



Wells River Village

Annual Meeting

March 17, 2026, 7pm, 15 Creamery Street

# **Wells River Village Info**

**Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8am -12 Noon**

First & Third

**Trustee Meetings: When: ~~Second and Fourth~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ Thursday of every Month**

**Time: 4pm**

**Location: Village Office, 15 Creamery Street Wells River**

**Phone: 802-757-3401**

**Mailing Address: PO Box 581  
Wells River Village  
VT, 05081**

**Email: [Wellsrivervillageclerk@gmail.com](mailto:Wellsrivervillageclerk@gmail.com)**

**Website: [www. Wellsrivervillage.org](http://www.Wellsrivervillage.org)**

**The Website has recorded and printed trustee minutes as well as important events**

# Village of Wells River Annual Report For year ending 1/31/2026

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**Warning**  
**Annual Meeting Wells River Village**  
**March 17, 2026 7PM**

The legal voters of the Village of Wells River are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Village Garage/Office at 15 Creamery Street, Tuesday March 17,2026 at 7:00p.m. to transact the following business by floor vote.

**Article 1:** To elect Village officers by floor vote:

- One Village President for a one-year term
- Three Village Auditors for a one-year term
- One BMU School Board member for a three-year term
- One Trustee for a three-year term
- One Village clerk for a one-year term
- One Village treasurer for a one-year term
- One Village tax collector for a one-year term

**Article 2:** To hear and dispose of Village Reports

**Article 3:** To see if the Village will authorize the Trustees to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.

**Article 4:** To see if the Village will vote to collect taxes as follows:

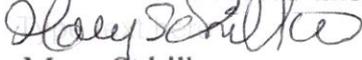
½ payable by September 20,2026 & ½ payable by November 20,2025 and set interest rate: 1% per month for first 3 months and 1 & ½ thereafter Delinquent Penalty of 8% after November 20,2026

**Article 5:** Shall the voters of the Village of Wells River raise and appropriate the sum of \$408,510.00 for the operating budget for the Village for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

**Article 6:** Shall the voters of Wells River authorize the trustees to borrow money from the General Fund to pay the Sewer Dept bill to Woodsville.

**Article 7:** Shall the Voters of Wells River agree to amendments of the Baldwin Library articles of Inc. Approved and adopted at a meeting of the Trustees of the Village of Wells River duly called, noticed and held February 12,2026

Received for record this 12th day of February 2026 by

  
Mary Schilke  
Village Clerk

Jean Welch



Mike Thomas



Erik White



## 2025 Wells River Offices

Title	Name	Term Expires
<b>Village Clerk</b>	Mary Schilke	2026
<b>Village Treasurer</b>	Mary Schilke	2026
<b>Village Tax Collector</b>	Mary Schilke	2026
<b>Trustees:</b>	Erik White	2028
	Jean Welch	2027
	Mike Thomas	2026
<b>Auditors:</b>	Mary Corey	2026
	Ashley Kara Fellows	2026
	Judi Waterman	2026
<b>School Board</b>	Kelsey Root - Winchester	2028
	Alyssa Smith	2026
<b>Water Department</b>	Jeff Morin	
<b>Highway Department</b>	Paige Construction	
<b>Fire Chief</b>	Jeff Morin	
<b>Animal Control</b>	Glen Godfrey	
<b>Charter Committee</b>	Brian Emerson Chip Conquest Richard Roderick	

## Trustees Report 2025

It's been another trying year for the Village, not only did we have to contend with the oil spill in January we also had to find a way to supply the Village with water after the state advised us to shut the well down in July. We then started trucking 6 to 7 loads of water from Woodsville every day. We need to thank John Kiernan for finding the trucking companies A1 Water and Mathews to haul the water, also Michael Thomas and Jeff Morin for testing the water that was being hauled. The state said we could turn the well back on in December with continued testing of the well. We have now hired a company called Verdantas to hopefully find another water source for us on Roystan Ridge near the reservoir.

Another big problem the Village had was finding the leak in the sewer line that was sending river water to Woodsville and costing us way too much. Now that we have found the leak, we must find some way to pay Woodsville.

The owner of the Wells River Motel really wants to stay in business, so the Village helped finance the shoring up of the riverbank behind the motel. Hopefully this will help stop more erosion in the future. The owner of the 2 apartment buildings behind the motel opted for a FEMA buyout.

The trustees have discussed tax sales, but with rule changes and other more pressing business we have not made any progress.

Paige Excavating is our new highway department with Ed Paige and his employees taking good care of our roads, streets and sidewalks.

Ross Grube with H2O Innovations has been working with Jeff Morin doing our water and sewer readings and he is working out well.

There are 3 new businesses in the Village – a floral shop called Ellie's garden, Snoot Studios a dog grooming business both on Main Street and a barber shop on the corner of Center and Main Street.

The Trustees need to thank our 3 Mary's - Mary Schilke trying to keep us in line and up to date on things. Mary Collins for always being just a phone call away and Mary Corey for auditing the books monthly.

The Village was saddened by the passing of Sandy Boyce in June, she was the driving force behind a lot of the happenings in Wells River.

