

**Town of Woodstock
Special Selectboard Meeting
January 5th 2026
9:00 AM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

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

Staff: Eric Duffy, Robert Densmore

Public: Nicolas Seldon, Roger Logan, Seton Mcilroy

Call to order

1. Vice Chair Susan Ford called the Selectboard meeting of January 5th to order at 9:00 AM.

A. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda -None

B. Citizen's Comments

Nicholas Seldon addressed the Board regarding Town Manager Duffy's contract.

Mr. Seldon expressed strong opposition to Mr. Duffy's contract as well as other concerns he stated publicly.

C. FY27 Budget

Eric Duffy presented the FY27 budget proposal, highlighting major changes from previous discussions:

- Fire/EMS staffing requests 5 new employees (two positions funded from July 1, and a training position funded from January 1)
- Capital reserves had been adjusted after meeting with Greg Fullerton
- The allocation formula for Community Development and Planning had been changed from a 60/40 Town/Village split to 55% Town, 25% Village, 10% Water, and 10% Sewer funds

With these changes, the current budget projections show:

- 8.4% tax increase for the Town
- 13% increase for sewer rates
- 36% increase for water rates

The significant increase in water and sewer rates was attributed to capital reserves for a new wastewater plant.

The board conducted a page-by-page review of the budget, discussing several items:

1. **Fireworks funding:** The board discussed whether to continue funding fireworks in the FY27 budget. It was noted that a fireworks committee is actively meeting and fundraising, with the goal of transitioning to private funding. The board was divided on keeping the budget item.

2. **Community TV:** The board discussed a \$10,000 request from Community TV, which had been funded two years ago but not in the last two years. Ray Bourgeois suggested having them submit a petition rather than adding them to the budget.
3. **School parking lot:** Questions were raised about the parking arrangement with the elementary school and whether continued funding was necessary. Eric Duffy noted there was no formal agreement but expressed concern that without funding, the school might close the lot on weekends and during summer.
4. **Bond repayment timelines:** The board inquired about the remaining terms of several bonds. Robert Densmore provided the following information:
 - Highway Garage: ending 6/1/2027
 - Irene grant: ending 7/1/2030
 - Little Theater: ending in 2032
5. **IT Infrastructure:** The board discussed the addition of an IT infrastructure capital reserve to begin building funds for future technology needs.
6. **Planning and Zoning:** Laura Powell raised the potential need for an enforcement officer for code and permit violations, suggesting it could be discussed at a joint meeting with the Village Trustees since the position would be shared.
7. **Welcome Center:** Discussion about the \$35,000 allocated for the Welcome Center, Laura Powell suggesting that the Town directly hire staff rather than go through the Chamber of Commerce. The board agreed that a written agreement should be created to clarify expectations.

Roger Logan suggested identifying budget items that could potentially be funded through private donations or sponsorships rather than tax dollars, using fireworks as an example.

Roger Logan urged the board to begin planning for a merger of the Town and Village, noting it would make budgeting more efficient and transparent. Eric Duffy confirmed that staff had already been directed to analyze a potential merger as part of the boards' goals, with that work to begin after the wastewater plant project in March.

D. Waste Water Plant Project

Scheduling Meeting for Allocation Conversation

The board scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, January 13th at 5:00 PM to discuss wastewater plant allocations.

Scheduling Public Forums

The board agreed to schedule public forums on Wednesdays, with some evening sessions to be added. They discussed holding sessions at various locations.

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

Motion: by Laura Powell to enter executive session 1V.S.A 313 after making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage: Contract (9:53 AM)

Seconded: by Cliff Johnson
Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Motion: by Cliff Johnson to exit executive Session (10:21AM)
Seconded: by Keri Cole
Vote: 5-0-0, passed

I. Other Business -None

F. Adjournment

Motion: by Cliff Johnson to adjourn the meeting (10:21AM))
Seconded: by Keri Cole
Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Respectfully submitted,

Kitty Mears Koar

Keri Cole

Susan B. Ford

Raymond Bourgeois

Cliff Johnson

Signature: 
Keri Cole (Jan 23, 2026 11:22:44 EST)
Email: kpcole@gmail.com

Signature: Susan B. Ford
Susan B. Ford (Jan 23, 2026 16:54:57 EST)
Email: sford@townofwoodstock.org

Signature: Raymond Bourgeois
Raymond Bourgeois (Jan 23, 2026 11:09:37 EST)
Email: rbourgeois@townofwoodstock.org

Signature: 
Email: lpowell@townofwoodstock.org

Signature: 
Cliff Johnson (Jan 23, 2026 17:23:10 EST)
Email: cjohnson@townofwoodstock.org

