

MINUTES
TOWN OF WOODSTOCK, VERMONT
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
February 28, 2026

Assembled on stage were Matt Maxham, Moderator; Eric Duffy, Town Manager; Laura Powell, Susan Ford, Ray Bourgeois, Cliff Johnson, Selectboard; and Charles Degener, Town Clerk.

Matt Maxham, Moderator, provided interesting facts from the 1926 Town Report and gave general instructions regarding procedure. After the Pledge of Allegiance, he read out the Warning and called the meeting to order at 10:00. He then introduced those present on the stage.

ARTICLE 1: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to collect the Town General, Highway, School Taxes and State Education Taxes on real property and all other taxes levied through the Treasurer under the provisions of Title 32 VSA Chapter 133 and fix the dates of payments as November 6, 2026 and May 7, 2027 and to require payment to be received by the Town Office by close of business on those dates.”*

Was moved by Alison Clarkson, seconded by Jennifer Maxham and passed without discussion.

ARTICLE 2: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to pay the Town Officers in accordance with Title 24 VSA, Section 932 as follows:*

<i>Select Board</i>	<i>\$1,000.00 per year</i>
<i>Town Treasurer</i>	<i>\$14,000.00 per year</i>
<i>Constable</i>	<i>\$25.76 per hour</i>
<i>Town Clerk</i>	<i>\$37.63 per hour</i>
<i>Moderator</i>	<i>\$100.00 each time serves”</i>

Was moved by Marian Koetsier, seconded by Molly Maxham and passed without discussion.

At this time State Senators Alison Clarkson and Joe Major were introduced along with State Representative Charlie Kimbell. A legislative update was presented. Alison announced that she will be retiring from the Senate.

ARTICLE 3: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Eight Million Eight Hundred Forty Two Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Dollars and Forty One cents (\$8,842,940.41) which includes the specified sums of money to operate each department; and to raise by taxation the amount up to Seven Million Two Hundred Four Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Dollars and Forty cents (\$7,204,230.40) which is the necessary sum to defray operating costs for FY 2026-2027.*

<i>Culture and Recreation</i>	<i>\$468,500</i>
<i>Town Hall Building</i>	<i>\$172,738.56</i>
<i>General Government</i>	<i>\$1,402,107.03</i>
<i>Community Development & Planning</i>	<i>\$174,865.44</i>
<i>Town Clerk</i>	<i>\$199,732.84</i>
<i>Town Highways</i>	<i>\$2,287,892.79</i>
<i>Cemetery Maintenance</i>	<i>\$28,000</i>
<i>Sanitation</i>	<i>\$27,045</i>

<i>Welcome Center</i>	<i>\$90,530.54</i>
<i>Ambulance/Fire Department</i>	<i>\$2,374,349.42</i>
<i>Health Officer</i>	<i>\$2,350</i>
<i>Communications – Dispatch</i>	<i>\$621,660.00</i>
<i>Constable</i>	<i>\$10,850</i>
<i>Town Police</i>	<i>\$487,468.79</i>
<i>Select Board Contingency</i>	<i>\$442,250.00</i>
<i>Irene Bond</i>	<i>\$52,600</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$8,842,940.41”</i>

Was moved by Allison Clarkson and seconded by Molly Maxham. Eric Duffy explained that this budget represents a 5.5% increase based on the current Grand List. Laura Powell then spoke regarding the budget process. Eric noted that Fire and EMS’s budgets have been combined. We are also looking to increase the staff by 3 as we have been straining the system with the use of overtime. In the past three years there has been a 16% increase in calls. The town is increasing capital reserves and have put together a five-year capital plan. Five loans will be expiring this year as well. Amy McElroy asked about reporting finances as we had in the past and the 1% Options Tax. Elizabeth Frascoia asked about the Select Board’s contingency fund. Patty Wilson asked about water revenues and billing, noting that large water and sewer bills are a hardship. Michael Brands encouraged better communication regarding new billing cycles. Lilly Mitchell questioned why users are the only ones paying for the sewer bond. Laura Powell and Cliff Johnson explained that there had been much debate. Susan Ford noted that during the life of the bond the average homeowner will need to replace their septic system at least once at their own expense. Matt Maxham noted this may best be discussed under the bond article. Sandra Audsley asked about Town versus Village expenses. Brad Prescott asked about the Welcome Center. Cynthia Huveltdt asked about the Town’s legal fees. It was explained that most are covered by our League of Cities & Towns insurance. Sally Garmon questioned whether this would cause our rates to increase. Roger Logan moved to call the article. Emily Lev seconded and the motion passed. A vote was then taken on the article, and the article passed.

