

TOWN OF HIGHGATE

Selectboard Meeting

Thursday, February 6, 2025 @ 6:30pm

Approved Minutes

NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated

ZOOM LINK: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/85789978770>

A. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Vern Brosky III, Chair, @ 6:30pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. This meeting was a hybrid of in-person and Zoom video. Participants were in-person unless otherwise noted.

Highgate Selectboard Members –Vern Brosky III, Chair; Merry Souza, Vice-Chair; Ben Lowell; Richard Flint; Kyle Lothian

Highgate Office Staff – Wendi Dusablon, Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk; Carrie Johnson, Town Administrator (interim); Shelley Laroche, Treasurer & DTC

Public – Henry Rainville; Ty Choiniere; Dominic Cloud

- The Highgate Selectboard members are all wearing tropical themed shirts to bring some warmth to Highgate in February. 
- Vern asked for a moment of silence for the fallen border patrol agent, Chris Maland, who lost his life in the line of duty on January 20, 2025.

B. Selectboard

- Vern read aloud from the letter of support and maps of this property were shared. Motion by Merry Souza to approve and sign the letter of support with VT Land Trust for the Ed Choiniere farm on Gore Road. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED**.
- Motion by Merry Souza to authorize Wendi Dusablon to approve and sign off on catering requests for the calendar year 2025 as they come in and forward them to the State Department of Liquor Control. Vern read aloud from the vendor list. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**.
- Motion by Merry Souza to exit the regular meeting and enter into the liquor control board @ 6:33pm. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED**. Motion by Richard Flint to approve the following applications for the Tyler Place Inc: 1st Class; 3rd Class; Outside Consumption. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**. Motion by Merry Souza to approve the following applications for Desorcie's Market: 2nd Class; Tobacco. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**. Motion by Richard Flint to exit the liquor control board and enter back into the regular Selectboard meeting @ 6:35pm. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**.
- We received one letter of interest for the “at large” seat on the newly formed Library Steering Committee, from Ty Choiniere. Ty was present and spoke about his interest in this committee and why he wishes to be appointed. We now have a board of five members to be officially appointed and form the Library Steering Committee. Motion by Merry Souza to appoint the following members to the LSC for a term of one year: Richard Flint – Selectboard; Jack Pelkey – Planning Commission; Chris Shepard – Village Core; Amy Rainville – Library Trustees; Ty Choiniere – member at large / public. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**.
- An RFP was posted on 1/21/25 for internal lighting replacement at the town offices, to include the main offices, meeting space, hallway, and bathrooms. We received two bids – Lamos and

Rainville. They both visited the office as well and while they were here, they were asked to look at the public works department and fire department as possible phase two and three projects. Merry Souza recused herself from this discussion and vote due to a conflict of interest. Henry Rainville had questions about the RFP and comments on what was excluded from it. Vern read aloud from sections of the RFP. The bids were opened and Kyle read aloud from the Lamos proposal, Richard read aloud from the Rainville proposal. We had also noted to both of them when they were here that we have some outlets that need work. There were questions about apples-to-apples bids. Carrie will get more information back to the board before a decision is made. Ty would like to see copies of these bids before a decision is made. Carrie noted that grant funding may be available for this project. We will bring this back up at the next meeting, or when all the info is available.

	<u>Offices</u>	<u>Public Works</u>	<u>Fire Dept.</u>
ERIC RAINVILLE	\$7,054.18	\$8,065.92/\$6,027.48	\$3,719.15
MIKE LAMOS	\$8,707.00	\$8,513.50	\$7,492.50

- We have finally received the last of the ice rental contracts for 2024-2025. The season has about another month to go. There was discussion on why we are not requiring these to be signed and returned prior to anyone using the ice. That is a discussion for the Recreation Commission. Carrie plans to attend their meeting on 2/10. The board wants all these contracts back and signed by 9/1 each year going forward. Motion by Richard Flint to sign the 2024-2025 ice rental contract with the Milton Town School District (Milton High School) for \$185.00 per hour. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**. Wendi noted that they have been getting invoiced monthly and the have been paid.
- Vern read aloud from the tax map maintenance contract with Cartographic Associates, Inc. (CAI). Our zoning administrator has reviewed it to make sure we are getting what we are paying for. The price has not changed \$4,100.00 annually and \$20.00 per building added or changed. Motion by Merry Souza to approve and sign the contract with CAI for the period 4/1/25 – 3/31/26. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**.
- Shelley had prepared an RFP to be put out for audit services for the board to review. It is the same RFP we issued in 2020 just with date changes. The board is fine with it and we will have bids to open at the second meeting in March.
- Otter Creek Engineering was asked to send us a letter summarizing the village wastewater project and describing the design. Carrie and NRPC were not thrilled with the letter, it does not clearly explain the project. At the next meeting it will be important to get a motion – which is a clear requirement from the federal grant that we have, to approve the design and understand it, in order to support the village wastewater project. Vern shared the map with those present and with the camera. This will be back on the agenda for 2/20. Greta from NRPC and the engineer from Otter Creek will participate, likely via zoom. Carrie stressed, this is NOT a sewer treatment plant, it is basically an indirect discharge system / leach field.

