

**TOWN OF HIGHGATE**  
**Selectboard Meeting & Town Meeting Info.**  
**Thursday, February 19, 2026 @ 6:30pm**  
**Approved Minutes**

NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated

ZOOM LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88920887436>

**A. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order by Merry Souza, Chair @ 6:33pm, 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** – Merry Souza, Chair; Vern Brosky III, Vice-Chair; Richard Flint; Chad Carr

**Highgate Office Staff** – Wendi Dusablon, Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk; Shelley Laroche, Treasurer & Delinquent Tax Collector *absent* – *Fredi Hayes, Town Administrator*

**Public** – Alice (Sue) Cota; Ty Choiniere; Henry Rainville; Rebecca Manning; Keith Ploof; Richard J. Noel; Virginia Holiman; Corey McCuin; Cathy Chugkowski; Owen McCuin; Deb McCuin; Robyn Klein (via Zoom)

**B. Public Comments**

None

**C. Town Report Dedication**

Merry read aloud from the 2025 Town Report Dedication to the McCuin Brothers – Owen & Corey! Each were presented with a plaque and some photos were taken. Highgate is very fortunate and grateful to have residents like Owen and Corey. Thank you both for all you do and have done. A copy of the town report dedication can be found at the end of these minutes and is also on the inside cover of the 2025 town report.

**D. Town Meeting Information Session / Review of Warned Articles**

The Selectboard read aloud from the town meeting day warning. Followed by questions and discussion. The full town meeting day warning, as well as sample ballots and other town meeting day information is attached to the end of these minutes. Ty Choiniere asked about article #6 and police patrol services and if that included dispatching fees – yes. Shelley offered to look up more information on this as well. There is no report from FCSO in the town report. They did not submit one, but they do send monthly reports to the town. All departments and contracted services are emailed well in advance of our town report deadline and a reminder is also sent. This year our hard deadline was January 15<sup>th</sup>. MVR also did not submit anything for the town report. Ty suggested this be a requirement as part of contracts going forward. He is not saying that he is not happy with FCSO services in any way, he would just like to see something in our annual report. The Selectboard is working towards quarterly updates from departments and contracted services as well. Keith Ploof asked for an update on the Casella contract negotiations. We signed a six-month extension and are still negotiating, but it is going well. Ty asked about cemetery mowing. Mr. Paquette did not request an increase for this year, so that stayed the same. Ty had questions about the arena renovation project and the amount of taxpayer dollars used for phase one. It was funded with grant money, fund balance, and fundraising money left over from our previous renovations. Shelley has not been asked that prior to tonight, but she can get exact numbers for Ty. Keith also inquired about impact fees. We went through this process several years ago and it has come up again many times to look back into this. The Planning

Commission has taken up that discussion again recently and it is on their radar. It could take many years to see that through to a reality for Highgate, if we decide to move ahead. Richard Noel asked about the Paws for Thought building and why that has not been further pursued as the voters wished to see. Merry stated that we already own properties we are trying to deal with (Village Core / Mill Hill, as examples), and the board can't see taking on more especially with unknowns if it will even work as a future library location. The owners have been very patient with us and are planning to market the property in the spring. We appreciate their willingness to work with the town and hang on to the property for as long as they did. Richard is disappointed that the library trustees were not cooperative with the process. Henry Rainville is on the fence about impact fees and doesn't know a lot about them, but he would rather see businesses come to town. He asked about the airport region and since the water and sewer has been expanded, where is that all at? We were told it would make that area of Highgate boom with industry and nobody has heard anything! Mr. Harrison had planned an 8-lot subdivision abutting the airport. He came to the DRB many many months ago and has not been back to continue the process. He also came to the Selectboard last year to present his vision. Vern Brosky III attended a VTrans meeting about the FC Airport in Highgate. He stated that because of upper management at the state level, it seems they don't want the airport to grow any more. It is extremely frustrating on all levels and it's all state politics! Our representatives are aware. The state seems to be driving the bus of what can and will happen there. As an example, if you use the wrong paint colors at your hangar unit, you will get fined. Endangered flowers at the site were brought up. There was further discussion about businesses that had, at one time, expressed great interest in coming here. Highgate has done our part, the state needs to do theirs! Merry will reach out to Tim Smith at FCIDC. There was talk of BETA coming to our airport, but they have purchased the Caledonia airport. Keith asked for updates on the village core water / wastewater projects. The wastewater piece is moving along and the water piece is in the very early stages, we just completed a water feasibility study and will undergo testing on the lot owned by the school district, known as the Cassidy lot. We do have businesses ready to hook on to the wastewater system and letters of interest from residents as well. Ty noted that he saw the new-to-us pumper / tanker that was delivered this week to HVFD. He thanked HVFD leadership for finding a truck that met their needs and was fiscally responsible with funds they already had within the CIP. Sue Cota asked about the house at 28 Mill Hill and why it has not been torn down yet. We discovered very recently that the property needs to have abatement work done before demo can take place. We will have to have an RFP issued for the abatement work. Initial testing, done this week, shows that asbestos needs to be dealt with, and proper protocols followed. The former Machia house is on a completely different timeline and involves many different funding sources. The Mill Hill house was supposed to be far less complicated and shorter timeline, but that has not been the case. We will need to get bids for the abatement work at 28 Mill Hill, so this project timeline will be stretched out even further. Henry asked how this got missed initially. That is a great question, and the board is waiting for an answer to it. Henry stated that after watching the last meeting, and he has said this before, that how we are creating our RFPs is very important. We are putting ourselves in a position for no one to want to bid on our jobs. When we realized that no asbestos report was on file for 28 Mill Hill, we immediately contacted Atlas who came to Highgate today, 2/19/26, and took samples for testing. The testing will be expedited and we should have official results by Monday. Based on what they saw, we were told to plan on having to issue an RFP for asbestos abatement. Beth from Atlas will also help us with this process, she has been very gracious in offering to help us fix this situation and as timely as possible. We appreciate her and Atlas very much. Beth will help us to issue a proper RFP for the abatement work at 28 Mill Hill. We did not assume that there was no asbestos at the property, that is what we were told, and that was also stated in the RFP that was issued for the demo work. The contractor selected, Mr. Guilmette, also asked for an asbestos report on a few occasions. After being unable to locate one, digitally or hard copy, we contacted Atlas to assist us. We have set aside ARPA funds in the amount of \$69,000.00 for remediation and demolition at 28 Mill Hill. Ty asked if the board and the public were given false information from the bank that we purchased the property from – no. If such a document exists with regard to asbestos at the