ARTICLE 4: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of One Million Five Hundred Seventy Four thousand Six Hundred Fifteen Dollars and Twenty Three Cents (\$1,574,615.23), which includes up to One Million Five Hundred Twenty Six thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Five Dollars and Twenty-Three Cents (1,526,765.23) and up to Forty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$47,850) from other revenues, to pay the current expenses and debt of the sewer department for FY27 spanning July 1st 2026 through June 30th 2027.”*

Was moved by Alison Clarkson and Seconded by Molly Maxham. The moderator questioned whether it should be amended to include the phrase “from user fees”. Jennifer Maxham moved that the article be amended to:

*“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of One Million Five Hundred Seventy Four thousand Six Hundred Fifteen Dollars and Twenty Three Cents (\$1,574,615.23), which includes up to One Million Five Hundred Twenty Six thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Five Dollars and Twenty-Three Cents (1,526,765.23) **FROM USER FEES** and up to Forty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$47,850) from other revenues, to pay the current expenses and debt of the sewer department for FY27 spanning July 1st 2026 through June 30th 2027.”*

The amendment was seconded by Susie Stulz and passed. The article as amended passed.

ARTICLE 5: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Nine Hundred Thousand One Hundred Thirteen Dollars and Twenty Two Cents (\$900,113.22), which includes up to Nine Hundred Thousand One Hundred Thirteen Dollars and Twenty Two cents (\$900,113.22) from user fees, connection fees and other revenue sources, to pay the current expenses and debt of the water department for FY27 spanning July 1st 2026 through June 30th 2027.”*

Was moved by Wendy Spector, seconded by Marian Kotsier, and passed without discussion.

ARTICLE 6: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Nine Hundred Dollars (\$900) and pay each of the Trustees Three Hundred Dollars (\$300) for the purpose of paying the Trustees of Public Funds for services rendered and approve the expenditure from the income of the Trust Funds for that purpose.”*

Was moved by Nancy Stockwell and seconded by Susie Stultz. Mike Green spoke about the duties of the Trustee of Public Funds and announced he is a write-in candidate. The motion passed.

ARTICLE 7: *“Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500) for the purpose of having the Public Trust Funds audited and approve the expenditure of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500) from income of the Trust Funds to pay for the Annual Audit.”*

Was moved by Wendy Spector and seconded by Brad Prescott. Charlie Kimbell asked what the true cost of the audit was. Eric Duffy said we do not know as it is not itemized. Jill Mitchell asked who performs the audit. Eric said an outside firm does. The motion passed.

ARTICLE 8: *To entertain the discussion of any other business of interest to the legal voters, such discussion shall not be construed in any manner as binding Municipal Action.*

Marian Kotsier noted that last year’s minutes were not included in the Town Report. Wendy Marrinan noted that Village residents pay the Town Tax and also the Village Tax as a surcharge. She thanked Eric and the Select Board for their work. She asked about a possible Town/Village Merger. The Select Board said discussion is on the horizon. Gail Scatchard asked why Woodstock can’t tax everyone at the same rate. Charlie Kimbell and Susan Ford explained that post Act 60 the State Education tax is set at two rates. Nancy Barr asked about short-term rentals and registration. Roger Logan spoke in support of building a new High School. Peggy Fraser asked about Homestead Declarations. Elizabeth Frascoia spoke in support of the new High School. Dave Schwartzman asked about the Village line marker. Wendy Marrinan asked what message our school bond vote sends to the State. Joe DiNatale asked if we were better off pre-Act 60. Jim Kachadorian said he does not think a flat roof on the school is appropriate. Sam DiNatale said a flat roof is not truly flat and most economical. At this point Keri Cole had joined the meeting and was present on stage. Eric Duffy thanked her for her service on the Select Board.

The moderator then noted that the remaining articles would be voted on by Australian Ballot

ARTICLE 9: *The election of Town Officers for the ensuing year as required by law.*

Norm Frates, Susan Ford, and Cliff Johnson introduced themselves as candidates for Select Board.

ARTICLE 10: *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).