Jean Welch

Chair

**Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year Ending 1/31/2026**  
1/31/2026

**General Fund**

**Beginning Balance:**

Revenue	\$718,639	
Expenses	\$289,278	
Payment to BMU	\$418,115	
Prior Year Adj		
Net Gain		<u>\$11,246</u>
<b>Fund Balance 1/31/25</b>		<b>\$542,868</b>

**Water/Sewer Account**

<b>Beginning Balance:</b>		-\$49,526
Revenue	\$233,467	
Expenses	\$195,541	
Net Gain		<u>\$37,926</u>
<b>Fund Balance 1/31/2026</b>		<b>-\$11,600</b>

**Treasurer's Misc INFO**

	<u>Est 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>EST 2026</u>
Current Property Tax	\$355,171.00	\$353,881.00	\$408,510
Hold Harmless	\$6,000.00	\$5,157.00	\$6,000
State Class 3 Hwy	\$8,000.00	\$5,753.00	\$6,000
Delinquent Tax	\$0.00	\$20,210.00	\$0
Tax Int	\$0.00	\$556.00	\$0.00
Tax penalty	\$0.00	\$1,979.00	\$0.00
Bank Interest	\$0.00	\$7,093.00	\$0.00
Rent	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
PILOT		2902	3000

**2025 Gross Salaries**

Erik White	\$1,950
Jeff Morin	\$24,147
Mary Schilke	\$20,844
Jean Welsh	\$2,500
Mike Thomas	\$33,885
Jason Winchester	\$6,505
Chip Conquest	\$550
Peggy Hewes	\$2,400

**Delinquent Taxes Owed**

	As of
	1/31/2026
2016	\$10,654
2017	\$8,240
2018	\$10,998
2019	\$8,965
2020	\$14,797
2021	\$11,624
2022	\$28,527
2023	\$10,801
2024	\$9,899
2025	<u>\$8,530</u>
2026	<u>\$35,596</u>

Names can be seen by Appointment \$158,631

## General Fund

General Fund	2025 Budget		Actual Debit		2026 Budget
Payroll	\$27,000		\$27,035		\$28,500
FICA expense	\$3,240		\$2,131		\$4,460
Child Care Contribution	\$300		\$391		\$400
Education	\$250				\$250
Mileage Reimbursement	\$100				\$100
Supplies	\$200		\$896		\$500
Office Equipment	\$500				\$500
Postage	\$500		\$492		\$750
Telephone	\$2,000		\$149		\$0
Repairs/Maint	\$8,000		\$2,835		\$8,000
Utilities Elec Oil	\$5,000		\$4,426		\$5,000
Street lights	\$15,000		\$13,483		\$15,000
Rubbish	\$900		\$790		\$1,000
Software	\$3,000		\$3,120		\$3,500
Election Expenses	\$250		\$327		\$350
* Appropriations	\$27,450		\$26,700		\$28,000
Dues	\$1,500		\$2,410		\$3,000
Insurance	\$10,000		\$3,671		\$5,000
Legal	\$0		\$645		\$500
Advertising	\$500		\$520		\$600
Misc.	\$500		\$102		\$500
Capital reserve fund	\$1,000		\$0		\$1,000

<b>Total Gen Fund</b>	<b>\$106,190</b>		<b>\$90,123</b>		<b>\$106,910</b>
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### Highway

Supplies	\$1,000		\$2,953		\$3,000
Salt	\$15,000		\$13,427		\$15,000
Hghwy Trucking	\$0		\$1,210		\$1,000
Sand	\$0		\$1,260		\$6,600
Fees	\$1,000				\$1,000
Paving & Reconstruction	\$100,000		\$33,950		\$92,000
Contracted services	\$130,000		\$149,601		\$183,000

<b>Total Highway</b>	<b>\$247,000</b>		<b>\$293,161</b>		<b>\$301,600</b>
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<b>Total Gen Fund</b>	<b>\$353,190</b>		<b>\$383,283</b>		<b>\$408,510</b>
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* Appropriations	
Library	\$26,000
4th of July	\$600
Berry Field	\$1,000
Wrap	\$200
302 Cares	\$200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$28,000</b>

# Water & Sewer Budget

	2025 Budget	2025 Expenditures	2026 Budget
<b>Water Dept</b>			
Clerk	\$8,000	\$723	\$8,000
Operator	\$22,000	\$19,495	\$6,000
FICA	\$5,500	\$1,607	\$2,300
Education	\$500	\$186	\$250
Subcontracted Operator	\$10,000	\$7,599	\$40,000
Supplies	\$5,000	\$3,349	\$5,000
Postage	\$800	\$0	\$800
Repair	\$15,000	\$8,827	\$15,000
Road Repair	\$2,000	\$0	\$12,000
Water Testing	\$2,000	\$4,168	\$4,500
Mileage	\$1,000	\$638	\$500
Utilities			
Propane	\$2,500	\$1,064	\$2,000
Electric	\$6,500	\$4,356	\$6,500
Fees	\$4,500	\$5,365	\$6,000
Software	\$2,000	\$721	\$1,000
Advertising	\$200	\$0	\$200
Bond State of VT	\$14,071	\$14,070	\$14,070
legal fees			\$500
<b>Water Budget Total</b>	<b>\$101,571</b>	<b>\$72,777</b>	<b>\$124,620</b>
<b>Sewer</b>			
Supplies	\$4,000	\$1,763	\$4,000
Repairs	\$25,000	\$60,005	\$25,000
Telephone	\$650	\$608	\$650
Utilities	\$2,500	\$2,777	\$3,000
Sewer to Woodsville	\$100,000	\$80,991	\$60,000
deferred sewer payment	\$120,000	\$0	\$0
Legal	\$0	\$45	\$500
Sewer Capital Reserve fund	<del>\$252,150</del>		\$25,000
<b>Total Sewer Budget</b>	<b>\$252,150</b>	<b>\$152,623</b>	<b>\$118,150</b>
<b>Total Water &amp;Sewer</b>	<b>\$353,721</b>	<b>\$225,399</b>	<b>\$242,770</b>

# VILLAGE OF WELLS RIVER WATER & WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT

## WATER DEPARTMENT

The water department has been working on compliance issues with the State of Vermont Water Division. Several items were noted as problems and have been corrected since the last report.

We have obtained a grant to assist with this, and the engineers are working on it now. We have been working on a solution for the low water pressure on Bible Hill at 3 homes. While this is an issue, we have several other issues that seem to be of higher priority. #1. The location of a new well site away from the Village Center. We have obtained a Winn Grant for the locating and installation of a new water source, Verdantas Engineering is working on this now (February 2026). They are looking at an area off Roystan Ridge near the reservoir.