property, we can't find it. The state does not have any information either. Office staff contacted Atlas as soon as we realized the situation needed to be rectified and testing needed to take place. The board was verbally told and it was part of the RFP that no abatement was required at 28 Mill Hill. We hope to have an RFP published early next week, with the assistance of Beth at Atlas. There were questions if the well was located at the property – yes, and it was marked. We have had unwanted visitors at the property, and a “no trespass” order was issued. VSP was very quick to respond. Mr. Guilmette will do a sweep of the property prior to any demolition. Rebecca Manning asked if there are any updates on the Route 207 bridge. No, other than the bridge repairs are on a schedule and VTrans is aware of it's condition. Circling back to the airport discussion, Vern would like to invite Cliff Coy to a future meeting for an update, as well as Tim Smith from FCIDC. There were no further questions or comments.

#### **E. Town Clerk – Wendi Dusablon**

- Motion by Richard Flint to approve the minutes from February 5, 2026, as written. The motion was seconded by Chad Carr – **APPROVED**.
- **Town Meeting Updates:** Absentee ballots are available any time by contacting Wendi. We have sent out approximately 60 so far, which is a good number for us for town meeting. Polls will be open 7am – 7pm at Highgate Sports Arena on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Fully Australian ballot voting – no floor meeting. Town reports are in circulation all over town or a pdf is on our website, there is a stack available here tonight as well. Copies of sample ballots – town and school – were shared and are available to view all over town or on our website or social media pages. We share a ton of information on voting in many different ways – both hard copy and digitally. You can find the information you are looking for easily, contact Wendi with any questions. Office hours the week of March 2-6 are posted. MVSD mailed out a budget flyer which is very informative. The parking lot paving and lighting project is a separate question on their ballot. MVSD held their informational meeting on 2/17 – the video and minutes are available. Appointed position letters of interest are due to Wendi by 2/26. Appointments will begin on 3/5/26 after town meeting day. All information on town meeting can be found at the end of these minutes.
- Dog licensing is going well and that deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup> by 4pm. Prices increase after that. There are now THREE rabies clinics in our area to take advantage of: Franklin on March 8; Swanton on March 14; Highgate on March 28. All three flyers can be found at the end of these minutes for full information.
- The town clerk's office has been extremely busy with town meeting prep, absentee voting, dog licensing, arena invoicing for ice rental and advertising, excess weight permits, land postings, and other day-to-day tasks. Please leave a message if we don't happen to answer the phone, we will get right back to you. Thank you for your understanding.

#### **F. Town Treasurer – Shelley Laroche**

- Motion by Chad Carr to approve and sign the check warrants. The motion was seconded by Vern Brosky III – **APPROVED**.
- The delinquent tax balance is \$177,775.40 as of earlier this week.

