housing programs include the workforce rental program, multi-unit housing rental program, rental incentive program, and home share program.

Trena Tolliver detailed her role as the housing advisor, managing program management, program design, and coordination with landlords and tenants.

Trena Tolliver discussed the challenges faced in the housing programs, including high building costs and lack of water in the East End Park.

Jill Davies outlined the two main goals: streamlining the development process and making development financially attractive.

Collaboration with the Selectboard, EDC, Planning and Zoning, regional energy coordinators, state legislators, and listers is essential for success.

Stephanie Appelfeller discussed changes being made in the Planning and Zoning office to streamline the development process, including creating water access in the village and updating zoning bylaws.

Jill Davies proposed renewing the housing advisor contract to continue working on existing agreements and bring the lease to locals' program in-house.

The recommendation to encumber an additional \$200,000 for success-based programs is reiterated.

Susan Ford asked about the sustainability of created housing units and the possibility of merging housing initiatives.

Jill Davies clarified that all created units are sustainable and that merging initiatives might not be beneficial.

The potential for the EDC to expand its role in housing and the possibility of hiring a marketing person as a full-time town employee are discussed.

Roger Logan supported continuing the housing advisor position and suggested examining the role of the EDC in marketing Woodstock.

The idea of creating a Housing Authority is proposed to access lower interest loans for development.

Jill Davies urged a quick decision on the housing advisor contract and program incentives to avoid paralysis in the housing programs.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 29th to make these decisions.

#### **F. Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313**

Motion: by Chair Ray Bourgeois at go into Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313 to discuss potential contracts(7:16PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed (Returned 7:32PM)

#### **G. Approval of Minutes**

Motion: by Susan Ford to approve the minutes November 14, 2024, November 21, 2024, December 5, 2024, and January 16, 2025 (7:32PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

#### **H. Adjournment**

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (7:33 PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar