

TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN

2026 TOWN MEETING

MARCH 3, 2026

The legal voters of the Town of Williamstown, in the County of Orange, in the State of Vermont, are hereby warned and notified to meet at Williamstown Middle High School on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 10:00 o'clock in the morning (A.M.) to act upon the following articles, viz:

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Heather King, Moderator, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Town meeting reconvened back to order at 10:40 A.M

At this time, we allowed our State Representatives, Topper McFaun, and Gina Galfetti representing the Washington/Orange district to discuss what is happening in Montpelier. Mr. McFaun and Ms. Galfetti were asked several questions by their constituents regarding legislation under consideration in Montpelier.

There were no objections to allowing the Town Manager, Ryan Lockwood, to speak if called upon, as he is not a town resident.

Barbara Graham, Town Clerk, read the warning.

Town Moderator, Heather King stated that there would be no discussion on Articles 1,2,3 as they are on Australian ballot, but would allow questions as was done during the school's portion of the meeting. Ben Moffatt wanted to know why both Articles 2 & 3 were being voted on by Australian ballot and not on the floor. Selectboard Chairman, Larry Hebert stated that with both articles, involving a substantial amount of money, needed to be put on an Australian ballot for all Town voters to vote on. Not just to be decided by the roughly 70 people that attend Town Meeting. Barbara Graham stated a bond vote by law must be voted on by Australian ballot. With many questions and discussion on Articles 2 & 3, Karla Perkins made a motion and seconded by Stephanie Winters, to cease discussion and to break for lunch at 12:40 PM. With a show of hands, 2/3 of the votes, motion passed. Moderator, Heather King called a recess for lunch and to be reconvened at 1:30 PM.

ART 1: To elect all necessary Town and Town School District Officers for the ensuing year by Australian Ballot. For the purpose of Article 1 & 2, the polls will open at 10:00 A.M. to act upon the following article, viz:

The total votes cast were 616. The results were as follows:

Moderator, 1 year

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	45
Write-In: Heather King.....	27
Blank.....	544
Total.....	616

Selectman, 3 years

Micheal MacAskill.....	237
Scott McCarthy.....	308
Write-In: Miscellaneous... ..	9
Blank.....	62
Total.....	616

Selectman, 2 years

Tyler Mitchell.....	497
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	16
Blank.....	103
Total.....	616

School Director, 3 years

Ed Dwinell.....	480
Write In: Miscellaneous.....	7
Blank.....	129
Total.....	616

School Director, 3 years

Donna M. Leblanc.....	486
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	9
Blank.....	121
Total.....	616

Trustee of Public Funds, 3 years

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	43
Blank.....	573
Total.....	616

Cemetery Commissioner, 5 years

Susan K. Lyons.....	537
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	4
Blank.....	75
Total.....	616

Cemetery Commissioner, 3 years remaining of a 5-year term

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	46
Blank.....	570
Total.....	616

Library Trustee, 5 years

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	53
Blank.....	563
Total.....	616

Library Trustee, 3 years remaining of a 5-year term

Liesl Wulff.....	478
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....	7
Blank.....	131
Total.....	616

Library Trustee, 1 year remaining of a 5-year term

Richard Ferno.....484
Write-In: Miscellaneous.....3
Blank.....129
Total.....616

Trustee for the Henry S. Baker Fund, 3 years

Write-In: Miscellaneous.....65
Blank.....551
Total.....616

ART 2:

Shall the voters approve of adding \$250,000 to the General Budget in order to hire an independent contracted firm to perform a forensic audit on the town's financial systems, records and internal controls? To be voted by Australian ballot.

The total votes cast were 616. The results were as follows:

YES.....142
NO.....464
Blank.....10
Total.....616

ART 3:

Shall the voters authorize the Williamstown Road Rehab Project in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed ten years through the Vermont Bond Bank? To be voted by Australian ballot.

