

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Snowdon and Bill McGahie and Mark Terry

1. The meeting was called to order at 1 pm by John Snowdon.
2. Meeting recorded by audio recorder for purposes of compiling minute due to absence of Town Administrator. Video recording of meeting by Bill Statz. A link to the video will be made available on the Town website.
3. Approval of Minutes: July 15, 2025 Motion was made by Mark Terry, seconded by Bill McGahie to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.
4. Accounts Payable: Motion was made by Mark Terry seconded by Bill McGahie to approve Manifests for: General Fund \$308,844.16. Motion passed 3-0.
5. Guests: Eversource
 - Selectboard last met with Eversource to discuss the outage issue May 16, 2023. Following the continued issues with outages ranking Westmoreland the highest for outages in the State, the board wrote a letter to Eversource
 - Snowdon - Westmoreland's wires continue to be spliced together each time they are damaged. On Glebe Road there are over 30 repairs within a 1 mile section. In a time when electricity should be an expected service residents should not have to purchase generators to ensure they will have electricity.
 - Standard wire used now is tree wire which can accept light interference. Eversource cannot replace all at one. Each year there is an allotted amount of money and projects are analyzed to see the best use of it.. Every dollar spent by Eversource has to be approved by the PUC.
 - Eversource has invested \$5.4 million in the last 3 years. 20 trip savers have been added which are the smart switches monitored in Manchester. Replaced 3 ½ miles of wire on Route 63 and ½ mile on Spofford road.
 - This year aggressive tree cutting and trimming is to be done in Westmoreland as part the the 5 year vegetation plan. Selectmen asked for a list of any customers who do not approve the cutting on their property so they can address. Residents can also report any other trees that may be an issue which if approved can be removed,
 - Chief Nelson - Fire department responded to 18 calls in 2023, 10 in 2024 and so far this year there have already been 12. Linemen do a phenomenal job although the response time is sometimes hours during which our volunteers wait.
 - Cathy Watson - Westmoreland worst in state for power outages. Full Hendrix wire was just installed on West Street Keene where there are no trees. More needs to be done in Westmoreland. Eversource - There are thousands of customers in Keene.
 - Jeff Watson - Westmoreland versus Walpole. Liberty got rid of the hodge podge of spliced wire and replaced it with Hendrix and tree wire. Walpole has almost no outages. What is Eversource doing about rebuilding? Eversource - We have to think of all our customers and everything done with money. Working to find ways to address.
 - Mark Terry - Should Selectboard be addressing PUC? The state doesn't recognize that Westmoreland is part of it since everything is focused on the heavily populated areas. PUC denied the battery project that could have helped the Town.
 - Scott Talbot - Westmoreland has 18-23 outages a year. A beautiful job was done on Spofford

- Road but something needs to be different in the rest of the town.
- Any plan in the future for 3-phase on Route 12? It is hard to attract many businesses without the power supply they need. Eversource - can work with Master Plan to make connections to the engineering team to incorporate in their plan. Snowden requested that Eversource provide a map of where 3-phase power is currently available.

Old Business

- Recycling Center - Harry Ackerman, Recycling Committee Chair - Pay as You Throw was initiated July 30th. Overall it has been well received and most have come prepared with bags. Most residents are willing to learn new recycling separation. Residents have been volunteering to help with the recycling process and overall everyone has a good time. Removing glass will reduce tonnage and putting only 1 & 2 recyclables in what was coming bin will reduce cost as well. Snowden - In a study released April 2025, the state is recommending towns use PAYT.
- Knotweed - Paul Steblein (attachment) has been working with the Conservation Commission since March 2025 to find best ways to mitigate Japanese Knotweed. There are currently at least 70 clumps of Knotweed along the roads and it could at this point be eradicated. Steblien has been reaching out to other towns to see what they are doing and has also reached out to the Cheshire County Conservation Commission. There is a lot of interest and support including available funding for Knotweed mitigation.
- Budget Committee - At the July 21st meeting the committee discussed whether the committee was sanctioned by RSA 32.5 or established as an advisory committee. After reviewing years of Town Meeting minutes the committee has been found to be an advisory committee and will continue to assist the selectmen with the budget.

