

**Village of Woodstock
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 14th, 2026
6:30 PM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn, Chair Lisa Lawlor, Brenda Blakeman, Jamie Fox, Stephen Stuntz

Staff: Eric Duffy, Interim Chief Chris O’Keeffe.

Public: Wendy Marrinan, Nicholas Seldon, Kate Harvey, Barbara Otronto, Jim Otronto, Emily Mooney, Deb Greene, Jim Ford, Douglas Audley, Roger Logan, Sandy Audsley, Peggy Fraser, Michelle Suterland, Eliza Ladd, Will Ladd, Al Alessi, Wendy Spector

A. Call to order

1. Chair Lisa Lawlor called April 14th, 2026, Village Trustees meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

B. Additions and Deletions- None

C. Citizens' Comments

Wendy Marrinan expressed gratitude for the work the Village Trustees do as volunteers and referenced a full-page ad in the Vermont Standard thanking them for their service.

Barbara Otronto asked about the approval process for \$125,000 of Town money for Village expenses related to a personnel issue and commented that the banners on the Green look like billboards to her and detract from Woodstock's beauty.

Nicholas Seldon criticized the Board's handling of personnel matters, particularly regarding Joe Swanson's situation.

Douglas Audsley raised concerns about missing no-passing signs in the Village - one across from the Village market, one at Tribou Park, and one by the Covered Bridge. He reported being passed by tractor trailers in dangerous locations and questioned police visibility.

Roger Logan humorously noted the "boring" agenda but praised the Trustees for doing the day-to-day nitty-gritty work of government.

Sandy Audsley asked why police reports are no longer published in the newspaper, as they were a good source for local information about incidents and accidents.

D. Reports

Manager's Report

Eric Duffy reported that the short-term rental software for short-term rental registration is nearly operational. A meeting was held to finalize the permanent document language for online registration. Current short-term rental owners will receive emails within two weeks requiring reregistration by June 1st with payment of fees, or they will face penalties. The Village has collected \$4,750 toward the budgeted \$25,000 target, which should be met by fiscal year end once all rentals are registered.

Eric Duffy highlighted March accomplishments including the Selectboard's approval of FY26 water and sewer rates, with bills going out for nine months of usage. The billing schedule changed from quarterly water bills and annual sewer bills to semi-annual billing for both. Due dates were set for June to allow residents time to pay, with installment options and financial assistance available through the finance office.

He noted that both boards received open meeting law and executive session training on April 1st, with the video now available on the website.

Public office hours will continue Friday mornings at 8:30 AM at Farmer and the Bell. On the reappraisal front, the assessment company has contacted 30% of Woodstock homes and completed 96 interior inspections. Duffy emphasized the importance of allowing inspectors

access to avoid estimated values that would require later grievance procedures.

The Selectboard approved VHB as the vendor for the Elm Street pipe environmental assessment, and a recommendation for the overall water system improvements vendor will go to next week's meeting.

Fire EMS had 69 EMS calls and 29 fire calls in March, with 9 building inspections. The new ambulance arrived and is operational. Extensive training was conducted including HIPAA, sexual harassment, and ethics training, with two new part-time staff and one volunteer being trained.

Financial Report

Eric Duffy noted that Ashley Wohler from the Finance Department created detailed financial projections showing the Village ending the year with approximately a \$30,000 surplus before audit adjustments. Employee health care costs are projected to be \$10,000 over budget due to new employees requiring family coverage instead of single coverage. Legal fees are \$41,000 over budget, largely due to over 30 public records requests since January 1st, many requiring legal guidance for proper redaction and response. With some requests taking no time at all and some taking 5-10 hours including legal advice.

The Village is 83% through the fiscal year but only at 9% of budgeted police revenue from moving violations. However, March alone generated \$10,880 in revenue from traffic stops. Short-term rental revenue is slightly behind projections, but Police revenue combined with Town services payments should meet projected numbers.

Several Trustees asked detailed questions about various budget lines including dispatch services allocation, building maintenance expenses.

Police Report

Interim Chief Chris O'Keefe addressed concerns about Police visibility and newspaper coverage, explaining that they speak with the Vermont Standard weekly, providing comprehensive Police logs for their review and publication decisions. Regarding trucks and speeding, the department conducts roving patrols specifically targeting these issues.

In March, officers conducted 105 motor vehicle stops resulting in 64 tickets, mostly for speeding at 40+ mph. Several tractor trailer inspections were completed, with violations for speed and cell phone use being common. Village ordinance violations included failure to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and illegal left turns by the statue.

The department contracted with a company for online training, 3 monthly training sessions to all officers. Physical fitness testing is scheduled, with all officers participating. Mandatory domestic violence training is also being conducted.

Interim Chief Chris O'Keefe reported plans to outfit a cruiser with portable scales to make truck weighing more efficient, currently requiring vehicles to be led to the public safety building for the cumbersome process. The department conducted 24-foot patrols in March with 267 total calls - 144 in the Village and 123 in Town.

