

**Village of Woodstock
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 4th, 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, Kitty Mears Koar

Public: Kelly Linton, Peggy Fraser, George “Whit” Manter, Beth Finlayson, Norm Frates Jr, Norm Frates Sr, Martha Giller, Jim Giller, Heather Lucas, Nicholas Seldon, Byron Kelly, Alex Beram, Eileen Godfrey, Phillip Neuberg, Barbara Otranto

A. Call to order

Chair Lisa Lawlor called May 4th, 2026, Village Trustees meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

B. Additions and Deletions-

Positive Pie – Sidewalk permit

Statement by the Chair of the Village Trustees – Lisa Lawlor

C. Citizens' Comments

Peggy Fraser expressed concern about the proposed Positive Pie sidewalk permit, citing the narrowness of the sidewalk in that location as a pedestrian traffic hazard. She also raised potential public health concern related to the condition of the building. Ms. Fraser also urged the Board and the Woodstock Conservancy to ensure the Village Green remains primarily a gathering place for people, cautioning against changes that would alter its essential community character.

Phillip Neuberg spoke regarding the revised draft Village Zoning Regulations posted online, specifically the proposed Tier 1B Village designation under State Act 181. While acknowledging this topic was not on the evening's agenda, he urged the Trustees to carefully consider the implications before any vote. He argued that the Tier 1B designation would adversely affect existing property owners through increased development intensity.

Barbara Otranto echoed Ms. Fraser's comments regarding the Green, emphasizing that residents should have meaningful input into how that space is used, rather than having decisions made solely by a commission.

Statement by the Chair of the Village Trustees – Lisa Lawlor

“On April 15, 2026, via email, a member of the public made me aware of a case from October 2024, case number 24WK003240. The member of the public claims that this case involves a sitting Village Trustee. As the Chair of the Board, it is my belief that this case was handled correctly. In order to ensure a transparent and non-biased investigation, Acting Chief Chris O’Keeffe sought to refer the case to another agency. With the approval of the Windsor County State’s Attorney, the case was referred to the Rutland County State’s Attorney Office, who assigned the case to the Rutland City Police Department detective division. It is my understanding there were no charges filed, and the case was subsequently closed. Out of respect for those involved, I will not be commenting any further on this matter.”

D. Reports

Manager's Report

Zoning Regulations: The draft Zoning Bylaw Revisions will go before the Planning Commission at least one more time before a vote, after which they may come before the Village Trustees. A public meeting will be held and announced in advance of the Trustees' regular June meeting.

Tribou Park / Woodstock Conservancy: Eric Duffy met with the Village Conservancy the prior week to discuss repairs to the grass at Tribou Park. Eric Duff clarified for the public that the Village Conservancy is a non-appointed volunteer group, and that any changes to Village or Town property would require approval from the Village Trustees and Selectboard at a public meeting. No changes are imminent, and both Boards are committed to holding multiple public forums before any action is taken.

Police Staffing: A temporary offer for a new full-time police officer was made and verbally accepted the same day. An official announcement will follow.

Finance Office: Eric Duffy commended Finance staff—Robert Densmore, Ashley Wohler, Kitty Mears Koar, and Patricia Martel—for processing over 1,200 deposits and approximately \$15 million during the final week of tax collection, which concluded the prior Friday.

Water & Sewer Bills: Due date is June 11. Residents were encouraged to contact the office if payment is needed.

Crosswalk Striping: Tentatively scheduled for May 11, weather permitting.

Vermont City Managers Association Conference: Eric Duffy and Chief of Staff Stephanie Appelfeller attended the two-day conference and were invited to present on Woodstock's short-term rental regulatory process, sharing lessons learned.

Draft Audit (FY25): The draft audit was received by Robert Densmore. A few outstanding questions remain, with the final audit expected within one to two weeks. Eric Duffy indicated the overall picture is positive for both the Town and Village, with some minor findings to be addressed. No major problems were identified.

Fire/EMS: 22 fire calls and 43 EMS calls in the reporting period. The department hosted 19 Dartmouth students for ride-along.