## OIL SPILL UPDATE

In July the engineers and lawyers recommended that we cease pumping from our well due to the oil spill. We started hauling water from Woodsville with potable water trucks on July 21, 2025. We hauled until December 18, 2025, and hauled 3,238,000 gallons of water from Woodsville. This was a long and time-consuming job to say the least. Between Jeff and Mike, they worked over 60 hours a week to monitor the chlorine level of the water entering the trucks and leaving them and the gallonage being hauled. The state has minimum and maximum level of chlorine, and we had to make sure it was kept in the proper range. Since November 4, 2025, there have been 4 VOC test done and all have returned with a negative finding for contamination. We are now on a quarterly testing schedule until at least the end of 2026. The engineers of Wilcox and Barton have installed 4 large recovery wells for pumping and testing the water, this was done while we were not pumping from our well.

H2O Innovations have taken over doing day-to-day operations and all is going well currently. Jeff will be on retainer for the year 2026 to assist with all aspects related to water and sewer for guidance.

We are still required to maintain a higher level of chlorine at the water filters to keep them working the way they were designed. We have lowered the chlorine concentration some, and we are trying to maintain a 1.0 mg/l out in our system.

There are 2 two fire hydrants needing replacement this summer. We have the hydrants in stock and will have our contractor install them once the weather warms. Along with the hydrants we have several house services that need new shutoffs installed.

## WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT

The major sewer inflows were located and repaired thus making our sewer pumped to Woodsville back to normal levels. Both issues were on the Railroad Street part of the system and were about 20 feet in the ground and within the water table. Both repairs were either an elbow or tee that failed. We have Dubois and King scheduled to do a comprehensive review of all the sewer system manholes (this was paid by a grant) as soon as the weather allows, this was delayed last fall for some reason.

Three items still being worked on are replacements for each of the following.

1 – Sewer pump, 1 – Water well pump, 1 - spare chemical pump for both chlorine and ortho phosphate.

Another item that should be looked at is emergency generators. The water and sewer systems should both have backup generators in the case of an extended power outage.

Sincerely

Your water and sewer operators

Town of Newbury Fire Department  
Report of the  
Wells River Station  
2025

As of December 31, 2025, the members of the Wells River Station have responded to 79 calls totaling over 611 hours for the year. We responded to several trees, and wires down due to storms, CO alarms, mutual aid calls, alarm activations, EMS assists, and many auto accidents. Most of our accident calls were on I-91. Seems that I-91 is becoming one of our most frequent locations for accidents and is possibly due to the tire ruts which collect water, then the vehicles hydroplane and spin out. As mentioned in last year's report, electric vehicles are becoming more abundant and are on our roads daily. These vehicles, if on fire, pose a much greater risk to the environment and the firefighters from the issues with the battery. Remember all battery powered equipment may have this type of battery and could fail without notice. It is almost impossible to extinguish the battery if on fire. We can apply large amounts of water to try and cool the battery in hopes it may limit the thermal runaway. Items you use daily like your cell phone, laptop computer or tablet have this same type of battery. Studies have shown that the impact on our fire gear is exponentially dangerous, as cleaning the gear after a fire is almost impossible.

Currently we have 14 members on our roster. We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday at 7 pm and have training on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 6 pm. If you know of someone who would like to give back to their community, they can contact any of the fire department members to obtain an application. Being a firefighter is a very rewarding way to give back to your community.

As always please mark your property with your 911 road number. Sometimes it is very difficult for us to find your home without the number visible on the roadway. If you have a fire alarm system that dials out in the event of a fire emergency, please make sure it is going to a reputable alarm company.

The addition of the new fire station in Newbury Village is certainly a big improvement to our department. This added space and very well-lit building makes a great safety upgrade for all involved. Congratulations to Chief Renfrew and crew on this wonderful station.

Thank you to all the community members for your continued support of the fire department.

Our yearly Super Raffle is scheduled for February 21, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted  
Chief Jeffrey Morin  
802-757-2706

**CHECK YOUR SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS  
MONTHLY AND CHANGE THE BATTERIES TWICE A YEAR  
CHECK THE EXPIRATION DATE ON THE BACK OF THE SMOKE  
OR CARBON MONOXIDE UNIT. IF IT IS 7 – 10 YEARS OLD YOU  
MAY NEED TO REPLACE THE ALARM  
YOUR 911 NUMBER NEEDS TO BE VISIBLE AT THE ROAD  
FOR RESPONDING EMS, FIRE OR POLICE**

# Town of Newbury Fire Warden's Report 2025

The number of permits issued for **BRUSH, GRASS, LEAVES AND CLEAN WOOD** in 2025 was 150 a little lower than average of previous years at 170 +. Remember, if you burn without a permit or burn illegal items the town can issue a bill for reimbursement, containment, and extinguishment of the fire. There could also be a fine and or community service. Please do not burn anything other than what is legal and remember:

**WE MAY ONLY ISSUE PERMITS FOR BRUSH, GRASS, LEAVES AND CLEAN WOOD.**

With adequate snow cover on the ground (2-4" min), you may burn without a permit, but we would appreciate a call letting us know that you are going to burn, and remember **YOU MAY BURN BRUSH, GRASS, LEAVES AND CLEAN WOOD.** If you have anything else to burn (such as old buildings, collapsed or partially burned buildings ect.) You must contact the VT Dept. of Air Pollution Control 1-802-272-4088. They will advise you of the procedure to follow. We are receiving more reports of burning without a permit and burning illegal items. When you obtain a burn permit it does not mean you can burn anything you want. Follow the law and burn what is legal.

**TRASH BURN BARRELS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE STATE OF VERMONT!  
CAMPFIRES ARE LEGAL AND REQUIRE NO PERMIT.**

Thank you to all of you who continue to call for permits even when there is snow on the ground.

Fire Warden  
Jeffrey Morin

During the FIRE season, the times for burning are as follows.

**Monday through Friday after 5PM out by 9AM the following day.**

**(Weekends)** Permits **MAY** be issued for **BRUSH, GRASS, LEAVES OR CLEAN WOOD ONLY** during any hours if weather permits, and the fire is out by 9AM Monday. Fires must always be monitored, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR FIRE UNATTENDED!** (Remember your permit is a privilege not a right and it can be revoked at any time by any of the following people whether they issued it or not. Also, the permit holders are bound by State of Vermont Forestry Regulations regarding fire laws.) Please try to call a day ahead for your permit.