#### **G. Selectboard Items**

- At a previous meeting, the board made a motion to work with Clay Point Associates for building materials abatement oversight at 14 St. Armand Road. The contract for this is now before the Selectboard for approval and signature. Motion by Vern Brosky III to approve and sign the Clay Point Associates contract in the amount of \$500.00 for bid administration and \$13,820.00 for project monitoring, management, and reporting. The motion was seconded by Chad Carr – **APPROVED**. Shelley noted that Clay Point and NRPC will wait for Fredi to return to the office for anything further on this and that one week wasn't going to impact the overall project timeline.

- Virginia Holiman asked if anything from the 28 Mill Hill house would be saved. That is up to the demolition contractor.

Motion by Richard Flint to exit the regular Selectboard meeting @ 7:26pm. The motion was seconded by Vern Brosky III – **APPROVED.**

**H. Executive Session**

Pursuant to Vermont State Statute, Section 313: Motion by Richard Flint for Wendi Dusablon and Shelley Laroche to join the board in executive session to discuss contractual and personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Vern Brosky III – **APPROVED.** Motion by Merry Souza to exit executive session @ 8:50pm. The motion was seconded by Vern Brosky III – **APPROVED.**

**I. Adjournment**

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

Respectfully submitted by:

Wendi Dusablon 3/5/26

Wendi Dusablon  
Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk

Minutes Approved by:

Richard Flint

Highgate Selectboard

## The 2025 Highgate Town Report is dedicated to the McCuin Brothers, Owen McCuin III and Corey McCuin

Born and raised in Highgate, Vermont, Owen and Corey are the sons of the late Owen McCuin Jr. and Elizabeth McCuin. Owen Curtis McCuin III was born on May 10, 1956, and Corey Scott McCuin was born on April 14, 1958. From an early age, they developed deep roots in the community that would shape a lifetime of service and commitment to the town they proudly call home.

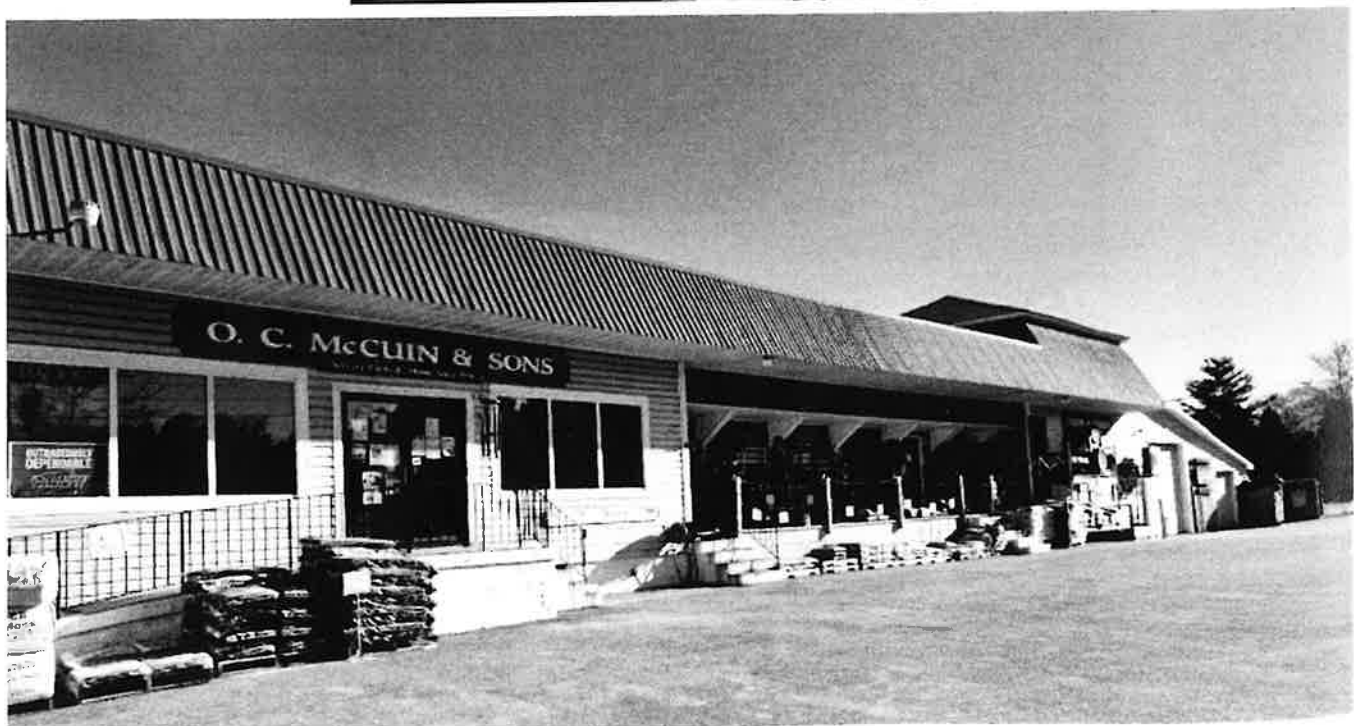
The McCuin Brothers are well known throughout Highgate, most notably for their family business, OC McCuin and Sons. "McCuin's", has proudly served the area for over 105 years, spanning three generations. Under their leadership, the business has grown steadily, expanding its services, customer base, and workforce while remaining grounded in the values on which it was founded. This growth has strengthened the company, supported local jobs, and provided dependable service to customers throughout Highgate and the surrounding communities.