C. Public Comments

- Henry Rainville had questions from reviewing the town report. Article #5 about possibly purchasing the Paws for Thought building for the future home of HLCC. He asked about lead and asbestos and solid numbers for the purchase price and renovations. We don't have any of that, the plan with this article is to see if the town is even interested in moving in that direction. We have a timeline with the sellers to gauge interest and this non-binding advisory article is a way to do that. Henry asked about article #7 and moving funds in the CIP. If the voters approve the reallocation then we would follow the policy and get bids for a zero turn. We do have rough estimates. Henry then asked about article #10 and how does that get approved if some of the others don't pass. Shelley noted that the money articles are all very separate – CIP / Highway Fund / General Fund. Henry had questions on the ambulance articles #11 and #12 and if the board had any opinions. Response times seem to be the big thing for most people. There are differing opinions on that across the board, based on history and which side of town you live. Henry asked about making interest on our money in the CIP.

We need to receive some larger reimbursements on some of these projects before the town can consider moving money to higher yield accounts. Shelley has an appointment with a bank after town meeting day to begin that discussion.

- Ty Choiniere asked about concerns he is hearing about freezes on federal money with the new administration and how that may affect our projects in town. Carrie answered that contacts she has made this week give us cause for concern, but we will know more this spring. The airport project literally has shovels in the ground, and we expect that project to be ok.

D. Town Treasurer – Shelley Laroche

- Motion by Merry Souza to approve and sign the check warrants. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**.
- The delinquent tax amount is \$134,235.67. We will begin the tax sale process after town meeting day.
- Next week the office will be CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC on February 11, 12, 13 so that the staff can dive straight into the grant files, town administrator's computer documents and emails, and organize the TA office. We are in the middle of a single audit and with staff changes and other factors we need this time to locate and organize documents and files as part of the single audit process and get everything submitted on time, which is by March 31st. We will be in the office, and we will be working, but uninterrupted time is essential to get this done as soon as possible. The office will be open only by appointment during this time for research that can't be done online or anything zoning related that absolutely cannot wait. Our drop box is always available and checked often. We thank everyone for their patience with us during this temporary closure to the public. This process will also help with a seamless transition when a new TA is eventually hired in the coming months. The closed to the public days have been posted.

E. Town Clerk – Wendi Dusablon

- Motion by Richard Flint to approve the minutes from January 16, 2025, as written. The motion was seconded by Ben Lowell – **APPROVED**.
- License your dogs by April 1st to avoid late fees and possible fines. Proof of valid rabies vaccination is required. We have licensed 120 dogs so far – long way to go! Vaccination clinic will be Saturday, March 29th from 9am – noon @ Highgate Sports Arena. We will promote this much more following town meeting day.
- Town Reports came in and look great! David Desorcie was very surprised by the dedication page! Reports are available all over town, pdf on the website, or by contacting Wendi to have one mailed to you. There will be books available at the informational meeting also.
- Our town meeting day ballots arrived yesterday, Wendi is just waiting on the school ballots to start mailing out absentee requests. We have quite a few so far. There will be three ballots total: School (yellow header); Town (white); and Ambulance Services (purple header). Wendi shared sample ballots at this meeting. They will be posted to the public once we have the MVSD ballots, should have them by next Wednesday.
- **NO FLOOR MEETING FOR TOWN MEETING DAY.** Polls will be open at Highgate Sports Arena from 7am – 7pm. Vote absentee / early, or vote that day at the polls. There is a lot of information on our social media pages and website, as well as around town at our regular posting locations. The JPs will join us after 7pm to break down voting equipment, process write-ins if needed, and two Highgate JPs will bring our MVSD ballots to Swanton to be tabulated as a district with the other towns. Info meeting is 2/27 @ 6pm @ Highgate Elem.
- A list of positions for appointment after town meeting day has been published and shared. Letters of interest are due to Wendi by 2/27 @ 2pm in order to be considered.
- The town offices will close at noon the day before town meeting (March 3) and be closed the day after town meeting (March 5).
- Highgate Library & Community Center has amended their hours while they work through some staffing issues. Please see the attached flyer for their hours effective 1/21/25.

- HLCC is also hiring a Library Clerk. Apply by March 10 (see flyer at the end of these minutes for more information).
- Missisquoi Valley School District mailed a double-sided flyer to residents in the last few days. It has a lot of great information on it and our school tax rates are doing down (see flyer at the end of these minutes for more information – or check your mailbox).

