



# GEORGIA VERMONT

## Selectboard Special Meeting: FY26 Budget Discussion

Thursday, November 20, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Chris Letourneau Meeting Room and via Zoom

### Minutes

#### Zoom Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6165843896?pwd=STduU2JzTmpiVmE1MXZSaWZWLzVadz09>

Meeting ID: 616 584 3896 | Passcode: 5243524

Dial by your Location: 1 929 205 6099 (New York)

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER 6:02PM

##### SELECTBOARD PRESENT

Chair Kristina Senna, Vice Chair Brian Dunsmore, Kellie Bosenberg, Carl Rosenquist (entered meeting at 6:54pm)

##### SELECTBOARD ABSENT

Judith Nasca

##### STAFF PRESENT

Doug Bergstrom, Kollene Caspers, Lori Hobart, Stacy Katon, Cheryl Letourneau

##### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Alysia Catalfamo, Tom Hargy

##### GEORGIA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Terry Cleveland, Debbie Mann

##### PUBLIC PRESENT

Ray Mann

#### A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### 2. FY26 Budget Discussions

##### A. 6:00PM - Town Clerk

- Town Clerk C. Letourneau presented her FY26 Budget. There are no major increases or decreases, besides the preservation of records. Binding and covering the old books will be more expensive in 2026 than years past.
- **Georgia Community Events Committee (GCEC)** FY25 has received \$11,000 budget from the Town in the past. FY26 she is asking for \$16,000 for new events and funding for the State of Vermont 250th Anniversary celebrations. There is also a \$5,000 grant opportunity for the 250th celebration.

Motion to approve C. Letourneau to apply for the 250th celebration grant on behalf of the GCEC.

Motion made by Vice Chair Dunsmore, Seconded by K. Bosenberg

Voting Yea: Chair Senna, Vice Chair Dunsmore, K. Bosenberg

- C. Letourneau answered Selectboard questions about the 250th Vermont State Celebration.
- C. Letourneau answered Selectboard questions on records preservation and future expansion of the vault.

#### B. 6:30PM - Zoning

- Zoning Administrator Doug Bergstrom presented his FY26 budget. The budget will stay at \$15,000 with \$50,000 in zoning fees receivable.
- DRB Fees will be increased due to new regulations and increase in housing permits. Change in sheds/accessory buildings to 200 sq ft before permit is needed will only lose a small amount of fees previously collected.
- There will be an increase in training in FY26 due to Tier 1 B status. The legal amount will also remain the same, though he did not use the whole budget last year.
- **IT/Security/Town Sign:**
- The GIS mapping system used by the Town via NEMRC (currently \$2,200 a year) is not updated properly and has a lot of errors which makes researching problematic for the Zoning office. He would like to switch the software to a company called CAI, which will also sync with our CloudPermit software. This software will be \$7,200 for set up and first year fees, and \$4,200/year thereafter. This is \$5,000 more than 2025 budget, and \$2000 more thereafter every year.
- Zoning does not receive Impact Fees; the Impact Fees for Town Administration are typically used for computers. D Bergstrom just spoke with Matt Bouchard and no new computers are planned for 2026 in the Town offices. The Fire Station may be due for new computers. Also researching an upgrade to the Fire Station community room swipe key card machine to be comparable to the Town offices, library and town garage.
- No changes are planned for the Town sign.
- Salary and benefits- D. Bergstrom was hired in 2023 for Zoning and Planning. Since then, he has taken over duties of security, website, electric sign, enforcement officer and help with IT. Due to the increase in duties he is requesting an additional 3%. This will be offset by alleviating outside IT costs, specifically as he handles most in-house IT issues.

## **OTHER DISCUSSION – L. Hobart Updates**

- Bond Funding research for leftover funds from Bridge #28 repairs. The money can be used for a similar purpose but only with another town vote. The 2025 Town vote specified the Bond was for Bridge #28. In conversation with T. Cadieux, Public Works director, the project may be completed by August 2026. With 3 elections in 2026, a vote to move this money towards repairs for additional bridges is a possibility. L. Hobart will reach out to the bond bank and the Town attorney for more information. L. Hobart will add interest from the bond into the FY2026 budget.
- Greenbacker revenue, the former Assessor had negotiated a new contract for \$45,000/year in lieu of taxes. The Town has not been paid for 2024 & 2025. Looking through the MOU for the arrangements, there were no instructions to invoice the wind turbines. Chair Senna and Vice Chair Dunsmore instructed L. Hobart to reach out to Jim Harrison, who owns the land.
- A paving spreadsheet has been reexamined, and money has been redistributed.
- The Selectboard had questions on the amount spent on Beach maintenance in FY25 and what has been included in the payable.
- The VGS E & O is in the warrant for Monday. L. Hobart is creating a line in “Administrative” expenses in FY2026 for the FY2023 and & FY2024 E & O.