**To obtain a fire permit please call one of the following a day in advance if possible.**

**Jeffrey Morin 757-2706**

**Steve Sharf 429-2292**

**Zac Cousino 603-728-5172**

If you get no answer from whom you normally get a permit, call the next person listed. We may not be home during the day so please be patient and wait for one of us to call back. **No call back = no permit!**

**ONLY THE NUMBERS LISTED CAN ISSUE PERMITS**

**DO NOT CALL THE FIRE DEPT**

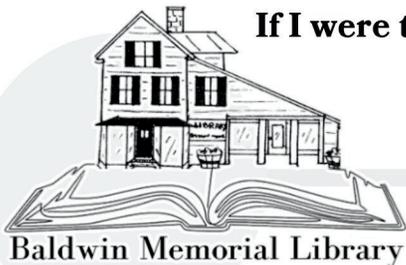
**EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR PERMITS**

**“A LIBRARY OUTRANKS ANY OTHER ONE THING  
A COMMUNITY CAN DO TO BENEFIT ITS PEOPLE.”**  
~Andrew Carnegie

**Baldwin Memorial Library**

33 Main Street North • PO Box 337 • Wells River, VT 05081 • (802) 757-2693

Board of Trustees: Chris Buhner, Lauren Nelson, Stephen Peck, Alicia King, Chip Conquest, Karen Kreis



**If I were to sum up 2025 at Baldwin in one word, it would be COMMUNITY.**

**Community Action:**

Among the many resources we offer, we are proud that human services are among them.

- Food and necessities shelf
- Free clothing exchange
- Application assistance
- Free summer meals

**Community Collaboration :**

Our success would be impossible without help. We are honored to have the opportunity to work with the following organizations:

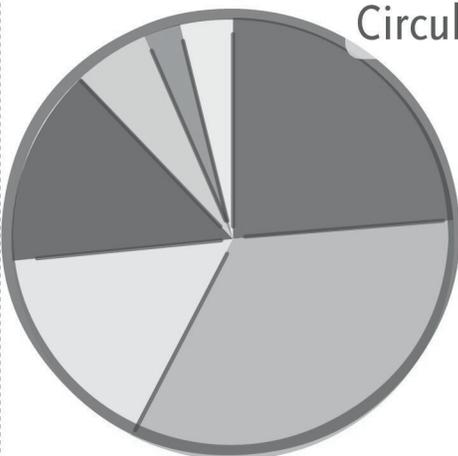
- Children’s Literacy Foundation
  - 302 Cares
  - BMU School
- Newbury Recreation Dept.
- Haverhill Recreation/HARP
  - Hunger Free Vermont

**Community Connection:**

This year we were able to increase the programming that we offer, providing more opportunities for connection.

- Summer events for family fun
  - Afterschool and vacation activities for tweens
- Collaborative arts and activities
  - Local Author Visits

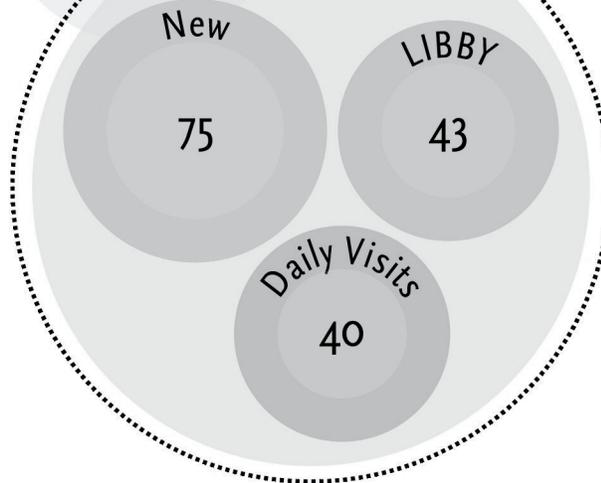
**Circulation: 4,166**



- Libby App: 940
- Adult Books: 1351
- Yth Books: 627
- DVD's: 576
- Periodicals: 220
- Other: 153
- ABLE - Large Print: 107

\*Not show in chart: Interlibrary Loans - Received 121 & Sent 71

**421 Card Holders**



**Professional Community:**

This year I attended three conferences to connect with other library and literacy professionals, and completed:

- VT Certificate of Public Librarianship
- ARSL Library Leadership Institute

Scan QR code to find us on Facebook!



**Community Support:**

This year was filled with community support! From volunteers and advocates to donations of funds, food, books and more, I can not say it enough. . .

**Thank you for your support!**

**This report is respectfully submitted by:**

*Melissa Beaulieu*  
Librarian/Director

Baldwin Memorial Library offers a welcoming and engaging environment that serves our community by providing equitable access to enriching and educational activities and resources.

## Proposals of amendment to the Wells River Library Association's Articles of Incorporation

The Trustees of the Baldwin Memorial Library are proposing to amend the library's Articles of Incorporation. Such amendments must be approved by the legally registered voters of the Village and therefore notice has been provided in the warning for the 2026 Annual Village Meeting. The proposed amendments can be reviewed below: strikethrough indicates language proposed to be removed, underlining indicates language proposed to be added. A library Trustee will be at the meeting to explain the proposals and to answer questions.

### *ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF THE WELLS RIVER LIBRARY ASSOCIATION*

We, the undersigned, ~~all citizens of the United States~~, being the current officers and trustees of the Wells River Library Association which was first incorporated on Oct. 20, 1906, do hereby certify that the membership of the association ~~has~~ voted ~~unanimously at the annual meeting held on January 9, 1979, on March 17th,~~ 2026, to amend the articles of incorporation to read as follows:

#### Article 1

The name of the corporation shall be the Wells River Library Association. The principal office of the corporation shall be in the village of Wells River, in the town of Newbury, Orange County, Vermont.

