

**Town of Woodstock
Selectboard Meeting
January 26th 2026
4:30 PM
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

Public: Nicholas Seldon, Roger Logan

Call to order

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of January 26th to order at 4:30 PM.

A. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda

General Update Wastewater Plant Allocation

Resolution for the Wastewater Plant Vote

B. Citizen's Comments

Nicholas Seldon addressed the Board with concerns about statements made at the last meetings regarding legal expenditures related to the Swanson case.

Vice Chair Susan Ford responded to Mr. Seldon's comments, stating that this was the second time he had called her a liar without factual basis. She disputed his characterization of her lying to the public regarding anonymous department heads reports and attorney's fees. Vice Chair Susan Ford also noted that Mr. Seldon had recently filed a lawsuit against the Village seeking the name of someone who had filed a complaint about his vehicle and the blow-up baby on top. The exchange became heated; The Chair intervened to end the discussion.

Roger Logan urged both Boards to finalize the Town Manager contract that evening, stating that nothing would be gained by further waiting.

C. Vote

Main Wastewater Plant Project Funding Allocation

The Board received news that the Town had been awarded a \$1 million grant through Congressional spending for the Wastewater Plant bond, subject to approval on March 3rd. Eric Duffy expressed thanks to Harry Falconer, Two Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, and Senator Welch's office for their efforts in securing this funding. The Board discussed how the potential bond should be allocated between Sewer users and non-users.

Laura Powell presented calculations showing how using \$150,000 per year from the infrastructure tax and \$400,000 from capital reserves (spread over the 30-year bond) could

offset some of the burden on Sewer users. This approach would still increase sewer bills but would leave more than half of the local options tax fund intact for other infrastructure spending.

Eric Duffy explained that as a general obligation bond, the Town would ultimately back the bond regardless of the allocation, ensuring it could be paid even if circumstances changed for Sewer users. The Board also discussed the importance of making the bond language clear to voters. Roger Logan commented that the Board would be "ill-served" by not including details in the Warning about where other funds would come from to help offset payments for users. The Board agreed to language stating "with the expectation, but not guarantee, that 100 percent of the annual debt services will be paid for from sewer user fees and other Town resources included, but not limited to, the local option tax."

Motion: by Laura Powell to fund the bond with the language as written (5:08PM)

Seconded: by Vice Chair Susan Ford

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

FY27 Budget

The Board reviewed the final budgets:

- Town budget: \$8,842,940.60
- Sewer budget: \$1,574,615.23
- Water budget: \$900,113.22

These budgets would result in a projected 7.8% tax increase for the Town based on last year's grand list (including \$35,000 from undesignated fund balance to offset tax rates), a 9% sewer increase (which includes money from the building reserves for the Wastewater plant), and approximately a 33.5% increase on Water rates.

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve the FY27 Budgets (5:10PM)

Seconded: by Cliff Johnson

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Main Wastewater Plant Bond Resolution

Read by Chair Ray Bourgeois: **WHEREAS**, at a duly warned special meeting of the Selectboard ("**Selectboard**") of the Town of Woodstock ("**Town**") held January 26, 2026, the Selectboard reviewed a Preliminary Engineering Report from Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc., dated June 30, 2025 (the "**Report**"), recommending maintenance of and upgrades to the Town wastewater treatment plant (the "**WWTF**"), including replacement of aging infrastructure with new (i) biological treatment process tanks and building, (ii) headworks, (iii) dewatering facilities, and (iv) ultraviolet disinfection system (the "**Project**"), at a total estimated project cost of Thirty Four Million Two Hundred Sixty One Thousand One Hundred Eight and 00/100 Dollars (\$34,261,188.00);

WHEREAS, the WWTF improvements will meet new, more stringent permit limits and upgrade equipment to improve operator safety, flood resiliency, energy efficiency and operational efficiency to provide uninterrupted essential operations at the WWTF;

WHEREAS, all necessary state and federal licenses, approvals and permits have been secured with respect to the Project to be financed, and the financing thereof, or are reasonably anticipated to be secured in due course;