Both brothers served as volunteer firefighters, demonstrating a personal dedication to the safety and well-being of their neighbors. Their generosity has extended throughout Highgate in countless ways, including ongoing donations and sponsorships to local organizations. They recognized and thanked their customers by hosting customer appreciation days, reinforcing the strong relationships they built within the community.

Owen and Corey also showed a deep commitment to Highgate's youth. They volunteered their time and various equipment to help maintain the Little League fields, coached youth sports during their children's younger years, and even built an ice rink long before a town arena existed.

Through their hard work, reliability, and dedication, Owen and Corey have not only continued a proud family legacy but have also made a lasting contribution to the strength and character of Highgate.

This dedication honors their enduring commitment, their profound impact on the community, and the pride they bring to Highgate through both their business and lives of service.



# PUBLIC NOTICE



## The Town of Highgate

### **2026 TOWN MEETING** **INFORMATION SESSION**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026 @ 6:30PM**

*AS PART OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED SELECTBOARD MEETING  
@ HIGHGATE MUNICIPAL BUILDING – 2996 VT ROUTE 78*

**PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON OR USE THE ZOOM LINK:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88920887436>**

**REMINDERS.....**

- ✓ Town Meeting Day is Tuesday, March 3, 2026 – 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 IN MARCH 2024.
- ✓ 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](mailto: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 voter registration is available at the polls.

## 2026 Town Meeting Warning ~ Highgate Vermont

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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 3, 2026 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 5 years
- b) One Library Trustee for a term of 4 years remaining on a 5 year term
- c) One Library Trustee for a term of 5 years
- d) One Moderator for the ensuing year
- e) One Selectboard Member for a term of 2 years remaining on a 3 year term
- f) One Selectboard Member for a term of 3 years
- g) One Town Clerk for a term of 3 years

**ARTICLE #2:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate set the final date of payment for FY2026/2027 property taxes to be **Thursday, October 29, 2026** with payments to be received in the town office by 4:00pm?

**ARTICLE #3:** 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 #4:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$731,500** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Capital Improvement Plan**, with an estimated **\$663,800** to be raised by taxes?


**ARTICLE #5:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$1,333,807** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Highway Fund**, with an estimated **\$975,357** to be raised by taxes?

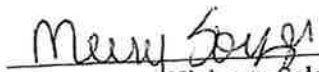
**ARTICLE #6:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$1,638,955** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **General Fund**, with an estimated **\$737,139** to be raised by taxes?

# 2026 Town Meeting Warning ~ Highgate Vermont

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Dated at Highgate Vermont this 8<sup>th</sup> of January, 2026:

  
Attest: Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

  
Merry Souza, Highgate Selectboard Chair

  
Richard Flint, Highgate Selectboard Member

  
Chad Carr, Highgate Selectboard Member

Vernon Brosky III, Highgate Selectboard Vice-Chair

- **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 3, 2026 @ Highgate Sports Arena, located @ 243 Gore Road.
- Register to vote by contacting the Town Clerk 802-868-5002 or [wdusablon@highgatevt.org](mailto:wdusablon@highgatevt.org), or visit the My Voter Page at <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>. Same day voter registration is also available at the polls.
- Absentee ballots are available upon request – contact the Town Clerk directly, stop by, or request yours through the My Voter Page (info above).
- Return ballots at the polls on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, by mail, during our public 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 3, 2026, in order to be counted.
- The Town Meeting Informational Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 19, 2026 @ 6:30pm, as part of the regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting. Attend in-person or participate remotely via Zoom with the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88920887436>.

