

TOWN OF WESTMORELAND, NEW HAMPSHIRE
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2026

Town Elections

The Annual Town Elections were held on March 10, 2026. The election was called to order at 11:00 AM by Town Moderator Vincent Ferlini. The polls were declared closed at 7:00 by the Moderator. Remaining warrant articles were addressed during the Town Meeting.

Call to Order

The Town Meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by Moderator Vincent Ferlini. Mr. Ferlini introduced himself, explained his recent appointment to replace former Moderator Peter Hills and expressed his commitment to serving to the best of his ability.

Rules of Procedure

At 7:04 PM, the Moderator reviewed procedures for discussion:

- Articles would be read in order as listed on the warrant.
- Motions require a mover and a second, with speakers identifying themselves for the record.
- Selectmen may provide additional explanation as needed.
- Speakers must be recognized by the Moderator.
- Attendees should raise their hands to be acknowledged and use microphones provided.
- All who wish to speak will be heard before repeat speakers.
- Comments must be directed to the Moderator.
- Speakers should remain brief, civil, and courteous.
- Votes will be called when discussion concludes.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at 7:07 PM.

Article 1: Election of Town Officers

The Moderator recognized newly elected officials:

- Nancy Zeller and Patti Patmos – Supervisors of the Checklist
- Nancy Zeller – Treasurer
- Ellis Chase-Pinkney – Town Clerk

- Vincent Ferlini – Town Moderator
- William S. McGahie – Selectman
- Patricia Seymour – Budget Committee
- Elinor Stalker – Trustee of Trust Funds
- Timothy Thompson and William Franzen – Briggs Committee
- Katherine Cox and Susan Harris – Library Trustees
- Jo Ann Labarre – Cemetery Trustee

At 7:09 PM, Mark Terry thanked town volunteers, committees, and staff for their service.

Thanks extended to Recycling committee, Matt Lily and staff of Westmoreland General Store for providing food to road crew, Dave, Sean, Ryan, Harry, Bill, and Luke from the highway department, Twin State for vehicle maintenance. Asked that any committee members or town volunteers stand to be recognized for their service. Highlights that this town runs on volunteers.

Article 2: Planning Board Ordinances

At 7:12 PM, the Moderator reported that all ordinance articles passed during the election except Article 8 (roadside parking), which failed (136–92). Full results are available on the town website.

Article 3: General Operating Budget

At 7:14 PM, Article 3 was introduced to raise \$1,890,573 for general municipal operations.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Kelly Wright

Discussion included clarification by John Snowdon regarding the relationship between the town budget and the overall tax rate. Town budget only accounts for roughly %22 of tax rate.

Vote: Passed unanimously by verbal vote at 7:19 PM.

Article 4: Purchase of Snowplow Truck

At 7:20 PM, Article 4 was introduced.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Bruce Clement

John Snowdon explained that instead of purchasing a previously planned tractor, the town identified a greater need due to the age and condition of existing plow trucks. Funding strategy includes:

- **\$100,000** reallocated from the paving budget
- **\$10,000** from the maintenance budget

A Highway Equipment Committee was formed to evaluate long-term equipment strategy, with meetings expected to begin in April and continue for approximately **4 months**.

A ballot vote was called at 7:28 PM.

Vote: Passed **103 in favor, 5 opposed** (announced at 7:37 PM).

Article 5: Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund

At 7:38 PM, Article 5 proposed adding \$20,000 to the Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Ellen Clement

Discussion included prior funding, rising tax rates, and ongoing needs such as elevator installation and ADA-compliant bathroom construction. Funds are intended to be matched with grant funding.

Vote: Passed unanimously at 7:43 PM.

Article 6: Highway Equipment Capital Reserve

At 7:44 PM, Article 6 proposed adding \$20,000.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Kelly Wright

Vote: Passed unanimously.

Article 7: Fire Equipment Capital Reserve

At 7:46 PM, Article 7 proposed adding \$20,000.

- Motion: Scott Talbot
- Second: Bruce Clement

Vote: Passed majority verbal vote.

Article 8: Grant Matching Fund

At 7:48 PM, Article 8 proposed raising \$10,000.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Bruce Clement

Vote: Passed by majority voice vote at 7:49 PM.

Article 9: Parks and Recreation Capital Reserve Fund

At 7:50 PM, Article 9 proposed establishing a fund and allocating \$10,000 (no new taxation).

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Ellen Clement

Discussion covered:

- Use of surplus funds
- Trail maintenance and recreation planning
- Grant opportunities
- Oversight by Select Board

A motion to end debate passed unanimously at 8:05 PM.

Vote: Article passed by majority verbal vote at 8:06 PM.

Bridge Project Update

At 8:07 PM, John Snowdon provided an update on the bridge project:

- Engineering study estimated at \$150,000, funded 80% by NHDOT and 20% by the town
- Cheshire County agreed to share the local portion, reducing the town's cost to \$15,000
- Study expected to begin mid-April and last approximately 1 year
- Estimated total project cost: approximately \$4,000,000
- Current bridge fund balance: \$308,431, including approximately \$200,000 in grant funding

Article 10: Jotham Lord Fund

At 8:11 PM, Article 10 addressed disposition of \$115.

- Amendment Motion: Transfer funds to the library (Motion: Bruce Clement, Second Ellen Clement)
- Amendment Vote: Passed unanimously

Main Motion:

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Jack Zeller

Vote: Passed unanimously at 8:14 PM.

Article 11: Veterans Memorial Fund Change

At 8:15 PM, Article 11 proposed re-purposing the fund.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Barb Chase

Discussion addressed intent to expand use for Town Common maintenance.

Vote: Passed majority verbal vote at 8:19 PM.

Article 12: Supervisors of the Checklist Term

At 8:20 PM, Article 12 proposed reducing terms from six to three years.

- Motion: Scott Talbot, Second: Bruce Clement

Vote: Passed unanimously at 8:22 PM.

Other Business

- Recognition of Rachel Bartlett for her service as Supervisor of the Checklist
- Acknowledgment of former Moderator Peter Hills
- Appreciation expressed to Moderator Vincent Ferlini for stepping into moderator role
- Fire Department recognition of long-serving members Edwin Johnson for 50 years and James Olmstead for 54 years of service

- Encouragement for volunteerism for fire department
- Promotion of CPR and Stop the Bleed training programs

Adjournment

At 8:30 PM, a motion to adjourn was made and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellis Chase-Pinkney

Town Clerk

Westmoreland, NH