Economic Development Director: Abbie Sherman attended the Vermont Tourism Summit, held an information session on tax credits, and is working on a strategic plan for housing and Economic Development in the Village.

Police Activity (April): 96 motor vehicle stops; 57 tickets issued totaling approximately \$9,207; 278 total calls for service (146 from the Village, 132 from the Town). Eric Duffy noted that motor stops in March and April are significantly higher than earlier in the year, consistent with increased enforcement focus.

Financial Report

Eric Duffy noted that the Financial Report had not been updated since the prior meeting, as payroll had just been processed that day. A revised report would be distributed once reconciled. The Village is still projected to end the fiscal year with a small surplus.

- **Fuel costs** are tracking higher than budgeted due to current gas prices, though overall budget balance is expected to hold.
- **Short-term rental registrations:** Invitations to register were sent the prior week; the deadline is June 30th, and revenue from this line item is expected to increase.
- **Parking Violations** revenue reflects only reconciled periods; approximately \$9,000 collected in April and \$10,000 in March will appear once March and April are formally reconciled.
- **Town Services revenue** is on track to exceed the \$423,000 budgeted.

Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn raised questions about the Building Maintenance line item, noting that costs such as propane and electricity for the shared building are currently being absorbed entirely by Fire/EMS rather than being allocated proportionally to the Police Department. Eric Duffy acknowledged this and indicated the departments would work on an appropriate cost-allocation journal entry going forward. Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn also flagged the Village Parks fertilization and tree work, noting no expenditure had been made despite the season being underway; Eric Duffy confirmed a vendor meeting had taken place, and the work would be completed before June 30.

Stephen Stuntz asked about three law enforcement budget lines—maintenance supplies, professional services, and uniforms—each significantly over budget as a percentage. Eric Duffy explained that a journal entry would offset the small tools/equipment and maintenance supplies lines, and that elevated uniform costs reflect new employee outfitting.

Police Report

Interim Chief Chris O'Keeffe was absent; Eric Duffy presented the police statistics as noted above under the Manager's Report. April parking meter revenue totaled \$9,108.85, approximately \$600 more than the prior year.

E. Votes

Positive Pie – Sidewalk Permit

Heather Lucas Regional Manager of the Neighborhood Pizza Group requested a sidewalk permit for outdoor seating. She described the proposal as placing approximately seven tables with chairs along the storefront—similar to what was in place when the business was acquired in October—intended for takeout customers and guests with pets. There would be no alcohol service, no stanchions or roping, and no servers in the pedestrian area. Heather Lucas confirmed the business would provide and maintain its own trash receptacle. The Board noted the need to keep the area around the existing trees clear of tables. Jamie Fox expressed support, calling it a low-impact way to animate the streetscape.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn approves the Positive Pie sidewalk permit as presented (6:58 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

DAR Wreath Laying Event – Use of Gore Permit

Eileen Godfrey representing the Thomas Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), requested a Use of Gore permit for a brief wreath-laying ceremony at the Gore on July 4, 2026, in conjunction with the America 250 celebration. The event would include a short script, a color guard, the playing of Taps, and placement of a wreath honoring Revolutionary War soldiers. The ceremony was planned to fit between the conclusion of green events at 4:00 PM and the community dinner beginning at 4:30 PM.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve the DAR Wreath Laying permit as presented (7:00 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Alumni Day – Parade, Use of Green and Banner

Kelly Linton presented on behalf of the Alumni Day parade. He confirmed the route and

logistics are unchanged from prior years—beginning and ending at the Elementary School—and that both required permits had been submitted. Kelly Linton noted that a conflict with an alumni barbecue that arose in the prior year had been resolved, including a donation from the food vendor. Insurance documentation (COI) and the application fee of \$50 were still pending submission.