## TOWN MEETING DAY IN HIGHGATE TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026

- Polls will be open Tuesday, March 3, 2026 from 7am – 7pm at Highgate Sports Arena, 243 Gore Road.
- **NO FLOOR MEETING** – we are a fully Australian ballot voting town, as voted on and approved in March 2024.
- Informational meeting on all Town Meeting Day articles (town articles) will be held on Thursday, February 19, 2026 @ 6:30pm as part of the regular Selectboard meeting at the Town Offices.
- 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 (town & school) are received.
- 2025 Town Reports are available starting Jan. 27, 2026 at the following locations: Town Office (entry way and drop box locations); Desorcie's Market; OC McCuin & Sons; Martin's General Store; Highgate Library & Community Center; Highgate Sports Arena. A digital version will be on our website in mid-February at [www.highgatevt.org](http://www.highgatevt.org). You can also contact Wendi to have a town report mailed to you.
- The town offices will close at noon on Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The town offices will be closed on Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk*  
802-868-5002  
[wdusablon@highgatevt.org](mailto:wdusablon@highgatevt.org)

# HIGHGATE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE OFFICE HOURS WEEK OF MARCH 2<sup>ND</sup> – MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>

The following will be our office hours open to the public for Town Meeting week 3/2/26 – 3/6/26

**Monday, March 2, 2026**

**9am – Noon**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2026**

**TOWN MEETING DAY  
OFFICES ARE CLOSED  
VOTING IS @ HIGHGATE ARENA  
243 GORE ROAD FROM 7AM – 7PM**

**Wednesday, March 4, 2026**

**Closed to the public**

**Thursday, March 5, 2026**

**Regular office hours 9am – 4pm  
Selectboard Meeting @ 6:30pm**

**Friday, March 6, 2026**

**Closed to the public**

*We will resume full normal office hours on Monday, March 9, 2026*

*Date of posting: February 18, 2026*

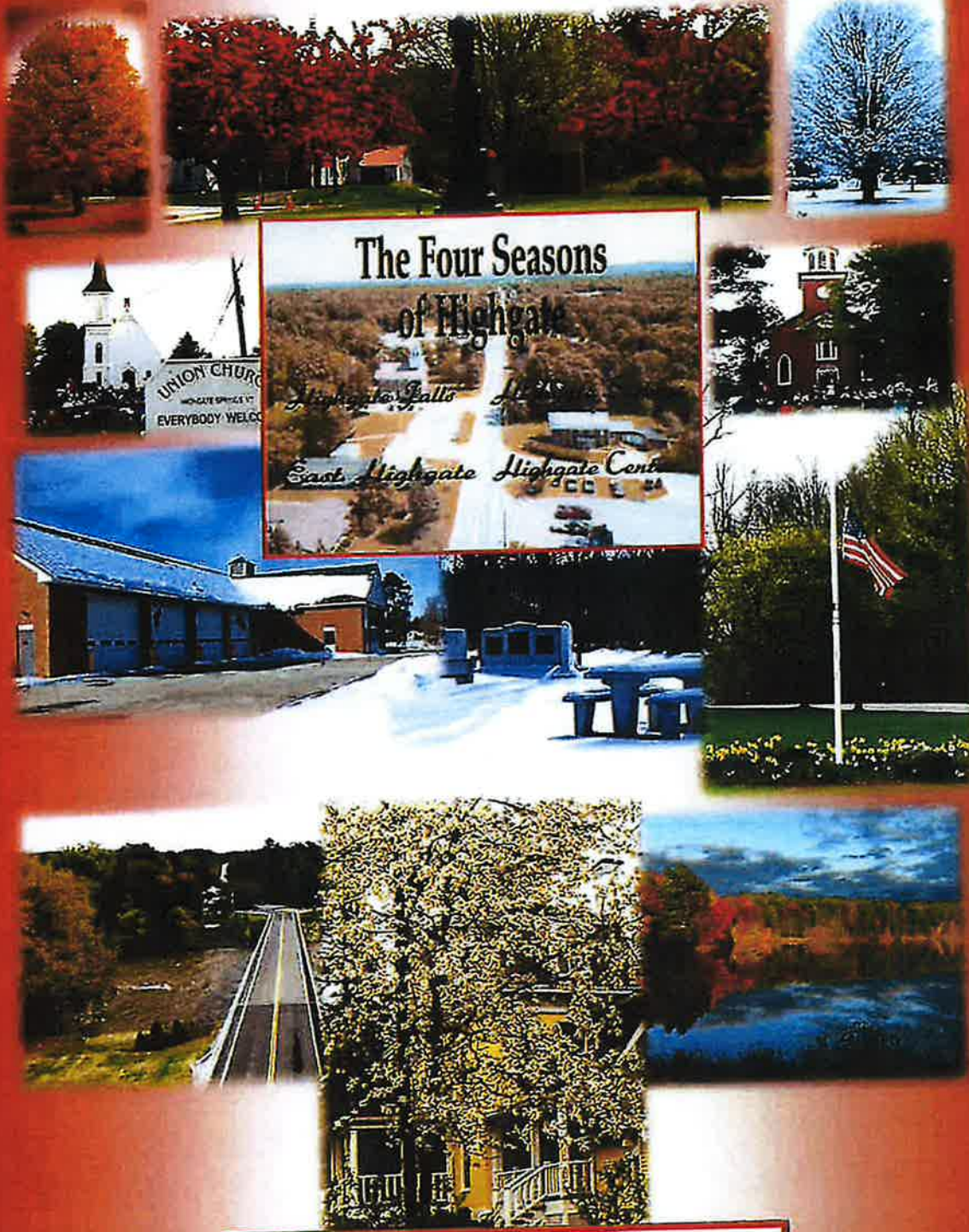
PICK UP YOUR COPY TODAY  
AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS OR  
CALL / EMAIL TO HAVE ONE MAILED