F. Interim Town Administrator – Carrie Johnson

- Carrie had a very productive in-person meeting with Otter Creek, State of VT, and NRPC regarding the village wastewater project.
- The airport water and sewer project has shut down for winter. They are a few weeks ahead of schedule but some of the more complicated steps are in the spring. They plan to finish on time and within budget. A million-dollar reimbursement was submitted for this project.
- The VT Judicial Bureau has dismissed a case against Norm McAllister for a ticket that was issued. The hearing was cancelled. The ticket issued by the town had some flawed references to ordinances. Members of the Selectboard noted that they understand the McAllister issue that initiated that ticket has since been resolved.
- The transfer station project needs to be closed out within 90 days of project completion. We will be sending out a reimbursement request of almost \$400k. This should be totally closed out soon.
- Ty asked about the building that was erected by MVU as part of the water / sewer project. That is a pumphouse and permits were issued for it from the town. There was discussion on who will maintain it, that will be Swanton Village's responsibility, per conversations, and they will be drawing up documents.
- Henry would like to see Selectboard term lengths added to the town report next to their term expiration dates. Wendi will try to remember to add them next year, no promises ☺. If there are ever any questions on things like this, just call or message Wendi.
- Ben Lowell has completed the ethics training and would like to be the town's ethics liaison. Vern was previously appointed to this role, he is happy to hand it over, noting that all town departments need to complete the online training by September. It is a 45-minute course, followed by some questions, and covers your training requirement for a few years. Motion by Ben Lowell to appoint himself, Ben Lowell, as the ethics liaison for the Town of Highgate. The motion was seconded by Kyle Lothian – **APPROVED**.

Motion by Ben Lowell to exit the regular Selectboard meeting @ 7:36pm. The motion was seconded by Merry Souza – **APPROVED**.

G. Executive Session

Motion by Ben Lowell to enter into executive session @ 7:36pm with Carrie Johnson, Wendi Dusablon, Shelley Laroche, and Dominic Cloud to discuss personnel, where premature general public knowledge would place the town and / or individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Merry Souza – **APPROVED**. Motion by Vern Brosky III to exit executive session @ 8:48pm. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED**.

H. Adjournment

Motion by Ben Lowell to adjourn the meeting @ 8:50pm. The motion was seconded by Merry Souza – **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted by:




Wendi Dusablon
Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk

Minutes Approved by:



Vern Brosky III
Selectboard Chair

date of posting 2/4/25

TOWN OF HIGHGATE PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town Offices will be closed to the public on the following dates to complete some time sensitive work with grant files / town projects:

Tuesday, February 11th

Wednesday, February 12th

Thursday, February 13th

We will be in the office, and available by appointment for those needs that absolutely cannot wait.

Please note, our land records are on our website back to 1937 – visit www.highgatevt.org to access this portal. Free to view, it will charge you to print.

Other needs, please contact us via email or phone, and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience and flexibility during these few days.

Wendi Dusablon, Town Clerk
802-868-5002
wdusablon@highgatevt.org

Carolyn Towsley, Zoning Administrator
802-868-4697 x209
zoning@highgatevt.org

Shelley Laroche, Treasurer
802-868-2741
slaroche@highgatevt.org

Carrie Johnson, interim Town Admin.
802-868-4922
townadmin@highgatevt.org

Town Meeting Day in Highgate

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

- ✓ Polls will be open Tuesday, March 4, 2025, from 7am – 7pm at Highgate Sports Arena, 243 Gore Road.
- ✓ **NO FLOOR MEETING** – we are now a fully Australian ballot town, as voted on and approved last March.
- ✓ Informational meeting on all the Town Meeting Day articles will be held on Thursday, Feb. 27 @ 6pm at Highgate Elementary School, 219 Gore Road.
- ✓ Absentee ballots will be available in early February, contact Wendi to request yours at any time to get on the list. Early voting will also be available at the town offices during regular hours once ballots are received.
- ✓ 2024 town reports will be available by February 1st at the following locations: Town Office (entry way and drop box locations); Desorcie's Market; OC McCuin; Martin's General Store; Highgate Library & Community Center; Highgate Sports Arena. A digital version will be on our website, or you can contact Wendi to have a town report mailed to you.
- ✓ The town office will close at noon on Monday, March 3rd. The town office will be closed on Wednesday, March 5th.

Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

802-868-5002

wdusablon@highgatevt.org

2024 TOWN REPORTS ARE HERE

pick up your copy beginning
Jan. 28th at the following locations
in town: Town Office (entry or drop box);
Desorcie's Market; Martin's General Store;
Highgate Arena; Highgate Library & Community
Center; OC McCuin

You can also contact us to have one mailed
to you and a pdf will be on our website soon.
802-868-5002 wdusablon@highgatevt.org

2024

Highgate Vermont

Town Reports

April 8
2024

ECLIPSE
Highgate Center

Magnitude: 1.0242
Duration: 2h, 22m, 37s
Duration of Totality: 3m, 32s
Partial Begins: 2:14:49 PM
Full Begins: 3:26:18 PM
Maximum: 3:28:04 PM
Full Ends: 3:29:50 PM
Partial Ends: 4:37:26 PM

Total Solar Eclipse

100% Coverage of Sun

Vermont, USA

cover photo design – Vera Nazarian

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HIGHGATE, VERMONT
MARCH 4, 2025**

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- Use BLACK Pen to fill in the oval. **DO NOT USE PENCIL**.
- To vote for a person whose name is printed on the ballot, fill in the oval to the right of the name of that person.
- To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the person's name in the blank space provided and fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line. Please use block letters and stay within the box provided for write-ins.
- Do not vote for more candidates than the "VOTE for NOT MORE THAN #" for an office.
- If you make a mistake, tear, or deface the ballot, return it to an election official and obtain another ballot. **DO NOT ERASE**.

CEMETERY COMMISSIONER	SELECTBOARD MEMBER	SELECTBOARD MEMBER
for a term of five years DENNIS NOLAN (Write-in)	Vote for not more than ONE CHAD L. CARR (Write-in)	for a term of one year remaining on a three year term MERRY SOUZA (Write-in)
		Vote for not more than ONE
		for a term of two years
		BENJAMIN LOWELL
		(Write-in)
LIBRARY TRUSTEE	SELECTBOARD MEMBER	SELECTBOARD MEMBER
for a term of five years AMY A. RAINVILLE (Write-in)	Vote for not more than ONE RICHARD E. FLINT (Write-in)	for a term of three years SHELLEY LAROCHE (Write-in)
		Vote for not more than ONE
MODERATOR		TOWN TREASURER
for the ensuing year PHILLIP S. LADUE (Write-in)	Vote for not more than ONE	for a term of three years SHELLEY LAROCHE (Write-in)
		Vote for not more than ONE

TOWN ARTICLES

ARTICLE #2: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate set the final date of payment for FY2025/2026 property taxes to be **Thursday, October 30, 2025**, with payments to be received in the town office by 4:00pm?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #3: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate advise the Selectboard to allow the legal use of ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles) on all town roads? ATVs must be registered, insured, have a valid VASA (Vermont All Terrain Vehicle Sportsman's Association) registration sticker affixed, as well as wear approved helmets and seatbelts.

YES

NO

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

ARTICLE #4: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate request the Selectboard to hold the Town Meeting Day Informational Meeting within the 30 days preceding Town Meeting Day, as is allowed per statute 17 V.S.A. § 2680?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #5: As a non-binding advisory opinion: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate purchase the property located at **5 Gore Road** (formerly known as Paws for Thought), owned by Robert & Sheryl Wilkins, as an option for the future home of the Highgate Library & Community Center?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #6: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate vote to raise, appropriate, and expend the sum of **\$7,423** for the support of the **VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region** to provide services to residents of the Town?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #7: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate reallocate **\$30,000** within the **Capital Improvement Plan** from the indoor turf / field house line item and move it to the 72" zero turn mower line item?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #8: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$590,000** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Capital Improvement Plan**, with an estimated **\$590,000** to be raised by taxes?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #9: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$1,153,171** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Highway Fund**, with an estimated **\$982,171** to be raised by taxes?

YES

NO

ARTICLE #10: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$1,600,822** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **General Fund**, with an estimated **\$710,352** to be raised by taxes?

YES

NO

GO TO NEXT BALLOT AND CONTINUE VOTING

Purple header

OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HIGHGATE, VERMONT
MARCH 4, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- Use BLACK Pen to fill in the oval. **DO NOT USE PENCIL.**
- To vote, fill in the oval to the right of your choice.
- If you make a mistake, tear, or deface the ballot, return it to an election official and obtain another ballot. **DO NOT ERASE.**

ATTENTION HIGHGATE REGISTERED VOTERS:
PLEASE READ BOTH QUESTIONS CAREFULLY PRIOR TO
MARKING YOUR BALLOT

Copies of both Ambulance Services Request for Proposals (RFP) responses are available to view in their entirety by visiting www.highgatevt.org under The Town Meeting Day 2025 tab, or under the events or recent announcements sections. You may also stop by the town office during regular business hours, or contact us to have copies sent to you. Copies of both RFPs will be on display outside of the polling location at Highgate Sports Arena, 243 Gore Road, on March 4.

ARTICLE #11: As a non-binding advisory opinion: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate contract with AmCare Ambulance Service for all ambulance services, in the amount of \$269,262.97, with such services beginning on July 1, 2025, for a term of three (3) years?

PLEASE SELECT EITHER YES or NO FOR ARTICLE #11

YES

NO

ARTICLE #12: As a non-binding advisory opinion: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate contract with Missisquoi Valley Rescue for all ambulance services, in the amount of \$268,936.11, with such services beginning on July 1, 2025, for a term of three (3) years?

PLEASE SELECT EITHER YES or NO FOR ARTICLE #12

YES

NO

YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED VOTING THIS BALLOT

PROPOSED BUDGET: \$50,956,879

This is a 4% increase from last year, and it will allow us to continue meeting the increasing needs of our growing population of students. By strategic investment in our personnel, facilities, and programs that have the most impact on student success, we'll be able to carry on providing a high-quality education while also bringing taxes down from last year!

This budget comes in just under the 3% increase per student spending that the governor recommended to help stabilize education spending in the state, and we're proud to set the example for other districts in Vermont of sustainable budgets that still prioritize student outcomes.

TAX RATES ARE GOING DOWN!

Franklin: ↓ \$0.06

Highgate: ↓ \$0.11

Swanton: ↓ \$0.04

HOW CAN TAXES DROP IF THE BUDGET INCREASED?

Property taxes are calculated from a wide variety of factors with the total number of the budget playing a relatively small role. Some factors that are contributing to a lower projected tax rate with this budget are:

- Increasing ratio of students with greater support needs.
- Lower Yield due to lower school budgets statewide.
- Additional revenue from strategic budgeting and grant use.

Learn more about this budget proposal at mvsdschools.org or
THE MVSD SCHOOL BUDGET INFO MEETING,
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, 7:00 PM AT THE MVU LIBRARY



Missisquoi Valley School District
100 Robin Hood Dr, Suite 2
Swanton, VT 05488

Local Postal Customer

**PRSR STD
 ECRWSS
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 EDDM RETAIL**

MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
2025 - 2026 Adopted School Budget Summary

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES	FY2024 BUDGET		FY2025 BUDGET		FY2026 PROPOSED
	APPROVED	Actuals	APPROVED	Anticipated	
1100 Instructional Programs	\$16,880,098	\$15,205,837	\$17,132,458	\$17,853,554	\$18,275,420
1201 Special Education	\$7,856,054	\$8,079,047	\$9,081,127	\$8,142,340	\$10,150,635
1401 Interscholastics & CoCurriculars	\$670,896	\$615,342	\$669,497	\$492,347	\$719,565
2120 Guidance Services	\$1,094,548	\$1,066,478	\$1,221,565	\$1,104,701	\$1,274,892
2132 Health Services	\$534,449	\$388,911	\$483,649	\$527,194	\$498,554
2140 Psychological Services	\$378,733	\$431,727	\$558,411	\$407,277	\$386,728
2151 Speech & Audiology Services	\$726,536	\$526,391	\$723,614	\$557,995	\$627,209
2160 Occupational & Physical Therapy	\$205,480	\$219,607	\$128,031	\$238,669	\$261,469
2190 Student Support	\$2,074,463	\$1,081,952	\$1,539,444	\$1,389,131	\$1,362,835
2212 Curriculum & Instruction	\$232,087	\$236,237	\$105,488	\$117,586	\$124,880
2213 Professional Development	\$267,150	\$161,749	\$219,763	\$223,443	\$219,772
2219 Mentoring Services	\$41,097	\$40,338	\$62,616	\$35,669	\$64,182
2220 Library Services	\$451,444	\$429,756	\$464,452	\$463,753	\$507,407
2230 School Technology Services	\$836,095	\$724,819	\$974,774	\$745,860	\$890,477
2290 Instructional Support Services	\$1,500	\$252	\$2,613	\$799	\$2,512
2310 Board of Education	\$97,042	\$103,631	\$106,783	\$97,398	\$106,908
2320 General Administration (and 2490)	\$901,055	\$895,243	\$967,353	\$1,103,650	\$1,151,888
2410 Principals' Office	\$2,089,716	\$2,073,401	\$2,114,234	\$2,251,520	\$2,300,343
2510 Fiscal Services	\$684,183	\$958,272	\$798,021	\$1,137,736	\$858,682
2570 Human Resources / Personnel Serv	\$365,391	\$359,558	\$377,253	\$374,438	\$423,335
2580 Technology Administration	\$277,715	\$297,622	\$404,187	\$486,852	\$379,843
2590 District-wide Services	\$403,638	\$1,254,731	\$1,304,917	\$966,489	\$485,245
2610 Plant Operation & Maintenance	\$3,454,707	\$3,109,697	\$3,886,886	\$3,388,935	\$4,321,366
2700 Transportation Services	\$2,514,119	\$2,636,437	\$3,149,928	\$2,721,567	\$3,135,561
3100 Food Services	\$24,832	\$5,093	\$26,429	\$72,033	\$35,154
4000 Construction & Renovations	\$1,535,000	\$3,704,358	\$1,921,350	\$1,950,583	\$1,921,350
5100 Long Term Debt	\$385,539	\$493,317	\$384,594	\$488,770	\$382,267
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	\$44,983,567	\$45,099,803	\$48,909,437	\$47,340,289	\$50,956,879

ESTIMATED REVENUES	FY2024 BUDGET		FY2025 BUDGET		FY2026 PROPOSED
	APPROVED	Actuals	APPROVED	Anticipated	
Estimated Local Revenues	\$2,628,682	\$4,100,326	\$2,030,419	\$2,573,531	\$2,000,203
Estimated State Revenues	\$5,498,661	\$5,824,588	\$6,665,912	\$6,837,086	\$7,188,531
Estimated Federal Revenues	\$2,875,141	\$1,273,329	\$1,764,905	\$1,253,831	\$1,999,100
TOTAL REVENUES:	\$11,002,484	\$11,266,445	\$10,461,236	\$10,664,448	\$11,273,834

NET EDUCATION SPENDING	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026
Equalized Pupil Count	1774.60	3245.32	3255.49
Spending per Equalized Pupil / LTW ADM	\$19,149	\$11,847	\$12,190
Estimated Property Yield	\$15,479	\$9,893	\$8,553
PreK-12 Equalized Tax Rate with Statewide Adj.	\$1.2371	\$1.1975	\$1.4252

ESTIMATED HOMESTEAD TAX RATE	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026
After Statewide Adjusted CLA by Town			
FRANKLIN [CLA - 72.85% FY25 --> 90.15% FY26]	\$1.4769	\$1.6438	\$1.5809
HIGHGATE [CLA - 78.83% FY25 --> 101.17% FY26]	\$1.4523	\$1.5191	\$1.4087
SWANTON [CLA - 78.98% FY25 --> 96.61% FY26]	\$1.3816	\$1.5163	\$1.4752

**WARNING ANNUAL MEETING
MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The legal voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District, consisting of the Towns of Franklin, Highgate, and Swanton, are hereby notified, and warned to meet to transact the following business by Australian ballot in their respective polling places hereinafter named for each of the above referenced towns on March 4, 2025 at the polling places and times hereinafter listed.

ARTICLE I To elect from the legal voters of said District the following officers:

- A. A Moderator for a term of one (1) year,
- B. A Clerk for a term of two (2) years,
- C. A Treasurer for a term of three (3) years,
- D. A MVSD School Director for a term of three (3) years from Franklin,
- E. A MVSD School Director for a term of three (3) years from Highgate,
- F. A MVSD School Director for the remainder of a three (3) year term from Highgate,
- G. A MVSD School Director for a term of three (3) years from Swanton.

ARTICLE II Shall the voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District approve the School Directors to expend \$50,956,879 which is the amount the School Directors have determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in a per pupil education spending of \$12,190, which is 2.89% higher than the per pupil spending for the current year.

ARTICLE III Shall the voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District authorize the Board of Directors of the said School District to borrow money to pay the current expenditures in anticipation of taxes and to sign notes for that purpose?

Said persons and voters warned are further notified that voter qualification, registration, absentee voting, and voter procedures shall be in accordance with Chapters 43 and 51 of Title 17 VSA.

The legal voters of the School District are further notified that an Informational Meeting will be held in person at Missisquoi Valley Union High School Library and electronically via Zoom on February 11, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of explaining the budget items to the voters. The link to access this virtual meeting will be posted on the MVSD Website, mvdschools.org, and MVSD social media prior to the meeting.

POLLING PLACES AND TIMES

FRANKLIN- Franklin Town Hall, 5338 Main Street, Franklin; from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

HIGHGATE- Highgate Sports Arena, 243 Gore Rd, Highgate Center, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

SWANTON-Swanton Village Municipal Complex, First & Elm Streets, Swanton; from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Dated this 28th day of January, 2025

Board of Directors

René Léveillé
James Charron
Pierrette Bouchard
Jeanne Johnston
Peter Maginn

Edward Dyer
Donald E. Collins
Richard T. Gruen
Mary Morrissey

Received and Recorded this

1-28-2025

District Clerk

Nola Gilbert

WANT TO VOTE ABSENTEE FOR TOWN MEETING?

- ❖ **BALLOTS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN EARLY FEBRUARY**
- ❖ **STOP BY, CALL, EMAIL, OR USE THE MY VOTER PAGE TO REQUEST YOUR BALLOTS – BALLOTS CAN BE REQUESTED AT ANY TIME – WHY WAIT ? REQUEST YOURS NOW 😊**
- ❖ **THERE WILL BE THREE BALLOTS:**
 - ✓ **MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT**
 - ✓ **TOWN OF HIGHGATE ELECTED OFFICIALS & WARRANTED ARTICLES BALLOT**
 - ✓ **TOWN OF HIGHGATE AMBULANCE SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS BALLOT**
- ❖ **BALLOTS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE TOWN CLERK BY 7PM ON TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025 IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED**

Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk
802-868-5002 wdusablon@highgatevt.org