Motion: by Stephen Stuntz to approve the Alumni Day parade,
Use of Green, and Banner permit, pending receipt of the
certificate of insurance and the application fee (7:02 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Conservation Committee Appointment – George “Whit” Manter

George “Whit” Manter addressed the Board, having relocated to Woodstock three years prior. He described his qualifications, including a 1977 degree in environmental studies and biology, 10 years of service on the Conservation Commission in West Tisbury, Massachusetts (including two years as chairman), and extensive volunteer work with organizations including the Audubon Society and Trustees of Reservations. He confirmed his understanding that the Conservation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Planning Commission and stated he had attended the last two Consecutive Commission meetings in person. He expressed full availability to meet the 80% meeting attendance requirement.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to appoint George “Whit”
Manter to the Conservation Commission (7:06 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Village Butcher – Sidewalk Permit

Alex Beram, owner of the Village Butcher appeared to request renewal of the sidewalk cooking permit for the fourth consecutive year. The permit covers the use of a flat-top grill on the sidewalk, positioned toward the street side, with the adjacent parking space rented and coned off at the business's own expense. The permit was requested for seven days per week to allow weather-based flexibility, with typical operation Thursdays from approximately 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, featuring the shop's own meats and Vermont products. The season was described as May through October. A current Certificate of Insurance (COI) had not yet been submitted.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve the Village
Butcher sidewalk permit pending receipt of an updated
Certificate of Insurance (7:11 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Banner Approval Process

The Board discussed and approved a change to the banner permitting process, whereby banners for events occurring within Woodstock would be approved administratively rather than requiring trustee Board approval. Events occurring outside of Woodstock would continue to require Board review. This change is intended to streamline the approval process and reduce the number of routine items on the trustees' agenda.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to delegate banner
approval for Woodstock events to administrative staff, rather
than the Board of Trustees (7:12 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Permit Software Contract

Eric Duffy reported that the Selectboard had already approved this item at its prior meeting. The current permit software, acquired approximately one year ago, has not performed as expected. Following a review by Community Development staff Emily Collins and Molly Maxham, GovWell was identified as the preferred replacement. The new platform will be more user-friendly, fully online, and available for use by both the planning department and Admin Assistant. The total first-year cost is approximately \$18,000, split between the Town and the Village, with the Village's share estimated at \$7,000–\$8,000—approximately \$2,000 more than the current contract.

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve the GovWell permit software contract as presented (7:14 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

F. Discussion

Rotary Plaque

Note: Per the Village Manager's advisement, this item was held as a discussion only and will be calendared for a formal vote at the June 9, 2026 meeting.

Norm Frates Jr. appeared on behalf of the Woodstock Rotary Club to revisit the request for placement of a granite pedestal with a bronze plaque on the Village Green. He recapped the history: the request was first presented in August and was subsequently referred to the Selectboard, which declined to act due to the absence of formal policies and procedures for such plaques—a process that remains incomplete. The Rotary's preferred placement is a low-traffic, out-of-the-way spot on the Green where the star on Mount Tom is visible from the plaque—the same location previously presented to the Board. The alternative location—the triangle in front of the Covered Bridge—was also noted. The Rotary's primary reason for preferring the Green is accessibility: many donors and community members who contributed to the Mount Tom star would be unable to access a placement at the summit.

Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn expressed strong support, noting that the placement is unobtrusive and does not interfere with Green events, and emphasized the Rotary's longstanding contributions to the community. Brenda Blakeman agreed. Stephen Stuntz raised the question of precedent—specifically, whether approving a size variance for this plaque (which does not comply with the Village's Monuments, Memorials, Markers, and plaques policy in terms of size and certain design elements) would obligate the Board to approve future requests from other organizations. The Trustees and Eric Duffy clarified that each variance is considered individually and does not automatically bind future decisions, though Chair Lisa Lawlor and Jamie Fox both acknowledged the legitimate concern about setting a precedent and the responsibility that comes with granting exceptions. Byron Kelly, a former Rotarian and Woodstock resident, addressed the Board to advocate strongly for approval, drawing a comparison to the sidewalk permits approved earlier in the evening and characterizing the Rotary as a "foundation block" of the community.

The Board agreed to place the item on the June 9 agenda for a formal vote.