#### Article 2

The members of the corporation shall be the legally registered voters of the village of Wells River. Each year at the annual village meeting they shall elect two trustees, who need not be members of the corporation, to serve three-year terms on the library board. Trustees to fill vacancies occurring during the year may be

appointed by the remaining library trustees to serve until the next village meeting, when trustees shall be elected to fill the unexpired terms.

~~Within two weeks~~ At their first meeting following the annual village meeting the six library trustees shall meet and choose a president and vice president from among their number to serve for a term of one year. They shall also appoint a clerk, and a treasurer ~~and a librarian~~, who need not be trustees. The library trustees shall have the general management and oversight of the association, and of the Baldwin Memorial Library, and may appoint a librarian and assistant librarians, prescribe their duties, fix their compensation and remove them at pleasure. They may dispense funds, make policies and perform all other duties customary to their offices. They shall arrange annually for an independent audit of the ~~books and~~ accounts of the association and shall make a report annually to the village trustees. The library trustees shall meet at least four times during the year, with notice of each meeting posted in the library for at least one week before the meeting. An affirmative vote of at least four of the six trustees, either physically present or ~~by signed proxy~~ attending a meeting remotely, shall be necessary to pass a motion. Contracts will be considered binding when signed by the duly elected president of the association. All meetings and records of the association shall be open to the public unless the trustees vote to close them for a specific reason, which must be stated in the minutes.

### Article 3

The Wells River Library Association is formed and continued exclusively for literary and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Its activities shall consist of maintaining, supporting and operating the Baldwin Memorial Library, a free public library in Wells River, Vermont. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the trustees shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the association shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and

the association shall not participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

#### Article 4

Upon dissolution of the corporation, the board of trustees shall, after paying all liabilities, dispose of all remaining assets exclusively for the purposes of the association, either to the village of Wells River to maintain a public library or to some other organization which qualifies as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

#### Article 5

These articles may be amended at the annual village meeting or at any special village meeting warned for this purpose. Notice of the proposed amendments must be included in the warning of the meeting.

WRAP  
WELLS RIVER ACTION PROGRAM  
Post Office Box 538  
Wells River, Vermont 05081

President – James Merriam  
Vice President – Kelsey Root-Winchester  
Secretary – Judi Waterman  
Treasurer – Lauren Nelson  
[wrapwr@gmail.com](mailto:wrapwr@gmail.com)

It has been a privilege to serve as President of WRAP for the last year to continue our work of welcoming and serving the Wells River community. With some significant business and residential turnover in the last year it has been especially meaningful to extend the same warm Wells River Welcome that I received when I came into the community four years ago. We hope that our little village with a big heart can continue to be the vibrant crossroad and meeting place for Community.

We are especially grateful for the strong support we have so reliably received from the Town of Newbury and from the many community volunteers who make our work possible.

Housing – WRAP works with the 29 Wells River Historic Housing apartments now owned by Evernorth under a partnership agreement. WRAP continues its role as a link between Evernorth, EP Property Management Corp, and the Wells River community.

Annual Meeting – The 2025 Annual meeting was held on February 16th, 2025 in person at the Wells River Congregational Church. The guest speaker was Susan Culp the chair of the Newbury Selectboard and was catered by Hatchbox.

WRAP Up - Volume 19, Issue 1 of the WRAP Up community newsletter was published in May. The newsletters were hand-delivered to the apartments and businesses in Wells River and were mailed to Wells River property owners through the generosity of Wells River Savings Bank. The WRAP Up provides ongoing information about WRAP's programs as well as Wells River community and business news. It couldn't be published without all the volunteer writers, photographers, and the production and distribution crew.

Flower Barrels and Holiday Lights - During the spring, summer and fall, bright flowers graced the village with a variety of colors, though this year's severe drought made taking care of the barrels more difficult than usual. Holiday trees and lights brightened the village during the winter season. All flowers, barrels and trees were purchased locally.

Rowe Community Garden - The 14th season of the garden was one of the best ever! Generous donations of manure and fencing allowed the gardener to supply three

different food shelves – the Virginia Onorato Emergency Food Shelf at the Congregational Church, Little Rivers Health Care and the Baldwin Memorial Library, with a variety of fresh veggies. Collections for Share the Harvest at the Baldwin Memorial Library now than filled a wheelbarrow nearly every week from June to October.

This year also saw fruit trees join the garden for the first time. There's no peach so delicious as a Wells River peach right off the tree!

There will FREE garden plots available in April 2026 Contact Janis Moore at 802 376 6044.

Welcome Center – Hundreds of visitors from across the country and assisting the world use the picnic area, bathroom, and phone/internet connections throughout the summer and fall months of operation. We are thankful for Wells River Chevrolet for allowing us to use internet and to Judi Waterman for organizing the volunteers, and training the many new volunteers welcomed this year. If you would like to be a volunteer greeter this year, email WRAP at [wrapwr@gmail.com](mailto:wrapwr@gmail.com)

So Long Summer – Hello Fall Festival –The 13th annual festival was held August 30th. The weather cooperated and this was the biggest year yet with over 80 vendors and in store specials and an Antique Tractor Ride and Show sponsored by Wells River Chevrolet. Both sides of Main Street plus Railroad Street were lined with a wide variety of food, retail, and crafts vendors as well as the Library book sale and community and non-profit booths providing information.

302 Cares -The 302 Cares Coalition, a subcommittee of WRAP, is a group of individuals and organizations who agree to work together for the common goal of reducing substance use, misuse among youth and adults. They have held a number of programs for the community, Drug Take-back days, Mail-Back prescription drug containers, providing information during BMU Parent Orientation, participation in the So Long Summer Hello Fall festival, coordinated with Wells River's Baldwin Library and the Groton Library to provide educational materials and a family dinner nights at local schools. Currently, several members of 302 Cares meet monthly with a prevention coalition at BMU and one in Haverhill with the purpose of sharing information and exploring ways to work together. We welcome new members and would like to hear from you if you would like to be included on our email distribution list. Meetings are typically held on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m at BMU and via zoom. For further information, or to be placed on the email distribution list, contact coalition coordinator Kelsey Root-Winchester at [302cares@gmail.com](mailto:302cares@gmail.com) or visit on facebook/302cares. Check out their new website [302cares.org](http://302cares.org)

WRAP mourns the passing of founding organizer and long time member Sandy Boyce. Her absence deeply felt by all in Wells River, as is the passing of long time volunteer Dean Rowden. They will be dearly missed.