DESORCIE'S MARKET - OC McCUIN & SONS -  
MARTIN'S GEN'L STORE - TOWN OFFICE LOBBY OR  
DROP BOX - HIGHGATE LIBRARY - HIGHGATE ARENA

THERE WILL BE A PDF ON THE WEBSITE IN FEBRUARY

802-868-5002 wusablon@highgatevt.org

## 2025 HIGHGATE VT TOWN REPORTS



Cover designed and all photos taken by Highgate resident Kevin B. Loomis

**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 3, 2026 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 MVSD School Director for a term of three (3) years from Franklin.
- C. A MVSD School Director for a term of three (3) years from Highgate.
- D. A MVSD School Director for a term of three (3) years from Swanton.
- E. A MVSD School Director for the one (1) remaining year of a three (3) year term from Highgate.

ARTICLE II Shall the voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District approve the School Directors to expend \$52,440,854 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 \$12,351, which is 1.3% higher than the per pupil spending for the current year.

ARTICLE III Shall the voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District approve the School Directors to expend \$1,270,500 for a parking lot and lighting replacement project at Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School?

ARTICLE IV 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 17, 2026 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, mvsdschools.org, and MVSD social media prior to the meeting.

**POLLING PLACES AND TIMES**

FRANKLIN- Franklin Town Hall, 5336 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 January 27, 2026

Board of Directors

*Ruth Hall-Mats*  
*Perrette Bouchard*  
*Janice Schuster*  
*Michael J. Gagne*  
*Eric Macgregor*

*Genevieve*  
*Donald E. Collins*

Received and Recorded this 1/28/2026

DocuSigned by:  
*Nora Gilbert*  
District Clerk

# BUDGET FACTS

Proposed Budget

**\$52,440,854**

With state test scores up in all subject areas, this budget will maintain **LEVEL SERVICES** with only **1.3%** increase in cost per student.

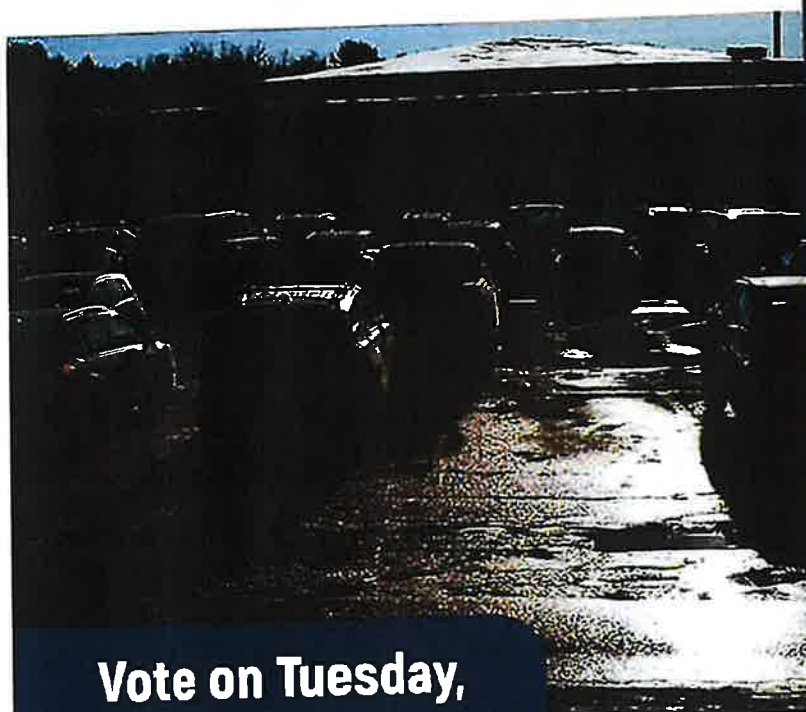
## Equalized Tax Rate Impact

Our district equalized tax rate is **DOWN** again this year by \$0.02 bringing it to **\$1.40** before townwide property value adjustments are factored in.