The total votes cast were 616. The results were as follows:

YES.....322
NO.....284
Blank.....10
Total.....616

Town Meeting was reconvened at 1:30 PM

- ART 4: **To hear and act upon the reports of the Town Officers.**
The motion was made by Winston Chambers and seconded by Bradley Kreis to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 5: **Shall the Town pay its Property taxes to the Treasurer on or before November 15, 2026, with delinquent taxes and assessments having charged against them an eight percent (8%) penalty and interest charges of one percent (1%) per month, or fraction thereof, from the due date, as provided for in 32 V.S.A. § 4773 and 5136?**
The motion was made by Christopher Wade and seconded by Nancy Avery to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 6: **Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to take advantage of any State or Federal monies available?**
The motion was made by Alvin Avery and seconded by Bradley Kreis to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 7: **Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to borrow money to pay the current expenses of the Town in anticipation of money to be received from taxes and the State of Vermont?**
The motion was made by Alvin Avery and seconded by Russell Ashe to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 8: **Shall the voters authorize the Town to pay its Selectboard members \$1000.00 and Chairman \$1500.00 and all other Elected Officers \$14.01 per hour and Chairman \$15.01 per hour, except the Town Clerk?**
The motion was made by Alvin Avery and seconded by Christopher Wade to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 9: **Shall the voters authorize to have the names of all delinquent taxpayers, including water and sewer users, with total amount of delinquencies printed in the Town Report as of December 31, 2026?**
The motion was made by Alvin Avery and seconded by Russell Ashe to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 10: **Shall the voters approve the sum of \$1,619,388.55 to support the General Budget of which includes the Fire Department?**
The motion was made by Winston Chambers and seconded by Stephen Hardaker to approve the article as written. Winston Chambers stated that this line item is a 14% increase to the taxpayer and that we are going to run out of money. Shannon Sweet stated that with a 21% increase to the general fund due to the fire department, that he moves to remove the fire department from the general fund. Moderator, Heather King stated that we could not do that at this time as it was not properly warned and we would need a separate meeting. Alvin Avery called for the question and seconded by Jill Plastridge. With a show of hands, 2/3 of the majority called for the question with no further discussion. A voice vote was undermined and John Perkins then called for a paper ballot. Results from the paper ballot: 43 YES 24 NO, motion passed.

ART 11:

Shall the voters approve the sum of \$1,467,824.74 to support the Highway Budget?

The motion was made by Larry Hebert and seconded by John Perkins to approve the article as written. Shannon Sweet asked what the plans for the roads are if the selectboard doesn't have a scheduled budget. Selectman, Cote Griggs stated that the former Town Manager and the highway foreman had gone over what roads that need to be done and hopes that the new Town Manager would go over those details. He also encouraged more people to attend the monthly selectboard meetings which are held on the second Monday of every month. He stated that they need to hear voter voices more than just at Town Meeting. Yvan LeBlanc wanted to know if the road crew is working on these road projects and how the maintenance will stay the same with the other roads. Selectman, Clayton Woodworth stated that Road Rehab would be for 90 days and the work would be done by our road crew. Stephanie Winters thanked everyone for all that we do for the Town and just wanted clarification on the \$93,000 increase from last year, understanding that the cost of living and health insurance goes up every year. Town Manager, Ryan Lockwood stated that the Town does provide a cost-of-living wage and insurance increase to make sure that the Town employees are taken care of. Russell Ashe and Shannon Sweet both wanted to know what the 5-year plan for the road entails. Selectboard Chairman, Larry Hebert stated that they have been a little behind with everything due to the past floods, and the former Town Manger leaving. He requested patience and time to catch up. Selectman, Tyler Mitchell stated he has a copy of the former 5-year plan, and it would be available to view at Town Hall and added that the list for this year's Road Rehab was assessed last year. Shannon Sweet felt the board was not answering the question regarding the roads that several Town's people have been asking for and stated it would be very difficult to support this highway budget. Barbara Graham called for the question seconded by Bradley Kreis to cease discussion. Motion passed by voice vote. Rosemary Lasell called for a paper ballot. Results from the paper ballot: 52 YES 26 NO, motion passed.

ART 12:

Shall the voters approve transferring the 2025 General Fund Surplus in the amount of \$58,711.77 to the Tax Stabilization Fund?

The motion was made by Christopher Wade and seconded by Bradley Kreis to approve the article as written. Winston Chambers wanted to know why we were overcharged \$58,711.77 and why the Town is only giving back \$50,000 and why they are not giving back the entire amount. Larry Hebert stated that it is a surplus and that the Town didn't overcharge anyone. Shannon Sweet wanted clarification on what is in the tax stabilization fund. Larry Hebert stated that the treasurer would be the one who would know that answer and Town Manager Ryan Lockwood also confirmed that without the treasurer being here they have no way of knowing and would need to consult with her. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.

ART 13:

Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$50,000 from the Tax Stabilization Fund to reduce the 2026-2027 taxes?