### **C. 7:00PM - Georgia Conservation Commission**

- Georgia Conservation Commission Chair Alysia Catalfamo was present to introduce the GCC budget for FY26. Tom Hargy arrived at 7pm.
- GCC is requesting a budget of \$18,525, this includes \$5,070 for conservation purchase and \$13,455 transfer to reserves.
- GCC projects in 2026 include replacing a bridge, repairing a trail that needs erosion control, specifically to recreate steps. There are plans for a mini trail and another new trail to connect to a trail built in 2025.
- There were questions from the Selectboard on the transfer of funds to reserve, this money goes into an account to help conserve properties in town. This fund is approximately \$159,225 to date, plus another \$13,000 after transfer. GCC maintains the Henley-Webster Town Forest property that was originally donated to the GCC.
- C. Rosenquist asked if this money could be used to purchase land with the Town, part for building and part for conservation purposes. A. Catalfamo said the fund was for conservation purposes only.

### **D. 7:30PM - Georgia Public Library**

- Terry Cleveland, GPL Trustee Treasurer, Debbie Mann, GPL Trustee Vice Chair and Kollene Caspers, GPL Trustee Secretary were present on behalf of the GPL.
- T. Cleveland presented the proposed GPL budget on behalf of the Trustees.
- Discussion on using \$3,000 in impact fees to offset the costs of books in FY26.
- T. Cleveland answered Selectboard questions on grant income in FY25 and FY26, and how it will be reported for FY27. To date, the library has received \$5,700 from the Building Bright Futures grants in income. No funds have come from United Way, which bills quarterly. \$19,000 in grant money will go towards salaries and indirect expenses by the end of the year.
- FY26 GPL requests \$175,022 without insurance and benefits. With that amount added to the budget, it will be approximately \$200,346, or a 10% increase.

- Vice Chair Dunsmore said the library has been given budgets over the maximum percentage requested in the past few years as requested to accommodate increasing wages for GPL employees.
- Chair Senna asked, if given the 3.5% increase, what would be trimmed? T. Cleveland responded the library may have to decrease hours or the number of books purchased.
- The Selectboard discussed the library's administrative costs increasing over the years, while very little in operational expenses has increased and the number of hours the library is open has decreased.
- K. Caspers expressed concern that whatever tax dollar amount the Selectboard allocates to the library, administrative raises will take priority in the budget to the detriment of programs, books and/or hours the library is open.
- C. Rosenquist asked what is the long-term vision of the library? The renovation of the library will bring a "revitalization" to the library which in turn means more programs, more hours, more money needed for staff.
- Chair Senna said she hears concerns from community members about the amount of taxes, it will be a hard sell to the Town with tax increases and a bond.
- D. Mann explained the building renovation and ADA compliance project and the potential Bond. The Trustees and the Library Revitalization Committee are trying to keep the renovation amounts down for taxpayers while still addressing the ADA accommodations.
- T. Cleveland discussed the Bond and timeline for the Bond with the Selectboard. The Committee is interested in getting the Bond on the ballot in March 2026.
- Discussion was had on potentially moving the Bond request till Fall, 2026 (August or November) for the Fall 2026 Bond. Bond application deadlines are mid-Dec for the winter pool with money distributed in February 2027. Construction for library revitalization will likely occur in 2027.
- The cleaning company for the Town offices and library was discussed.

### **3. OTHER**

### **4. PLAN NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

A. December 4, 2025: Public Works Department and Georgia Fire Station

### **5. ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22pm

Motion made by Vice Chair Dunsmore, Seconded by K. Bosenberg

Voting Yea: Chair Senna, Vice Chair Dunsmore, K. Bosenberg, C. Rosenquist

**Agendas are posted to the Town website, four designated places within the Town of Georgia (Town Clerk's Office, Georgia Public Library, Maplefields & Georgia Market), and e-mailed to the local media. Meeting videos are posted on the Town of Georgia website.**

**Minutes and videos are posted on the Town of Georgia website.**

**Signed: Kollene Caspers, Selectboard Clerk**

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