MY VOTER PAGE <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>

2025 Town Meeting Warning ~ Highgate Vermont

The legal voters of the Town of Highgate, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Highgate Sports Arena (243 Gore Road) in the Town of Highgate on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 between the hours of seven o'clock in the forenoon (7:00am), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock in the evening (7:00pm), at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot upon the following Articles of business:

ARTICLE #1: To elect the following town officers:

- a) One Cemetery Commissioner for a term of five (5) years
- b) One Library Trustee for a term of five (5) years
- c) One Moderator for the ensuing year
- d) One Selectboard Member for a term of one (1) year remaining on a three (3) year term
- e) One Selectboard Member for a term of two (2) years
- f) One Selectboard Member for a term of two (2) years
- g) One Selectboard Member for a term of three (3) years
- h) One Treasurer for a term of three (3) years

ARTICLE #2: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate set the final date of payment for FY2025/2026 property taxes to be **Thursday, October 30, 2025**, with payments to be received in the town office by 4:00pm?

ARTICLE #3: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate advise the Selectboard to allow the legal use of ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles) on all town roads? ATVs must be registered, insured, have a valid VASA (Vermont All Terrain Vehicle Sportsman's Association) registration sticker affixed, as well as wear approved helmets and seatbelts.

ARTICLE #4: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate request the Selectboard to hold the Town Meeting Day Informational Meeting within the 30 days preceding Town Meeting Day, as is allowed per statute 17 V.S.A. § 2680?

ARTICLE #5: As a non-binding advisory opinion: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate purchase the property located at 5 Gore Road (formerly known as Paws for Thought), owned by Robert & Sheryl Wilkins, as an option for the future home of the Highgate Library & Community Center?

ARTICLE #6: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate vote to raise, appropriate, and expend the sum of \$7,423 for the support of the **VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region** to provide services to residents of the Town?

ARTICLE #7: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate reallocate **\$30,000** within the **Capital Improvement Plan** from the indoor turf / field house line item and move it to the 72" zero turn mower line item?

ARTICLE #8: Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$590,000** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Capital Improvement Plan**, with an estimated **\$590,000** to be raised by taxes?

2025 Town Meeting Warning ~ Highgate Vermont

- ARTICLE #9:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate \$1,153,171 to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Highway Fund**, with an estimated \$982,171 to be raised by taxes?
- ARTICLE #10:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate \$1,600,822 to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **General Fund**, with an estimated \$710,352 to be raised by taxes?
- ARTICLE #11:** **As a non-binding advisory opinion:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate contract with **AmCare Ambulance Service** for all ambulance services, in the amount of **\$269,262.97**, with such services beginning on July 1, 2025, for a term of three (3) years?
- ARTICLE #12:** **As a non-binding advisory opinion:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate contract with **Missisquoi Valley Rescue** for all ambulance services, in the amount of **\$268,936.11**, with such services beginning on July 1, 2025, for a term of three (3) years?

Dated at Highgate Center, Vermont this 16th day of January, 2025

Wendi Dusablon
Attest: Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

Richard Flint
Richard Flint, Highgate Selectboard Member

Vern Brosky III
Vernon Brosky III, Highgate Selectboard Chair

Kyle Lothian, Highgate Selectboard Member

Merry Souza
Merry Souza, Highgate Selectboard Vice Chair

Benjamin Lowell
Benjamin Lowell, Highgate Selectboard Member

- **NOTE:** The Town of Highgate no longer holds a floor meeting, as voted on in March 2024. Voting is fully Australian ballot between 7am – 7pm on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 @ Highgate Sports Arena, located @ 243 Gore Road.
- **Register to vote by contacting the Town Clerk 802-868-5002 or wdusablon@highgatevt.org, or visit the My Voter Page at <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>. Same day voter registration is also available.**
- **Absentee ballots are available upon request – contact the Town Clerk directly, stop by, or request through the My Voter Page (info above).**
- **Return ballots at the polls on March 4th, by mail, during our office hours 9am – 4pm Monday – Thursday, or by using our secure drop box at the rear entrance of the Municipal Bldg. Ballots must be received by the Town Clerk by 7pm on March 4, 2025 in order to be counted.**
- **The Town Meeting Informational Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 @ 6:00pm in the gymnasium @ Highgate Elementary School. Attend in-person or participate via Zoom with the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86492134232>**
- **Ambulance RFP responses are available at the Town Clerk's Office during regular business hours, by contacting the town office, or by visiting the town website www.highgatevt.org.**

TOWN OF HIGHGATE POSITIONS FOR APPOINTMENT BY THE HIGHGATE SELECTBOARD

Appointments will take place on Thursday, March 6, 2025 (after Town Meeting Day)