Laura Powell spoke about the bond. Tom Debevoise noted that discussion about who should pay for the bond dates back to Dr. Jim Roberts and the original bond for the plant. He thinks it is appropriate for only users to pay. Amy McElroy asked if all users will pay, such as Taftsville and So. Woodstock, Eric said they would. Wendy Marrinan asked about the local option tax being used for the bond. Lily Mitchell noted that heavy trucks on Route 4 cause damage to the sewer lines. Joe DiNatale spoke about Chief Byron Kelly's enforcement of truck violations.

ARTICLE 11: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Fifty One Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$51,250) for the Norman Williams Public Library to help support the operations and maintenance of the library. Denny Weatherald spoke in support.*

ARTICLE 12: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) for the Ottauquechee Health Foundation (OHF). OHF is a nonprofit community resource that provides funding and support for individuals with limited financial means to help meet critical health and wellness needs such as medical and dental care, eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures, prescription co-payments and short term caregiver services. David Sleeper spoke in support.*

ARTICLE 13: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$15,000 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars) to Woodstock Community Television (WCTV) to provide local media services to residents of the Town. Matt Maxham noted that Select Board meetings and Town Meeting is covered by WCTV.*

ARTICLE 14: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$2,500 (Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars) to Windsor County Mentors for youth mentoring services provided to the Children of Windsor County. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 15: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,000 (One Thousand Dollars) to Green Mountain RSVP of Windsor County, an AmeriCorps Seniors Program, to coordinate free-to-attend, volunteer led Bone Builders classes and connect people age 55 and older with volunteer opportunities, thereby reducing social isolation and improving health. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 16: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate \$7,000 (Seven Thousand Dollars) for Senior Solutions, the nonprofit area agency on aging serving Southeastern Vermont, to serve older Woodstock residents with nutrition and wellness programs, application assistance for state and federal benefit programs, Medicare enrollment guidance, long-term care Medicaid program care coordination, volunteer programs, and more. Kevin Goldman spoke in support.*

ARTICLE 17: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,000 (Three Thousand dollars) to Public Health Council of the Upper Valley to provide free regional flu vaccine clinics, ensure core public health services, like emergency preparedness, and addressing health disparities services to residents of the Town. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 18: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,247 (Three Thousand Two Hundred Forty-Seven Dollars) to Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) to help support outpatient mental health and substance use services to residents of the Town. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 19: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$8,000 (Eight Thousand dollars) to Mt Ascutney Hospital and Health Center to support the Community Care Coordinator position, an initiative dedicated to providing in-home care coordination for Woodstock area residents. This role will connect individuals and families with essential healthcare services and community resources, improve health outcomes, and reduce unnecessary*

hospital visits, ensuring the well-being of our most vulnerable neighbors. Marian Koetsier spoke in support.

ARTICLE 20: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of One Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$1,250) to support programming of the Spectrum Teen Center. Our objective is to engage teens in healthy activities and make youth feel supported, welcomed, and included. There is no charge to attend our program. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 21: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000) for the support of The Family Place to provide services to residents of the Town. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 22: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$42,000 (Forty-Two Thousand Dollars) for the support of Pentangle Arts, to provide services to residents of the Town. Deborah Green spoke in support.*

ARTICLE 23: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote either or both of the exemptions listed below for the parking lot of the Norman Williams Public Library for a period of 5 years.*

a.)Exemption from all local property taxes including education, highway, and town general.

b.)Exemption from the educational property taxes and to raise by property taxation a sum of money to pay the exempted amount to the appropriate entity. There was no discussion.

ARTICLE 24: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars) for the support of Woodstock Area Adult Day Services dba Upper Valley Adult Day Care (formerly Scotland House) to provide services to residents of the Town. There was no discussion.*

ARTICLE 25: *Shall the voters of Woodstock vote to appropriate the sum of Forty-Three Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$43,200), for the support of services of the Woodstock Area Council on Aging dba The Thompson Senior Center. The Thompson is an important community resource – providing daily meals, medical and area transportation, and an array of health, educational and social services that assist residents to age well. Roger Logan spoke in support.*

Jeff Kahn moved to adjourn the meeting until Tuesday at 7:00 A.M. for the purpose of Australian Ballot voting. Molly Maxham seconded. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 P.M.

Attest:

F. Charles Degener III,
Town Clerk

Matthew Maxham,
Moderator

Mary Y. Riley,
Justice of The Peace