

WHEELLOCK NEWS



Wheelock Community Initiative <https://wheelockcmty.org/>
Facebook: <https://bit.ly?3weRn94>

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



Meeting notices and documents available on the Town Hall message boards and online:

<https://townofwheelockvt.org/>

REMOTE ACCESS INFO

By Phone: +1-646-558-8656
Meeting ID: 810 8003 1813
Passcode: 055553
By Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3oCNpFI>
Meeting ID: 810 8003 1813
Passcode: iN9YcK

IN PERSON TOWN MEETING

- **Tuesday, March 5 9:00 am**
Wheelock Town Hall
Polls open 10:00 am — 7:00 pm
KINGDOM EAST
SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE
 And the
PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY
 (Voters must choose one ballot, either Republican or Democratic **)

WHEELOCK COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

- **Thursday March 7 2:30 pm**
 Committee Meets In-Person
@Town Hall All Are Welcome!

SELECTBOARD MEETING

- **Tuesday March 19**
@ 6:00 pm In-Person and Zoom
Wheelock Town Hall



To the Many Wonderful Volunteers Who Gave Time and Energy to the Wheelock Community in 2023!

Selectboard News and Notes



Selectboard:
 Ann Lawless, Chair
 Jim Blackbird
 Andy Buteau

Wheelock's 2024 Town Meeting will present voters with many important issues to consider, as well as, positions to fill that are vacant either through term limits or resignations. A list of the positions is in the **Town Warning** at <https://bit.ly/49JEIyI> and hard copies of the **Town Report** are available at the Town Clerk's office, Transfer Station, and the Wheelock Village Store, or electronically at <https://bit.ly/3T4zKpW>

The summer (and winter) floods caused considerable road damage, and with more extreme weather events likely in the future, the resources for road maintenance and repair are likely to generate a lot of discussion. Residents will be considering "total highway fund expenditures of \$464,356 of which \$360,216 shall be raised by taxes \$104,140 by non-tax revenue" ...and the "purchase of a new dump truck to replace the '09 International, in an amount not to exceed \$240,262.00, less the trade in of \$25,000".

As noted in the **Selectboard Report**, the town is still required to ensure the Town Hall complies with the **ADA** (Americans with Disabilities Act). In 2023, however, after earmarking ARPA funds for it in 2022, then drawing up architectural plans, drafting grant applications, and holding public meetings, the Selectboard withdrew the grant applications and "no other plans have been formalized to date". Town Meeting attendees who are unable to negotiate the stairs to the lower level bathrooms, are "accommodated" with an outdoor porta-potty.

The Town Meeting Warning includes a new appropriation request to cover Wheelock residents' admissions to the Fairbanks Museum. The recently completed **Tang Science Annex** offers interactive science stations for all ages and a "construction zone" play area with Legos, Wix, blocks, etc., for children to enjoy. <https://fairbanksmuseum.org/>

Voting booths will be open from 10:00 - 7:00 for casting ballots in the Presidential Primary** and the Kingdom East FY'25 School Budget.

** You or a family member can request **early or absentee ballots** at any time during the year of the election in person, by telephone, email or online at mvp.vermont.gov. The latest you can request an absentee ballot for the primary at the Town Clerk's Office is February 29, 2024.

Town Clerk/Treasurer Carol Rossi

Hours: Tues./Thurs. 8:30-3:00; Wed. 10:30-5:30

Special hours 3/24 9:00-noon

Email: wheelocktown@gmail.com **Phone** 802-626-9094

P. O. Box 1328, 1192 Route 122, Wheelock VT 05851



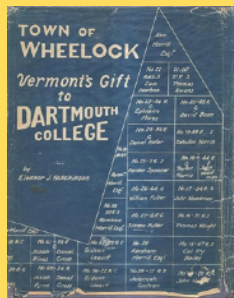
GOT HISTORY?

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

Raffle!

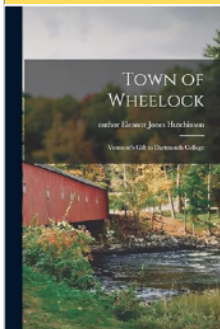
Readers of this history column often see citations crediting Eleanor Jones Hutchinson's historical research and writing from her 1961 publication of...

Town of Wheelock : Vermont's Gift to Dartmouth College



In 2019 it was scanned and made freely available at <https://bit.ly/3uE999T>. Although this on-line version makes it easy to search for specific topics, it is not as satisfying as holding a real book.

Some Wheelock residents are lucky to have an original hard copy, and hard copies come up for sale now and again from booksellers specializing in history (usually going for \$100 or more). So it was with great interest that we became aware of a new paperback printing.



The WCI is raffling a new copy of this paperback issue. Raffle tickets will be available at **Town Meeting**. The drawing will take place at the WCI meeting on March 7 at Town Hall, at 2:30.

ARPA Status (The American Rescue Plan Act)

Congress passed ARPA in 2021 committing \$1.9 trillion to address the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including monies to invest in infrastructure and assistance for economically disadvantaged communities. The State of Vermont received about \$2.7 billion and dedicated a large portion to a variety of statewide projects, as well as to individual municipalities—**Wheelock received \$246,971.12. The funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024; and expended by December 31, 2026.**

Any funds not spent must be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

Most Vermont municipalities solicited ideas from community members on how to use their one-time monies. Wheelock's volunteer ARPA Committee, appointed by the Selectboard, suspended activity after meeting three times in 2022, when the Selectboard voted to use "a majority of ARPA funds for the Town Hall accessibility project, with the excess funds to be used for other projects recommended by the ARPA Committee, with the approval of the Selectboard." (5/3/22 SB meeting)

So far, ARPA monies, totaling \$116,907, have been used for a variety of expenses. None are related to the Town Hall accessibility goal.

The payments are outlined in the **Town Report** (pages, 13, 14, 16):

- 2021 - \$999 IT 2022 - \$17,112 Town Garage repairs
- 2023 - \$98,796 Roads, sheriff patrol, IT, fire safety, property maps.

As of this writing, the Selectboard has decided to move the remaining funds (\$130,065) "to the general fund" (*Minutes of Jan. 30, 2024*).

FEMA Followup



The Town Report outlines extraordinary town highway expenses from 2023 and in the proposed 2024 budget. FEMA reimbursements for road repairs from the summer's flood damage may not cover as much of the expenses as anticipated. The Selectboard continues to work with FEMA officials to determine which costs are eligible for reimbursement.

Wheelock Community Initiative 2024 Projects

- 12 Editions of "Wheelock News"
- "Town of Wheelock" Raffle
- June 8: Community Yard Sale on the Green
- Maintain and stock the 2 Free Little Libraries
- 3 Food Drives and Holiday Toy Drive
- Welcome and Sympathy Baskets
- Continue Research and Plans to Improve a Safe, Walkable Village
- New WCI website with a Wheelock Business Directory
- Support our Wheelock Cemetery Taskforce
- Promote the NEK "Window Dressers" Project
- A New Gazebo/Bandstand?



A small team with a mighty mission!

Members: Enid Ellis, Ann Lawless, Hèlène Millas, Carolyn Nolan, Linda Rhodes, Eileen Boland...and new members are always welcome.

Contact information on the top of page 1