At 7:25PM a citizen disrupted the meeting; to maintain order the Village Trustee Chair Lisa Lawlor called a 15 minute recess of the meeting. The resident then left the meeting and did not return.

Update on Missing Speed Signs (7:40PM)

Eric Duffy reported that following a resident's comment at the prior meeting about missing speed signs, staff was unable to pinpoint the exact location referenced. Eric Duffy indicated he would follow up with the resident to obtain the precise location and assess whether the signs need to be reinstalled.

Plan for Library Parking Lot Clean Up

Eric Duffy confirmed that the Village lease on the library parking lot ends June 30. Parking meters and poles currently in the lot will be collected and stored at the Police department for use as replacements when existing meters break. Revenue collection from the meters will continue through June 30, after which the meters will be removed. It was noted that under the terms of the concluded arrangement, the library is now responsible for the lot itself, including snow removal.

Elementary School Parking Lot

Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn raised the matter of the annual payment the Village and Town make to the school district for use of the Elementary School parking lot during off-hours, weekends, and non-school periods. He noted the payment history, which has been reduced over time to approximately \$1,000 from each entity per year. He expressed the view that the Village and Town should not be paying for the use of a public facility during hours when the school is not in session, particularly given the other municipal services provided to the school. The discussion touched on the origins of the arrangement—initially linked to paving cost contributions and an emergency evacuation agreement—and the lack of a formal written agreement between the parties. Byron Kelly provided historical context regarding why the payments were originally instituted. The Board directed Eric Duffy to open a conversation with the school district to explore whether the payment arrangement can be revisited or eliminated.

Issues with Parking at Woodstock Post Office

The Board discussed ongoing concerns raised by a resident about the management of the 15-minute parking spaces in front of the post office—among the most heavily used spaces in the Village. Issues identified included out-of-town visitors unaware of the restriction, residents with PO boxes who need regular daily access, and customers occasionally receiving tickets when post office lines cause them to exceed the 15-minute limit.

Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn suggested a practical near-term fix: reorienting the westernmost post office parking sign, which currently faces across the street rather than toward oncoming traffic, and lowering the height of both signs so they are more visible to drivers about to pull in. The Board agreed this would be worth pursuing. Discussion of other options—such as adjusted time limits, doubled fines during certain hours, or weekend meter changes—was generally set aside, as most would require changes to the parking ordinance. The Board agreed to monitor the situation with the new parking enforcement staff and revisit it as needed.

Wassail Prep

Eric Duffy noted that the Wassail Committee is expected to begin meeting in May. The Chamber of Commerce has proposed a budget of \$15,000 for the event. The Board agreed to invite a committee representative to present at the June meeting following the committee's initial session.

Foliage Non-Profit Food Plan

The Board discussed plans for non-profit and food vendor presence on the Village Green during the foliage season. The agreed-upon start date for the foliage weekend programming is the third weekend of September—Friday through Sunday, September 18–20. The Board discussed the importance of also recruiting vendors or non-profits for Mondays, as many

businesses in the area are closed that day and visitor demand remains strong. The Manager noted that a broader discussion about food on the green during summer months should be scheduled for a future meeting.

G. Approval of Minutes

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to approve the April 14, 2026, minutes as corrected was made (7:58 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

H. Adjournment

Motion: by Vice Chair Jeffrey Kahn to adjourn the meeting at (7:58 PM)

Seconded: Brenda Blakeman

Vote: 5-0-0 passed

Respectfully submitted,
Kitty Mears Koar

Lisa lawlor

J Kahn

Brenda Blakeman

X

Signature: Lisa lawlor
Lisa lawlor (Jun 19, 2026 06:01:47 EDT)

Email: llawlor@townofwoodstock.org

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Jeffrey Kahn (Jun 15, 2026 18:57:38 EDT)

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Brenda Blakeman (Jun 16, 2026 06:56:40 EDT)

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Signature: Stephen Stuntz
Stephen Stuntz (Jun 15, 2026 14:42:49 EDT)

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Signature: Jamie Fox
Jamie Fox (Jul 15, 2026 13:07:16 EDT)

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