E. Votes

St James Fair Permit

Emily Moody represented the St. James Fair seeking their annual permit. The permitting process was completed with insurance on file.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey to approves the permit as presented (7:06 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Memorial Day Parade Permit & Veteran's Day Parade Permit

Jim Ford of the American Legion requested permits for both Memorial Day and Veterans Day parades. The Memorial Day parade has been shortened from previous years, expecting about 100 participants. The parades have been running for about 100 years.

Discussion centered on the board's decision last year to charge parade organizers for police services. These parades would require four officers for three hours at time-and-a-half pay. Jeffrey Kahn argued that these patriotic parades should not be charged like for-profit events, and Interim Chief O'Keeffe expressed support for waiving fees for veterans. Brenda Blakeman supported waiving fees but wanted consistency in charging policies going forward.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to waive the cost of Police presence for both Memorial and Veterans Day parades (7:12 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve permits for Memorial Day and Veterans Day parades. (7:12 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Prouty Ultimate Parade Permit

This item was moved to next month's agenda due to the representative's absence.

Music on the River – East End Park

Deb Greene of Pentangle presented the annual Music by the River summer concert series permit for free Friday night concerts in July and August. A bill from last year that fell through the cracks has been resolved with payment ready. The series remains unchanged except one band might require reservations due to popularity, with potential rain venue backup at the Theater.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve the permit at the same fee as last year (\$1,200). (7:15 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Planning Commission Appointment- Kate Harvey

Kate Harvey, a landscape architect who recently moved to Woodstock from Southern California, applied for appointment to the Planning Commission. She has attended Planning Commission meetings both in person and on Zoom and has read portions of the current bylaws. Ms. Harvey is prepared to engage in the upcoming Town Plan work following completion of Village bylaws.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to appoint Kate Harvey to the planning commission. (7:18 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Change Standard Trustee's meeting time

Discussion was held on potentially changing the meeting time from 6:30 PM to 6:00 PM. Jeffrey Kahn and Brenda Blakeman both expressed preference for keeping 6:30 PM due to work schedules and dinner considerations, especially during summer months when work hours extend later. Other Trustees deferred to those with scheduling constraints. The motion to change

meeting times was tabled, maintaining the current 6:30 PM schedule.

Police Camera Contract

Interim Chief O'Keeffe presented updated quotes for body camera and cruiser camera systems to replace obsolete equipment. Two quotes were received from Motorola and Axon, with Axon chosen despite Motorola's initially lower bid because Axon matched the price and the department already has a taser contract with them.

The Axon system provides cloud-based storage, automatic upload when cameras are docked, and 24/7 replacement service. This will significantly reduce administrative time for Michelle Suterland, who currently spends considerable time mining data and creating DVDs for court cases and freedom of information requests. The new system allows three licensed users to access footage directly for review and distribution.

The five-year contract totals \$88,201.96 and includes body cameras for 10 officers (6 full-time, 3 part-time, plus anticipated new hires) and cruiser cameras. The Dorothy Byrne Foundation provided a \$15,000 grant, and a \$50,000 federal grant application is pending for rural police departments.

Wendy Marrinan questioned whether cloud storage costs were included, and what happens after the five-year contract (renewal would be required, potentially with different terms).

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve the Axon police camera contract as presented (7:36 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

33 Central Street Easement

Eric Duffy explained that the property owners at 33 Central Street need to relocate an underground propane tank slightly west from the previously approved location for their pizza ovens. Eliza Ladd clarified that while the original restaurant plans have changed and they hope a restaurant tenant will occupy the space, the tank installation is still needed and no parking spaces will be permanently lost - one space will be temporarily unavailable during construction but another space will be created to maintain the total count.

Motion: by Chair Lisa Lawlor Having seen a review of the notice of sale of municipal real estate for the purpose proposed convenience of an easement to Amos and Ginger LLC and the proposed quit claim easement deed for such convenience, I hereby move to approve the notice of sale of municipal real estate assets in substantially the form presented at this meeting and direct the Village Clerk to post and publish the notice as required by law. (7:42 PM)

Seconded: Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Change Date of May Meeting

Eric Duffy's is on vacation from May 5-19, the May meeting was moved from May 12th to May 4th. Wendy Marrinan noted this could create timing issues since the Planning Commission's public hearing on bylaws is scheduled for May 6th, potentially pushing Trustee consideration to June rather than the originally planned May meeting.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to change the meeting date from May 12th to May 4th at 6:30 PM (7:44 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

White Cottage Food Truck Parking Spots Approval

John's Hurley's White Cottage Food Truck requested approval for the same parking spots as last year, with a schedule change from Thursday-Monday to Friday-Monday, running June through October. The business pays for parking spots and electricity from the Chamber of Commerce and handles their own trash removal. No ice cream will be sold per previous agreement.