WHEREAS, the Selectboard believes that 100% of the annual debt service can be paid from sewer user fees and intends, but can't guarantee, that the Town will pay 100% of the annual debt service using such funds;

WHEREAS, the Selectboard is obligated to and intends to allocate the proceeds of any bonds issued by the Town to qualifying capital projects within the time limits specified in Section 148 of the Internal Revenue Code and the accompanying regulations and, if necessary, restrict the yield on any proceeds of bonds issued by the Town pursuant to this Resolution;

WHEREAS, a proposal for the issuance of general obligation bonds, notes or other debt obligations of the Town in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed Thirty Five Million and 00/100 Dollars (\$35,000,000.00), to pay for the Project, subject to reduction from available state and federal grants-in-aid and other financial assistance, should be submitted to the legal voters of the Town at Town Meeting to be duly called, warned and held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Selectboard believes, based on the Report, that the public interest and necessity demands that the Project be undertaken; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the costs of the Project after the application of any available state and federal grants-in-aid, public appropriations, reserves, and other funds are too great to be paid out of the ordinary annual income and revenue of the Town; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the following bond question should be submitted to the legal voters of the Town at Town Meeting to be duly called, warned and held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026: "Shall general obligation bonds, notes or other debt obligations of the Town of Woodstock in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed Thirty-Five Million Dollars (\$35,000,000.00), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid and other financial assistance, be issued to finance the cost of maintaining and upgrading the Woodstock Main Wastewater Treatment Facility, the total estimated cost of which is Thirty Four Million Two Hundred Sixty One Thousand One Hundred Eighty Eight and 00/100 Dollars (\$34,261,188.00) and includes the construction of new (i) biological treatment process tanks and building, (ii) headworks, (iii) dewatering facilities, and (iv) ultraviolet disinfection system, with the expectation, but not guarantee, that 100% of the annual debt service will be paid from sewer user fees and other town resources (including but not limited to the Local Option Tax);"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town will hold a public informational hearing on the bond question and any other Australian ballot articles on Saturday, February 28, 2026, following the discussion of, and voting on, all floor votes commencing at 10:00 A.M. at Town Hall (31 The Green, Woodstock, Vermont), to discuss and explain the Project and the indebtedness, and any other Australian ballot items on the Warning, the specific details shall be as specified in the warning for the public information hearing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all acts relating to the proposition of incurring bonded indebtedness and the issuance of general obligation bonds, notes or

other debt obligations of the Town for the purpose of financing the Project be in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 53 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the form of the bond question be incorporated as written above into the Warning for the Town Meeting and posted and published in compliance with law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the form of the bond question be incorporated as written above into the ballot for the Town Meeting in compliance with law, including 24 V.S.A. § 1758.

Dated: January 26, 2026

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve documents read by Chair Ray

Bourgeois (5:18PM)

Seconded: by Keri Cole

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Approval of Town Meeting Warning

Eric Duffy stated that the Town Warning has been updated from the packet and is publicly available. He stated that the Wastewater Bond Allocation was originally 90% Users 10% non-users and is now 100% users paid for with other resources included, but not limited to, the local option tax.

Motion: by Keri Cole to approve the Town Warning (5:19PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

D. Adjournment

Motion: by Cliff Johnson to adjourn the meeting (5:20 PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Respectfully submitted,

Kitty Mears Koar

Susan B. Ford

Raymond Bourgeois

Laura Powell


Keri Cole

Cliff Johnson

Signature: Susan B. Ford
Susan B. Ford (Feb 20, 2026 14:12:31 EST)
Email: sford@townofwoodstock.org

Signature: Raymond Bourgeois
Raymond Bourgeois (Feb 19, 2026 20:16:40 EST)
Email: rbourgeois@townofwoodstock.org

Signature: 
Laura Powell (Feb 23, 2026 16:01:27 EST)
Email: lpowell@townofwoodstock.org

Signature: 
Kerl Cole (Feb 20, 2026 16:22:49 EST)
Email: kpcole@gmail.com

Signature: Cliff Johnson
Cliff Johnson (Feb 20, 2026 06:58:17 EST)
Email: cjohnson@townofwoodstock.org