6. New Business

Signature Approval was given for the following

A motion was made by John Snowden, seconded by Mark Terry to appoint Susan Alejandro as Zoning Board Alternate. Motion passed 3-0

Payroll 7/21 & 8/5	Intent to Cut (2)	HeathTrust \$7149.24
Payroll Taxes 7/21 & 8/5	Timber Warrant (2)	USPS \$555.44
Veteran's Credit (1)	Retirement \$2866.10	GemGraphics \$395.52
PA 16 Application		

- Video Taping Selectboard meetings. Bill Statz was asked to tape today's meeting since Eversource was coming. Statz said he taped the previous meeting but has to compress size to fit on Youtube. Selectboard agrees that official posting of videos needs to be on the Town website not Facebook. Mark Terry - 5 years ago a website with the ability to host taped meetings was recommended to the Selectmen by the Communications Committee. The board at that time thought it to be too expensive. With increased interest in having meetings videotaped a motion was made by Mark Terry, seconded by John Snowden to reestablish the Communications Committee to study options and cost of a website that will support videotaped meetings. Recommendations to be made to the selectboard in time for Warrant Article to be established for the Town to vote on. Motion passed 3-0
- The State Legislature passed a number of RSAs that will require multiple revisions to the Town Ordinances. Selectboard agrees that an in person meeting with the Town Council to

discuss the effect of the changes with the land use boards would be helpful. The Town's new law firm, Drummond Woodsum specializes in municipal law and Attorney Michael Malaguti is available to attend the October 7th meeting at 6pm. Snowdon recommends no other guest on the agenda and all 3 land use boards attend. Mark Terry - Planning Board intends to contact the NH Municipal Association and will come prepared with what they learn about the changes.

C. Terry - At the last Planning Board meeting it was discussed that the current clerk resigned 8 months ago and is still working since a replacement has not been found. The Planning Board thinks the Selectboard needs to look at the salary and make adjustments. Chesterfield made a full time position that combines the Zoning Board Clerk, Planning Board Clerk and Town Admin Assistant positions.

D. Snowdon - need to appoint a new fire warden for the Town. Ed Johnson has retired and we greatly appreciate all his years of service. Scott Talbot has been a deputy as well as a member of the fire department. He has volunteered his time to make several improvements including getting the permit process for small burns online. A motion was made by John Snowdon, seconded by Mark Terry to support the nomination of Scott Talbot. Motion passed 3-0. The State makes the appointment based on the Towns nomination.

7. A motion was made by John Snowdon, seconded by Bill McGahie per RSA 31:19 to accept donations for the Tennis Courts in the amount of \$500. Motion passed 3-0

8. 3:19pm Motion by John Snowdon, seconded by Bill McGahie to enter nonpublic session per RSA91-A:3 II(I). Motion passed 3-0.

9 . 3:33pm Motion by John Snowdon, seconded by Bill McGahie to leave nonpublic session, return to public session and adjourn meeting Motion passed 3-0

Respectfully submitted,
Jodi Scanlan
Town Administrator

NEXT REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY AUGUST 19, 2025 1:00PM
MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED
SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

John Snowdon, Chairman

William McGahie

Mark Terry

Westmoreland Board of Selectmen
Update on Knotweed
August 5, 2025

Prepared by:

Paul Steblein, pfsteblein@gmail.com

Survey of Knotweed – April – May 2025

- Surveyed 25 roads in Westmoreland, about 100 miles
- Mapped more than 70 patches of knotweed in town of Westmoreland
- Submitted results to NH invasive species survey

Science review on knotweed biology and management – reviewed and summarized more than 20 peer-reviewed scientific papers and review articles. Incorporated results in briefing materials and potential strategy. Review notes and list of citations available.