Thank You to the Baldwin Memorial Library, the Wells River Congregational Church and the Wells River Wellness Hall for providing space for WRAP to meet; WYKR, Bridge-Weekly/Sho-Case, Journal Opinion, and Trendy Times for their ongoing coverage of our

events and local businesses for sponsoring all of the advertising publicity for the So Long Summer-Hello Fall Festival.

Submitted by

James Merriam, President

## **302 Cares: Building a Healthier Community Together**

As we celebrate our 9th year, 302 Cares—a substance misuse coalition and subcommittee of the Wells River Action Program (WRAP)—continues its mission to foster a healthier, substance-free community. Covering Wells River, Newbury, Groton, Ryegate, and Topsham, Vermont, our coalition works tirelessly to engage, educate, and inspire residents to reduce substance misuse and promote wellness.

### **Who We Are**

302 Cares is a community-driven initiative committed to addressing substance misuse through education, prevention, and support. We meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Blue Mountain Union School (BMU), and everyone is welcome to join us.

### **Our Growing Impact**

Over the past year, we've strengthened our collaborations with Newbury Elementary School and Blue Mountain Union School and have expanded our efforts to Waits River Valley School. Through these partnerships, we provide crucial resources on substance prevention, mentoring, and vaping education.

### **Our Work in Action**

Since its founding, 302 Cares has spearheaded and participated in numerous community-focused initiatives, including:

- **Mail-Back Prescription Drug Containers** in partnership with the Vermont Department of Health.
- Informational sessions during BMU Parent Orientation.
- **Family Dinner Nights** to promote healthy conversations and connections.
- Educational collaborations with Wells River's Baldwin Library and Groton Library.

We are looking forward to partnering with Up For Learning to offer the Getting to "Y" program at Waits River Valley School. This is a program that empowers middle and high school students to lead community change by analyzing local data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

### **Join Us**

302 Cares is always looking for passionate individuals to join our efforts. Together, we can create a stronger, healthier community. Contact us at [302cares@gmail.com](mailto:302cares@gmail.com) or connect with us on Facebook at [facebook.com/302Cares](https://facebook.com/302Cares). Explore our new website at [302cares.org](https://302cares.org).

Let's work together to make a difference!



# Vermont 250<sup>TH</sup> Commemoration

# NEWBURY

## RESILIENCE IN NEWBURY: *Past, Present & Future*

SPONSORED BY: Newbury Conservation Commission | Newbury Historical Society | Daughters of the American Revolution - Oxbow Chapter  
Wells River Action Program | Tenney Memorial Library | Baldwin Memorial Library | Newbury Womans Club | The Newbury School of Weaving

## 2026 - A YEAR OF FESTIVITIES

### JANUARY

#### JANUARY 8 - KICK OFF EVENT!

Newbury Womans Club Book Group Meeting  
("Light Pirate") 1st in Series on Resilience in Newbury  
7:00-9:00PM Tenney Library

### FEBRUARY

#### FEBRUARY 23-29

250 Years of "Getting from Here to There" in Newbury  
A Diorama/Display at the Town Office - by Larry Scott

### MARCH

#### MARCH 3

Town Meeting • VT 250th Remarks by Brian Emerson  
Original Poetry by Syd Lea to be Read

#### MARCH 22

Maple Sugaring in Newbury - The Tradition Continues  
Head Waters Farm Sugarhouse Tour - Saxie Welch Trail  
1:00-3:00PM

#### MARCH 22

Puffin Presentation by Ian Clark  
Tenney Memorial Library 2:30PM (Snow Date March 29)

#### MARCH 26

Bayley Hazen Expedition Anniversary 250 Years of Song  
Concert – Wells River Congregational Church

### APRIL

#### APRIL 9

NES Presentation – The History of Newbury Elementary  
School • Kids Program

#### APRIL 12

NES Presentation – The History of Newbury Elementary  
School • Adults Program

### ARBOR DAY TREE PLANTING

APRIL 25 Wells River (w/ BMU)

APRIL 26 West Newbury

MAY 1 Newbury Common – Kids Arbor Day w/ NES

### MAY

#### MAY 2

How Resilient Will Newbury Be? Readings & Book  
Discussion: "2050: Vermonters Take a Swipe at the Future"  
Compiled by Bill Mares, 4:00 PM Tenney Memorial Library

#### MAY 16

DAR Chapter House Open 1:00-3:00 PM  
Chamberlin Ferry Marker Dedication 4:00 PM

#### MAY 17

Paddle the Border (Rogers Rangers Re-enactment)

#### MAY 25

Honoring Revolutionary War Heroes Event

### JUNE

#### JUNE 19

Juneteenth Celebration Program with Michelle Sherburne  
6:30 PM at Tenney Memorial Library

#### JUNE 20

Revolutionary Women 2:00 PM DAR Chapter House

#### JUNE 27

Annual Wells River Community Picnic - Old-Time Ice Cream  
Making and Activities 11:00 AM Berry Memorial Field

### JULY

#### JULY 4

Revolutionary Flag Raising & Travel to Wells River  
Wells River-Woodsville Parade & Fireworks Display