**Submit letters of interest to Highgate Town Clerk, Wendi Dussablon, by
2:00pm Thursday, February 27, 2025**

Tree Warden	1-year term	Planning Comm. Member	3-year term
Animal Control Officer	1-year term	Planning Comm. Member	3-year term
Asst. Animal Control Officer	1-year term	Recreation Comm. Member	2-year term
NW Regional Planning Rep.	1-year term	Recreation Comm. Member	2-year term
NW Regional Planning Rep.	1-year term	Recreation Comm. Member	2-year term
Transportation Advisory Rep.	1-year term	Communications Union Dist. Rep.	1-year term
Delinquent Tax Collector	1-year term	Communications Union Dist. alternate	1-year term
Road Commissioner	1-year term	Communications Union Dist. alternate	1-year term
Fire Commissioner	1-year term	Health Officer	3-year term
NW Rail Trail Council Rep.	1-year term	Deputy Health Officer	3-year term
Development Rev. Board Member	3-year term		
Development Rev. Board Member	3-year term		

*Office hours are Monday – Thursday 9am – 4pm (closed to the public on Fridays)

*By mail – Town of Highgate, PO Box 189, Highgate VT 05459 Attn: Wendi

*Use our secure drop box located at the rear entrance of the town office building

*By email wduusablon@highgatevt.org

PUBLIC NOTICE



The Town of Highgate

2025 TOWN MEETING **INFORMATION SESSION**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025 @ 6:00PM
@ HIGHGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GYMNASIUM)

PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON OR USE THE ZOOM LINK:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86492134232>

REMINDERS.....

- ✓ *Town Meeting Day is Tuesday, March 4, 2025 – polls will be open at Highgate Sports Arena from 7am – 7pm @ 243 Gore Road. WE NO LONGER HAVE A FLOOR MEETING ON TOWN MEETING DAY – FULLY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT VOTING – AS VOTED ON LAST MARCH*
- ✓ *Absentee ballots will be available in early to mid- February and can be requested by contacting the Town Clerk, Wendi Dusablon, at 802-868-5002, wdusablon@highgatevt.org, by stopping by the office, or through the “My Voter Page” <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>*
- ✓ *Voter registration is available at the town office, through the “My Voter Page”, or same day registration is available at the polls*



LIBRARY HOURS

EFFECTIVE TUESDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2025

MONDAY	10AM-5PM
TUESDAY	10AM-5PM
WEDNESDAY	10AM-5PM
THURSDAY	10AM-5PM
FRIDAY	CLOSED
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM
SUNDAY	CLOSED

CONTACT:

EMAIL:LIBRARIAN@HIGHGATEVT.ORG

PHONE:802-868-3970

WEBSITE:HLCCVT.ORG



WE ARE HIRING



JOB POSITION:

Library Clerk

Information

- Library Circulation
- Patron Services
- Facilities Maintenance
- 10-15 hours/week
- Flexible availability

To apply:

Send your cover letter and resume to Christine Walton, Library Director, via mailing address or email by **Sunday, March 10th.**

APPLY NOW AT:

Highgate Library & Community Center
17 Mill Hill Road
Highgate Center, VT 05459
librarian@highgatevt.org



Library Clerk

JOB DESCRIPTION

General Description:

The Highgate Library and Community Center is looking to hire a part-time (10-15 hours a week) Library Clerk. The Library Clerk will perform a broad range of tasks including, but not limited to, the following: assisting with library circulation and clerical procedures, assisting in daily library operations including opening and closing duties, assisting in patron services and recommended reads, assisting with library displays, and assisting in daily tasks assigned by the Highgate Library & Community Center (HLCC) Library Director.

This position requires a friendly, positive, and energetic personality who enjoys working with the public. The position requires the ability to interact successfully with the public, which includes persons of all age groups, and a desire to further local community connections. This position requires the ability to learn various computer programs to circulate library materials and to serve library patrons. A weekly set schedule is required for this position.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Circulation desk routines such as checking library items in and out
- Assisting patrons in finding materials to match their reading interests
- Assisting patrons with computer and technological device usage
- Assisting with the positive promotion of library programs and services
- Shelving materials and keeping shelves neat and accessible
- General clerical work such as answering the telephone and routing calls/messages as necessary
- Performing opening and closing procedures as necessary
- Performing daily tasks to keep the overall library neat, clean, and organized
- Filling in as needed for Highgate Library & Community Center staff to cover vacations/sick time
- Learning the general rules and policies of the Highgate Library & Community Center
- Must be able to lift 30 pounds

Minimum Qualifications:

- A high school education is required
- Prior library experience and/or experience working directly with the public is an asset
- Basic knowledge of library procedures and methods is a plus but not mandatory
- Computer experience including the use of the Microsoft Office and the Internet is required
- Must have exceptional communication skills when interacting with patrons in-person and over the phone
- Must be able to work weekday evenings and weekends.
- Must pass a background check

To apply, please send a resume and cover letter by March 10th to: Highgate Library and Community Center, 17 Mill Hill Road, PO Box 76, Highgate VT 05459 or email these items to Christine Walton, Library Director, at librarian@highgatevt.org.