Discussion addressed the increasing number of food options in the Village with Positive Pie, Farmer and the Bell, and Ranch Camp now operating. Trustees noted the White Cottage owner is a taxpaying business owner who invested significantly in the truck. Questions were raised about policies for other local businesses wanting food trucks, with that falling under peddler's license regulations to be addressed separately.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn moved to approve the same location as last year for Friday through Monday, June to October. (7:49 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

F. Village Trustees Updates

Traffic Enforcement

Chair Lisa Lawlor provided additional details on traffic enforcement mentioned in the police report. In March there were 110 stops, 64 tickets, and 38 warnings, with speeding and distracted driving being primary violations. Targeted enforcement is occurring at locations like Central and Elm Streets, successfully catching vehicles making illegal left turns onto Central Street.

Crosswalks

The need to repaint crosswalks was acknowledged, with DPW lining up vendors for bids. The repainting is weather-dependent and will proceed once conditions improve.

Roger Logan suggested installing crosswalk signs at every location since snow plows scrape off paint markings, making crosswalks invisible to visitors. Peggy Fraser supported this idea and suggested consulting other communities with similar weather conditions about better paint quality or embedded technologies.

Village Design Advisory Updates

The Planning Commission is completing Village zoning regulations with a public hearing scheduled, after which recommendations will come to the Trustees regarding whether to continue the Design Advisory Board or merge committees. The board has been unfilled pending clarity on its future role and responsibilities as outlined in the new bylaws.

Accounts Payable Process

Chair Lisa Lawlor explained the multi-step accounts payable process: departments receive and review bills, which go to Finance Director Robert Densmore for review, then to Patricia Martel for warrant preparation by department (Town, Village, Water, Sewer), then to the Eric Duffy for review, and finally requiring either the chair of Trustees or chair of Selectboard signature before checks can be issued. Trustees receive warrants online for review at least twice monthly, providing multiple checkpoints for accuracy.

G. Discussion

Peddler's license

Discussion focused on updating the outdated Peddler's License ordinance that currently requires approval from the Chief of Police and doesn't specifically address food trucks. Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn volunteered to work with the Chair on drafting updates, with plans to present a draft for public comment and Trustee consideration next month.

Discussion- permits/banners approval

Chair Lisa Lawlor proposed allowing banner permits to be approved administratively rather than requiring Trustee approval for efficiency. Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn supported this for banners but emphasized that more complex permits like Green usage and parades should still come before Trustees for discussion and potential modifications.

Wendy Marrinan expressed concern about losing the broader community perspective that Trustee review provides, noting banners often represent community activities and events. Discussion addressed whether approval would be limited to Woodstock-centric events, with out-of-town events potentially still requiring Trustee review.

This item was tabled for vote at the next meeting to allow further consideration of appropriate parameters and guidelines.

Tribou Park maintenance

Al Alessi from the daily gathering at Tribou Park discussed the physical impact on the park from regular use by 10-20 people daily. A \$500 donation was presented for care and maintenance. Mr. Alessi noted drainage issues due to the park's slope toward the sidewalk, with water becoming trapped during ice melts and storms because the two large metal plates are for utilities, not drainage.

The group conducted a fundraiser and is prepared to continue supporting maintenance costs. Al Alessi suggested consulting with lawn care professionals like Jack Rossi to develop a comprehensive solution rather than temporary fixes, noting the existing grass quality was poor even before the daily gatherings began.

Peggy Fraser recalled earlier plans involving the Garden Club and Jack Rossi for park improvements including memorial brick fundraising that never materialized. Brenda Blakeman volunteered to work with the group and reach out to Jack Rossi for professional consultation. Wendy Spector promoted the Woodstock Village Conservancy as a resource for park enhancement and maintenance funding, noting their interest in supporting DPW's limited capacity for long-term landscape care through private fundraising and volunteer workforce development. The group will coordinate with the Conservancy and report back to Trustees within two weeks.

Wassail and Foliage

Discussion focused on clarifying the Trustees' role in these major annual events versus administrative support provided by Municipal Office. Eric Duffy explained current departmental involvement: Police provide full coverage for parade safety and Village patrols, DPW handles barriers and extra trash collection with overtime staff, and administration assists the Chamber of Commerce with permits and issues.

Foliage season requires additional considerations including food vendors on the Green, which has created administrative burden in recent years with staff managing vendor coordination, calendars, and weekend problem-solving. The goal is to establish clearer parameters early - maximum vendors per day, simplified approval process through Excel spreadsheets, and earlier deadlines to avoid last-minute complications.

Trash overflow was identified as a recurring problem requiring better advance planning, either through increased Casella service or scheduled DPW overtime. Additional temporary trash

barrels and volunteer ambassadors in identifying shirts were suggested to help direct visitors and reduce staff burden. The discussion will continue monthly leading up to both events to ensure proper planning and role clarity.

H. Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn made detailed corrections to both the March 10th and March 17th meeting minutes.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey to accept the minutes as corrected. (8:42 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blackman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

I. Adjournment

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to adjourn the meeting at (8:43PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

*Respectfully submitted,
Kitty Mears Koar*