#### JULY 18

Jeremiah Ingalls and Sacred Harp Singing  
at Town House 10AM-3PM

#### JULY 25

DAR Open House 1:00-4:00 PM  
- Archeologist Robert Goodby Program 2:00 PM

### AUGUST

#### AUGUST 8

Tucker Mountain 5K  
West Newbury Summer Festival

#### AUGUST 15

Jacob Bayley: Man, Myth, Legend 2:00 PM  
DAR Chapter House

#### AUGUST 29

Tucker Mountain Day

### SEPTEMBER

#### SEPTEMBER 5

WRAP's So Long Summer Hello Fall Festival 9:00AM-2:00PM  
WRAP Wells River Walking Tour - during Festival, time TBA

#### SEPTEMBER 19

Oxbow Cemetery Tour

#### SEPTEMBER 26

Oxbow DAR Period Room at Haverhill History Day

### OCTOBER

#### OCTOBER 3

It's Monumental" Quest Group Activity Organizer: NHS

#### OCTOBER 17

Royalton Raid 246th Anniversary (at the Bailey Club)  
2:00 PM

### NOVEMBER

#### NOVEMBER 7 & 8

Newbury Womans Club Exhibit:  
History of the Old Village Church

#### NOVEMBER 14

Epitome of Resilience: A Study of Profiling, Eugenics, &  
Institutionalization - Presented by Michelle Sherburne  
4:00 PM Tenney Memorial Library

### DECEMBER

VT 250TH WRAP UP EVENTS: Christmas Concert and Dance

DECEMBER 6 First Congregational Church of Newbury

DECEMBER 13 Wells River Congregational Church

DECEMBER 20 West Newbury Congregational Church

For more information on these events, visit  
[newburyvt.org/222/Newbury-Celebrates-the-250th-Anniversary](http://newburyvt.org/222/Newbury-Celebrates-the-250th-Anniversary)



Supported by a Vermont 250th Community Planning Grant with funding provided by Vermont Covered. This project is supported in part by the Vermont Arts Council, which receives support in part from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, and the State of Vermont through funds from Vermont's 250th Anniversary Commission.

**Village of Wells River**  
**Annual Meeting – March 18, 2025**  
**Minutes**

Village Trustee Chair Chip Conquest called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was audio-recorded.

**Article 1: To elect Village officers by floor vote.**

Jean Welch nominated Brian Emerson to serve as Village President (Moderator); this was seconded by Kelsey Root-Winchester. With no further nominations, Brian Emerson was unanimously elected for a one-year term by voice vote.

Mr. Emerson led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. With no objections from the floor, he dispensed with a reading of the warning.

To serve as Village Auditors, June Griswold nominated Mary Corey, Judi Waterman, and Ashley Fellows. Richard Roderick seconded the nominations. With no further nominations, Mary Corey, Judi Waterman, and Ashley Fellows were elected unanimously for one-year terms by voice vote.

To serve as BMU School Board member, Kelsey Root-Winchester nominated Alyssa Smith with a second by Richard Roderick. With no further nominations, Alyssa Smith was unanimously elected for a two-year term by voice vote.

To serve as BMU School Board member, Rev. James Merriam nominated Kelsey Root-Winchester with a second by Richard Roderick. With no further nominations, Kelsey Root-Winchester was unanimously elected for a three-year term by voice vote.

Anticipating the possibility of several candidates for an office, Brian Emerson reviewed the guidelines from *Roberts Rules of Order* which require a majority vote.

To serve as Trustee, John Mahnker nominated Chip Conquest who declined the nomination. Mr. Mahnker then nominated Eric White with a second by Richard Roderick. With no further nominations, Eric White was unanimously elected for a three-year term by voice vote.

To serve as Village Clerk, Rev. James Merriam nominated Mary Schilke with a second by Richard Roderick. With no further nominations, Mary Schilke was unanimously elected by voice vote for a one-year term.

To serve as Village Treasurer, Richard Roderick nominated Mary Schilke with a second by Rev. James Merriam. With no further nominations, Mary Schilke was unanimously elected by voice vote for a one-year term.

To serve as Village Tax Collector, Richard Roderick nominated Mary Schilke with a second by Rev. James Merriam. With no further nominations, Mary Schilke was unanimously elected by voice vote for a one-year term.

Chip Conquest reported that a third vacancy has just occurred on the Board of Trustees for the Baldwin Memorial Library and asked if a third Trustee can legally be elected at this meeting. Referring to *Roberts Rules of Order*, Brian Emerson explained that the new vacancy must be filled by appointment by the Library Trustees until the next Village Annual Meeting, at which time an election may be legally warned.

Richard Roderick nominated the following four candidates for two open positions on the Baldwin Memorial Library board: Steve Peck, Jennifer Clogston, Lauren Nelson, and Alicia King. Ashley Fellows seconded the nominations. To comply with *Roberts Rules of Order*, the President called for two rounds of voting by paper ballot. In the first round, Steve Peck received 15 votes, Lauren Nelson received 7 votes, and Alicia King received one vote. With a majority of votes, Steve Peck was elected to serve a three-year term. In the second round, Jennifer Clogston received two votes, Lauren Nelson received 16 votes, and Alicia King received 5 votes. With a majority of votes, Lauren Nelson was elected for a three-year term.

**Article 2: To hear and dispose of Village Reports.**

Each report was then considered in order with opportunity for questions and discussion.

Looking at the Treasurer's Fiscal Report, Richard Roderick asked where payment for the Recording Secretary is included. Treasurer Mary Schilke responded that this is included in the salaries line item of the budget.

June Griswold requested an update on the Water & Sewer Department, particularly regarding progress in solving the sewage system leaks. Chip Conquest provided a summary. Three substantial leaks in the sewer line were located and repaired, but output monitoring continued to show significant leakage. The Trustees have engaged Dubois & King to further troubleshoot the problem and are now waiting for the engineering firm to submit a scope of work proposal and a contract. This work will be funded through the Revolving Loan Fund.

Mr. Conquest also summarized how the oil spill from the Baldwin Block has been handled. The Village water supply has been consistently and frequently tested, showing no contamination to date. The property owner hired an environmental engineer to remove the contaminated soil and to dig additional test holes for continued monitoring for infiltration. The testing schedule will be maintained until the State indicates it may stop.

