



WHEELLOCK NEWS

Wheelock Community Initiative on the Web: <https://wheelockcmtv.org/> and on Facebook!

Email: wheelockcmtv@gmail.com Phone: 802-626-3109, leave message



Meeting notices are on the Town Hall message boards and online <https://townofwheelockvt.org/>

You can join **regular Selectboard meetings** by phone or computer. On the town website click on the **“Government”** drop down, then **“Agenda & Minutes”**

The agenda document for each meeting lists **unique** phone numbers, Zoom links, meeting IDs, passcodes

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

SELECTBOARD 2025 MEETINGS

- **First & Third Tuesdays**
January 21, February 4 & 18
6:00 pm
Wheelock Town Hall
Selectboard Budget Work
January 14

SHEFFIELD FOOD PANTRY

Sheffield Town Hall

Also serves Wheelock residents
2nd and 4th Wednesdays

- **Wed. Jan. 22 11:30-1:00**
Please bring your own boxes/bags

ALL ENTRIES FOR THE TOWN REPORT DUE

- **Wednesday, January 22**

WHEELLOCK COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

- **Thursday Feb. 8 2:30 PM**
Meets in person at Town Hall
All are welcome!

Selectboard News and Notes

The Selectboard is seeking interested Wheelock community members to serve on a **steering committee** to help implement the town’s grant under the **Municipal Energy Resilience Program**. One of the energy efficiency goals for Town Hall is to help make it warmer and less costly to heat.

In 2024, the Nova Group technicians completed a detailed **MERP Level 2 Energy Audit** <https://bit.ly/4gTp05Q>, which outlines all the areas for improvement. The steps for implementing the grant are available here: <https://bit.ly/3PxODyD>. For more information about the project and how to join this steering committee, contact Ann Lawless, Selectboard chair, at alawless.townofwheelockvt@gmail.com or call 802-626-3109.

An energy fair, also funded by the grant, will be organized with help from WCI volunteers. It will take place on **Saturday, May 17** and feature financial incentive information, affordable home weatherizing options, and reps from local Vermont organizations and vendors.

A photo for **Dayton Blake**, our new Highway Maintenance Worker, was not available for the December newsletter. He is pretty busy with keeping winter roads clear, but be sure to give him him a welcoming wave!



A belated thank you to **Chuck Dill** for his extra help plowing on Thanksgiving Day. And a thank you to **Enid Ellis**, a citizen auditor for Wheelock (volunteer), for her help with the town’s 2023 CPA audit and working with **Kim Crady Smith** reviewing the town’s 2024 financials.



Kingdom East School District Early FY’26 Budget Projections

Early drafts of the FY’26 school budget that will be voted on at Town Meeting outline two scenarios: one at \$51,272,596, an increase of about 7.76%, proposes the same FY’25 level of staff and services with healthcare and salary increases; the second scenario for \$50,349,157, is a 5.82% increase over FY’25, and eliminates some positions and purchases. The projected tax impacts on a per \$100,000 of home value is \$154 and \$117 respectively for each scenario.



Interim Town Clerk/Treasurer: Erin Swigart
Starting 1/1/2025

Hours: Tues./Thurs. 8:30-3:00; Wed. 10:30-5:30
Email: wheelocktown@gmail.com **Phone** 802-626-9094
P.O. Box 1328, 1192 Route 122, Wheelock VT 05851



Selectboard:
Ann Lawless, Chair
Mike Richardson
Scott Lange

📖 **GOT HISTORY?** 📖

There's no time like the present to learn more about Wheelock's past.

The Town of Bamf

The recent movie production of **"Lost Nation"** by Kingdom County Productions (at Catamount Arts) portrays an aspect of our state's early history that's not very well known. Both New York and New Hampshire speculators had competing claims on Vermont lands and some willing accomplices in Ethan Allen and his brother who played both sides.

Wheelock, known as **Bamf** in its early history, was much sought after. At one point, the New York speculators had the upper hand when...*"George the Third, by the Grace of God of Great Britain and Ireland King and Defender of the Faith"* in **1774**, granted his *"loving subjects"* the desired land **(a 30,000 acre parcel then/current day 23,040 acres)**.

Of course, the king reserved *"all mines of gold and silver,"* and also the *"white and other sorts of PINE TREES fit for Masts for the Royal Navy."*

A payment of **2 shillings, 6 pence per 100 acres** was to be made yearly at the Customs House in New York City. It was understood in writing that the land grant was *"by the Name of Bamf for ever hereafter to be called and known."*

The town was surveyed into 120 lots in **1775**, but the settling was interrupted by the Revolutionary War. By **1785**, the New York speculators were petitioning the Vermont legislature to honor their claims, promising to become *'good Vermont citizens, pay all the taxes, obey the laws, and even send a representative from Bamf to the Vermont General Assembly'*. At that time, however, there were many claims before the General Assembly and several months earlier they granted 23,000 acres to Rev. Eleazar Wheelock for the benefit of Dartmouth College.

"Town of Wheelock : Vermont's Gift to Dartmouth College"
by Eleanor Jones Hutchinson

FEMA Update

As of early January, all the Federal FEMA payments for the **2023 flooding disaster** have been received, and the State share will be coming soon. All the 2023 paperwork is organized and complete at the town clerk's office.

The FEMA reimbursement process is complicated and requires significant documentation, but the process for the **2024 damage** is going more smoothly. Weekly meetings about the 2024 disaster are now held with town and FEMA officials, and a state advisor. Site inspection meetings to visit the nine sites where repairs have not yet been completed are scheduled for late January (this might be accomplished by electronically sharing photos).

Sheffield-Wheelock Fire Station

Our Sheffield neighbors will have one more community meeting to discuss their **new town plan** <https://bit.ly/4o9bgQ9>. Residents will vote to adopt it at their March Town Meeting. Part of their planning includes constructing a new town hall, retaining their current municipal offices, and converting a portion of that building into a considerably **expanded Sheffield-Wheelock fire station** (potentially aided by a large MERP grant).

Sheffield has requested Wheelock make a financial investment in that renovation.

The architect for Sheffield's project will also provide some sketches to the Wheelock Selectboard addressing the ADA component of Wheelock's MERP grant (see page 1).



NEK Broadband: 2024 Gains and 2025 Projections

As of August 16, 2024, the **NEK Broadband** (51 member communities) **merged with CVFiber** (20 communities located in central Vermont) forming one Communications Union District (CUD). Each will continue to use their respective brand names in their districts. In 2024 this new CUD has made fast reliable service available to 8200 addresses. The Town Report for the Wheelock Town Meeting will include the NEKBB's Annual Report. Wheelock's representative to the NEK Broadband board will also be available to answer questions.



NEK Prosper! Lending Library



NEK Prosper! and the Physically Healthy Collaborative Action Network (CAN) have partnered with RecFit and Link to offer a lending library of outdoor gear and equipment. The program is designed to support individuals and families of all abilities to enjoy outdoor activities and recreational opportunities. The lending library provides access to winter and summer gear for free or a minimal renting fee. <https://nekprosper.org/outcomes/physically-healthy/>