## A Special Article for the MVU Parking Lot

Our community has consistently asked for renovations to the MVU parking lot. Because this will add about **\$0.04** to the tax rate, we are putting this decision to an individual vote to ensure it truly reflects the majority opinion.

Note that while this project will include lighting upgrades, it will not change the footprint or traffic flow pattern of the parking lot.



**Vote on Tuesday,  
March 3rd!**

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

In addition to the information provided here, we encourage everyone to attend our **Informational Meeting at MVU on Tuesday, February 17 at 7:00 PM**. A Zoom link and more budget information can be found on our website at [mvsdschools.org](https://mvsdschools.org)

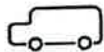
## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Where can I review the entire budget and tax rate information?**



Visit the budget page on our website, [mvsdschools.org](https://mvsdschools.org).

**Q: What is the Special Article for the MVU Parking Lot?**



This means the vote for the school budget and the vote for funds to fix the MVU parking lot will be separate items on the ballot. Voters can choose to approve both, only one, or neither.

**Q: Test scores are up in all subjects? Did I read that right?**



That's right! State test scores in MVSD are up **12%** in Literacy, **6%** in Math, and **8%** in Science! Additionally, enrollment is stable, and average daily attendance is at **95%**!

**Q: How can the equalized tax rate go down if spending doesn't?**



Tax rates are calculated using a wide variety of factors, and individual district spending per student is just a small part. State level tax planning is the main driver of tax changes this year.



# TOWN OF HIGHGATE POSITIONS FOR APPOINTMENT BY THE HIGHGATE SELECTBOARD

Appointments will take place on Thursday, March 5, 2026 ~ after Town Meeting Day

**SUBMIT LETTERS OF INTEREST TO HIGHGATE TOWN CLERK,  
WENDI DUSABLON BY 4PM ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026.**

Tree Warden	1-year term	Development Rev. Board Member	3-year term
Animal Control Officer	1-year term	Development Rev. Board Member	3-year term
NW Regional Planning Rep.	1-year term	Planning Comm. Member	2 years remaining on a 3-year term
NW Regional Planning Rep.	1-year term	Planning Comm. Member	3-year term
Transportation Advisory Rep.	1-year term	Recreation Comm. Member	2-year term
Delinquent Tax Collector	1-year term	Recreation Comm. Member	2-year term
NW Solid Waste Dist. Rep.	3-year term	HART* Comm. Members (5)	1-year terms
Road Commissioner	1-year term	NW Rail Trail Council Rep.	1-year term
Communications Union Dist. Rep.	1-year term	Fire Commissioner	1-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, Att: Wendi

~ Use our secure drop box located at the rear entrance of the Municipal Building

~ by email [wdusablon@highgatevt.org](mailto:wdusablon@highgatevt.org)


\*HART = Highgate Arena Renovation Team

# FRANKLIN RABIES CLINIC



**SUNDAY, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**12pm–12:45pm at the Franklin Town Hall, 5336 Main Street,  
Franklin** \*hosted by Franklin County Animal Rescue

 **\$25 per rabies vaccine, \$15 per distemper vaccine.**  
(\*\*3 yr vaccination available IF pre-registered online and a non-expired  
previous rabies certificate is provided)

 **Cash or Check only.**

 **Dogs must be on a short leash, cats must be in  
carrier/ crate.**

**Dog registration will be available for Franklin residents; NO CARDS,  
cash or check only. \$15 for altered dogs/ \$19 if unaltered.**

**Questions? Reach out to [info@fcarpets.org](mailto:info@fcarpets.org)**

**Please pre-register  
using the QR code below**





## **TOWN OF SWANTON RABIES CLINIC**

**SWANTON TOWN HIGHWAY  
GARAGE**

**211 FIRST ST, SWANTON**

**RABIES \$15**

**DISTEMPER COMPLEX \$25**

**BOTH \$35**

**CASH ONLY**

**ALL DOGS ON LEASHES AND  
ONE CAT PER CARRIER  
REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES**

**MARCH 14TH | 10 AM – 12 PM**

**Town of Swanton Dog Licenses  
Available during Rabies Clinic  
Spayed/Neutered Dog \$16 | Intact Dog \$20**

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE RABIES & DISTEMPER VACCINATION CLINIC FOR DOGS & CATS



**Saturday, March 28, 2026**

**@ Highgate Sports Arena ~ 243 Gore Road**

**9:00am – 10:00am**    HIGHGATE RESIDENTS ONLY

**10:00am – Noon**    ALL OTHERS ARE WELCOME 😊

Attending Vet: PAWS FOR THOUGHT

## PRICES AT THIS CLINIC:

CAT / DOG RABIES                      \$15.00

CAT DISTEMPER                      \$25.00

DOG DISTEMPER / PARVO        \$25.00

**OR GET BOTH \$35.00**

**CASH OR CHECKS ONLY  
NO CARDS AT THE CLINIC.**

CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
PAWS FOR THOUGHT  
FOR VACCINATIONS