The motion was made by John Perkins and seconded by Bradley Kreis to approve the article as written. Shannon Sweet asked how the voters are going to have an educated vote without knowing what is in this Tax Stabilization Fund. Town Manager, Ryan Lockwood stated that according to last year's report that possibly you are looking at around \$120,000 or so in the Tax Stabilization Fund, but without the treasurer being present the exact amount is unknown. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.

- ART 14: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$59,873.20 to support Williamstown Cemeteries?**
The motion was made by Alvin Avery and seconded by Mark LaFleche to approve the article as written. Susan Lyons, Cemetery Commissioner, made the motion and seconded by Orvil Lasell to amend the article to read, \$51,273.20. Winston Chambers clarified the reason for the change of amount. With there being no further discussion on the amendment the motion was passed by voice vote. With there being no further discussion, the motion with the new sum of \$51,273.20 passed by voice vote.
- ART 15: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$139,234.00 to support the Ainsworth Public Library?**
The motion was made by John Taylor and seconded by Bradley Kreis to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 16: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$12,000 to support the Williamstown Historical Society?**
The motion was made by John Perkins and seconded by Mark LaFleche to approve the article as written. There was no discussion, and the motion passed by voice vote.
- ART 17: **Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$52,070.00 in support of Orange County Parent Child Center \$750, Barre Area Senior Center \$1500, Orange County Restorative Justice \$500, Elevate Youth Service \$250, CV Home Health & Hospice \$6700, CV Council on Aging \$1750, CV Adult Basic Education \$1500, CV Economic Development Corp \$500, GMTA \$2004, Williamstown Food Shelf \$15,000, Williamstown Beautification \$1500, Williamstown Youth Sports \$8500, VT Center of Independent Living \$500, American Red Cross \$1500, Safeline \$1200, Clara Martin Center \$4968, Green Up \$150, Family Center of Washington County \$500, Henry S. Baker Fund \$2500 and Good Beginnings of Central Vermont \$300?**
The motion was made by Christopher Wade and seconded by Bradley Kreis to approve the article as written. Conrad Beattie stated that the food shelf is asking for \$3000 more than the previous year and made an amendment to level fund this article to last year's. Barbara Graham stated that this year's total requested amount is lower than last year's, that the food shelf had gone up, but the Historical Society was separated into their own article, and the Henry S. Baker Fund went down. Conrad Beattie withdrew his amendment. Jennifer Cummings spoke on behalf of the Williamstown Food Shelf stating that the reason for the increase was last year the food shelf benefited 35 households a week, this year's record breaking 61 households. Winston Chambers made an amendment to level fund this amount to last year's \$46,772.00, seconded by Yvan LeBlanc. Rama Schneider, treasurer of the food shelf, stated that whatever the Town was to donate to them it would be appreciated and would go directly to the food shelf. There was no further discussion, and the amendment failed by voice vote. The original motion passed by voice vote.

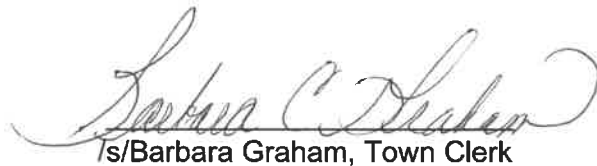
ART 18:

To transact any other business deemed necessary and proper.

Jennifer Cummings thanked everyone for their support with the food shelf and that there will be an open house, March 21st from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM. She encouraged Town's people to stop in and visit. Barbara Mitchell wanted to know when selectboard meetings would be live online so that more people could attend from their homes. Cote Griggs replied that he and Town Manager Ryan Lockwood are working on setting that up. Rama Schneider mentioned that ACT 60 bailed out Williamstown Schools in the 1990's and that we benefited from ACT 60. Shannon Sweet stated that in the future he would like all articles to be voted on the floor instead of Australian ballot and thanked the selectboard for their service. Selectman, Cote Griggs thanked our new Town Manager, Ryan Lockwood for joining the Town at a very difficult time. He stated that Ryan has been doing a tremendous job and is easy to work with and encouraged people to stop in and meet him if you haven't already. The motion was made by Barbara Graham and seconded by Lorraine Martel to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by voice vote and moderator adjourned at 3:15 P M.



/s/Heather King, Moderator



/s/Barbara Graham, Town Clerk

/s/Laurence Hebert, Chair

/s/Clayton Woodworth

/s/Scott McCarthy

/s/Tyler Mitchell

/s/Cote Griggs