Responding to a question from Richard Roderick about storage of the contaminated soil, Mr. Conquest confirmed that it is still being held at Paddy Acres but that it will be moved according to State regulations and deadlines.

Rev. James Merriam introduced himself as the newly-elected President of the Wells River Action Program (WRAP).

Kelsey Root-Winchester announced that 302 Cares holds its regular meetings on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 2:45 pm at Blue Mountain Union School and on Zoom. All are welcome.

Richard Roderick asked how the article "Let Me Tell You About Wells River" by Bob Murphy came to be included in the Village Annual Report. Jean Welch responded that she felt it might be of interest and recommended its inclusion.

As moved by Nelson Baker and seconded by Richard Roderick, the assembly accepted all Village Reports by unanimous voice vote.

**Article 3: To see if the Village will authorize the Trustees to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.**

As moved by Kelsey Root-Winchester and seconded by Richard Roderick, the article passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Article 4: To see if the Village will vote to collect taxes as follows: ½ payable by September 20, 2025 and ½ payable by November 20, 2025 and set interest rate: 1% per month for first 3 months and 1.5% thereafter with delinquent penalty of 8% after November 20, 2025.**

As moved by Nelson Baker and seconded by Richard Roderick, the article passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Article 5: Shall the voters of the Village of Wells River raise and appropriate the sum of \$353,190.00 for the operating budget for the Village for the 2025-2026 fiscal year?**

As moved by Kelsey Root-Winchester and seconded by Richard Roderick, the article passed unanimously by voice vote, following Mr. Roderick's additional comments regarding a record of the Recording Secretary's salary.

The Village President then opened the floor for any other non-binding comments and questions. He highlighted the photographs of Russell Sulham and Don Waterman on the back cover of the Annual Report, spoke of the contributions made to the community by both gentlemen, and called for a moment of silence in their memory. He also commended Michael Thomas who was named by the Cohase Chamber of Commerce as Citizen of the Year and whose photograph was featured on the front cover of the Annual Report.

June Griswold commented on the rapidly deteriorating condition of Schaeffer Hill Road, asking about plans for repair. Chip Conquest stated that the Trustees recognize the problem which will require major and expensive reconstructive work. The Village has received funding for some interim mitigation efforts. Mary Schilke added that Road Foreman Shannon Young has been monitoring and documenting the situation and that the State Agency of Transportation is also aware of the problem. Michael Thomas added that the Town has recently convened a Capital

Budgeting Working Group. Schaeffer Hill will be on the list of urgent capital needs, although there will not be immediate results.

Rev. James Merriam asked about the status of tax sales. Mary Schilke replied that two property-owners have agreed to payment plans to catch up on taxes. The remaining four properties are temporarily on hold due to new State regulations requiring that all asbestos and hazardous materials be removed by the municipality prior to sale.

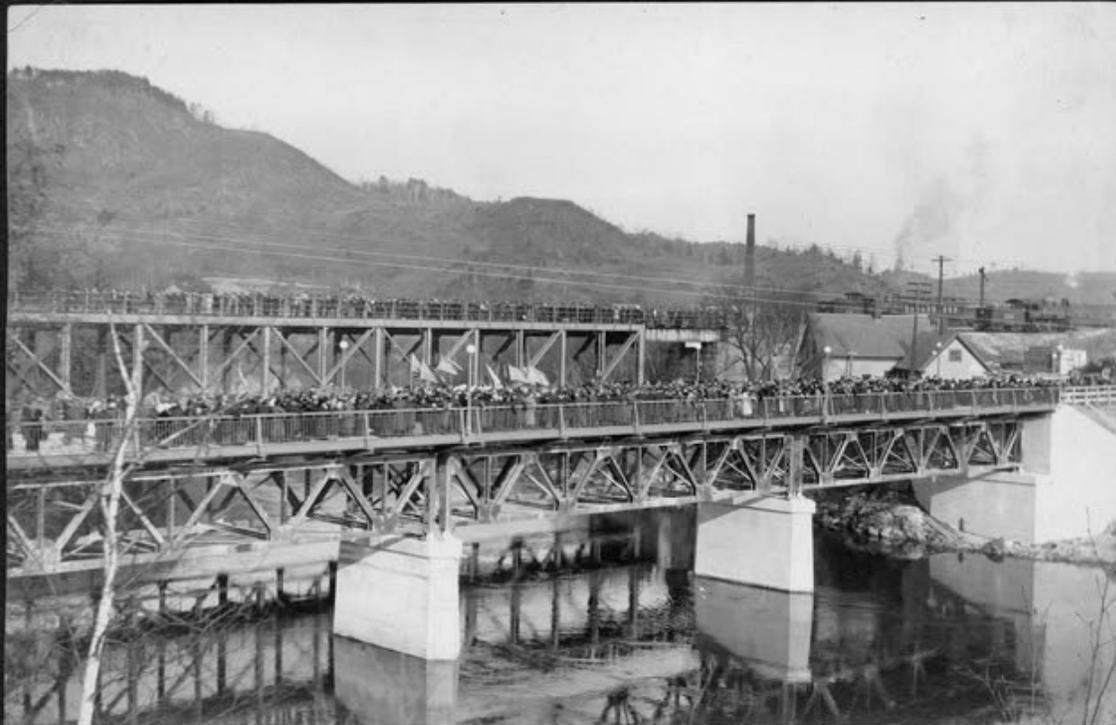
Nelson and Rachel Baker expressed thanks to Chip Conquest for his service as Trustee and to Jeff Morin for his service in several capacities, including Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director. The assembly responded with applause.

Richard Roderick suggested that the Village revisit the model of contracting for road maintenance in case hiring an employee might now be more cost-effective.

The meeting adjourned with a motion by John Mahnker and a second by Steve Peck.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Hewes,  
Recording Secretary



RANGER'S BRIDGE DEDICATION  
WOODSVILLE, NH. - WELLS RIVER, VT.  
GOV. CLEMENT, VT. - GOV. KEYES, N.H.  
1917