Coordination with Westmoreland Conservation Commission

- Met with Commission at February, June and July meetings
- In-depth briefing on knotweed biology and control, discussion on level of Commission interest and potential strategy
- Planned decision at August Commission meeting on knotweed control strategy to propose to Board of Selectmen. Recycling Committee Chair and Selectman McGahie are invited.
- Booth at Old Home Days on knotweed control, public information meeting on knotweed biology and control

Coordination with Westmoreland Recycling Committee

- Met with Committee several times, including site visit to Recycling Center
- Provided briefing on knotweed biology and control
- Participated in knotweed patch cutting on July 27, as approved by Board of Selectmen July 22. See attached action report.

Outreach and Communications

- Provided regular updates to Westmoreland Conservation Commission, Westmoreland Recycling Committee, Westmoreland Selectman Bill McGahie
- Developed informational PowerPoint summarizing science, management alternatives, survey results. Presented at June Conservation Commission Meeting
- Developed draft Frequently Asked Questions Fact Sheet
- Developing poster for Conservation Commission to use at Old Home Days
- Coordination meetings with NH Invasive Species Coordinator, Cheshire County Conservation District, Monadnock Conservancy, Harris Center – there is a lot of interest in Westmoreland addressing knotweed and potential cooperative relationships.
- Will submit abstract to Monadnock Region Natural History Conference, November 15

Japanese Knotweed Control Action Report

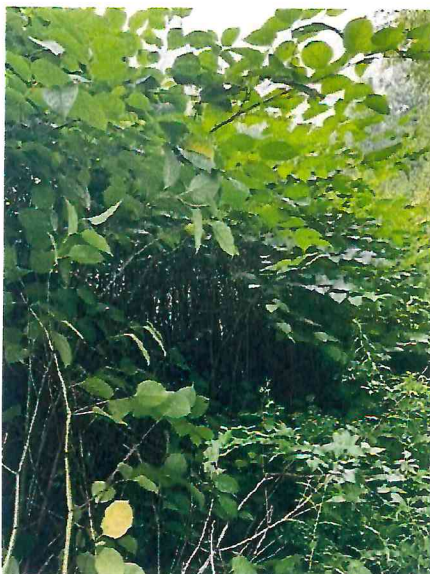
Four volunteers met at Westmoreland Town Recycling Center on Sunday, July 27, 2025 to cut down knotweed covering the road to the burn pile and area needed for large containers. The action was initiated by the Recycling Committee for necessary site maintenance to support implementing the new recycling program, and approved by Westmoreland Board of Selectmen (July 22, 2025). In the span of 1.5 hours, Bill McGahie (Selectman), Harry Ackerman (Recycling Committee Chair), Bruce Uhas, and Paul Steblein cut down a 1,200 square foot patch of knotweed. The dense stand of knotweed stood over 8 feet tall. In cutting the patch back to ground level, the volunteers discovered a tire, bed springs, barbed wire, poison ivy and multiflora rose. Cutting the patch of knotweed is a temporary measure and will require further effort to control it.



Japanese knotweed is a State-listed prohibited invasive plant species. It easily spreads by root, stem or seed along roads, disturbed areas and wetlands. Wherever it establishes, knotweed grows into large, extensive, dense patches. Knotweed excludes all native plants by depriving them of sun, water, and nutrients. It even produces a chemical toxic to other plants. The ever-spreading knotweed impacts habitat for native plants, pollinators, birds, other wildlife, and forest regeneration. It is even known for growing through roads, parking lots, and building foundations.

The Westmoreland Conservation Commission is working with Paul Steblein (natural resource manager/scientist) to develop a knotweed control strategy to present to the Westmoreland Board of Selectmen. Questions can be sent to pfsteblein@gmail.com

Before cutting



After



For more information:

NH Knotweed Best
Management Practices