## ADDITIONAL INFO:

- Dogs must be on a short leash.
- Cats must be in a crate – only 1 cat per crate please.
- **Cash or checks only at clinic – no cards.**
- 2026 Dog Licenses for the Town of Highgate will be available at the clinic until 11:15am. Cash or check only – no cards - \$15 or \$19 per dog. Checks payable to the Town of Highgate for licensing.
- Questions? Contact Wendi @ 802-868-5002  
wdu sablon@highgatevt.org

**OFFICIAL BALLOT  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
HIGHGATE, VERMONT  
MARCH 3, 2026**

**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.**

<b>CEMETERY COMMISSIONER</b> for a term of five years      Vote for not more than ONE	<b>MODERATOR</b> for the ensuing year      Vote for not more than ONE	<b>TOWN CLERK</b> for a term of three years      Vote for not more than ONE
<b>KEVIN SPEARS</b> <input type="radio"/>	(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	<b>WENDI DUSABLON</b> <input type="radio"/>
(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	<b>SELECTBOARD MEMBER</b>	
<b>LIBRARY TRUSTEE</b> for a term of four years remaining on a five year term      Vote for not more than ONE	for a term of two years remaining on a three year term      Vote for not more than ONE	
(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	<b>CHRISTOPHER LAPAN</b> <input type="radio"/>	
(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
<b>LIBRARY TRUSTEE</b> for a term of five years      Vote for not more than ONE	<b>SELECTBOARD MEMBER</b> for a term of three years      Vote for not more than ONE	
<b>REBECCA MANNING</b> <input type="radio"/>	<b>CHAD CARR</b> <input type="radio"/>	
(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	

**TOWN ARTICLES**

**ARTICLE #2:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate set the final date of payment for FY2026/2027 property taxes to be **Thursday, October 29, 2026** with payments to be received in the town office by 4:00pm?

YES

NO

**ARTICLE #3:** 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 #4:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$731,500** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Capital Improvement Plan**, with an estimated **\$663,800** to be raised by taxes?

YES

NO

**ARTICLE #5:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$1,333,807** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **Highway Fund**, with an estimated **\$975,357** to be raised by taxes?

YES

NO

**ARTICLE #6:** Shall the voters of the Town of Highgate appropriate **\$1,638,955** to meet the expenses and liabilities of the **General Fund**, with an estimated **\$737,139** to be raised by taxes?

YES

NO

**OFFICIAL BALLOT  
MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANNUAL MEETING  
MARCH 3, 2026**

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- If you make a mistake, tear, or deface the ballot, return it to an election official and obtain another ballot. **DO NOT ERASE.**

<p align="center"><b>FOR MODERATOR</b></p> <p>For a One Year Term <span style="float:right">Vote for not more than ONE</span></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p align="center"><b>FOR SCHOOL DIRECTOR FROM HIGHGATE</b></p> <p>For a Three Year Term <span style="float:right">Vote for not more than ONE</span></p> <p>ELAINE NESTER <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p align="center"><b>FOR SCHOOL DIRECTOR FROM HIGHGATE</b></p> <p>For the Remainder of a Three Year Term <span style="float:right">Vote for not more than ONE</span></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>
<p align="center"><b>FOR SCHOOL DIRECTOR FROM FRANKLIN</b></p> <p>For a Three Year Term <span style="float:right">Vote for not more than ONE</span></p> <p>ANTHONY BESSETTE <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p align="center"><b>FOR SCHOOL DIRECTOR FROM SWANTON</b></p> <p>For a Three Year Term <span style="float:right">Vote for not more than ONE</span></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	

**ARTICLES**

**ARTICLE II**  
Shall the voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District approve the School Directors to expend \$52,440,854 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 \$12,351, which is 1.3% higher than the per pupil spending for the current year.

YES   
NO

**ARTICLE III**  
Shall the voters of the Missisquoi Valley School District approve the School Directors to expend \$1,270,500 for a parking lot and lighting replacement project at Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School?

YES   
NO

**ARTICLE IV**  
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?

YES   
NO