



Winooski City Council Meeting

Monday, October 19, 2026, at 6 PM

Attend in person: Winooski City Hall (27 W Allen St)

Attend online: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84364849328>

Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 843 6484 9328

Members Present: Mayor Thomas Renner; Deputy Mayor Bryn Oakleaf; Councilor Elsie Goodrich; Councilor Al Turkos; Councilor Eli Ogilvie

Officers Present: John Audy, Acting City Manager; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; Jenny Willingham, City Clerk; John Affinito, Treasurer; Adam Hoffnung-Warantz, Assistant City Clerk

Others Present: Katie Livermore, Winooski School Board; Robert Millar, Winooski School Board; Nicole Mace, Winooski School Board; Jackie Thomas; Matthew Smith; Emily Bowers, Winooski School Board; Jordan Mitchell, Town Meeting TV; Meghan O'Rourke, Town Meeting TV; Judy Lance; Anja Ciric; Elon Essiba; Wilmer Chavarria, Winooski School District Superintendent; Jen Berger; Zoom User "Melissa"

I. Call to Order at 6:03 PM

II. Agenda Review

Minutes: There were no changes to the agenda.

III. Public Comment

Minutes: There was no public comment.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Approval: Liquor Control Board Meeting Minutes of October 5, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes of October 5, 2026, and Special Liquor Control Board Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2026

B. Approval: Payroll Warrant September 27 - October 10, 2026

C. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant as of October 15, 2026

D. Approval: Subsequent to Payout Warrants July and August 2026

E. Approval: Halloween in Winooski Event Permit Approval - Ray Coffey, Community Services Director

F. Approval: Lease Resolution - Backhoe - Angela Aldieri, Finance Director

G. Approval: Background Checks for All Applicants to City Council Approved Commission and Other Related Appointment Seats - Deputy Mayor Bryn Oakleaf

H. Approval: School Merger Study Buddies - Deputy Mayor Bryn Oakleaf

I. Approval: Inclusion & Belonging Commission Appointment - Jenny Willingham, City Clerk

Minutes: Jackie Thomas introduced themselves to Council. Councilor Turkos and Deputy Mayor Oakleaf shared their excitement for Jackie's enthusiasm and desire to participate.

Motion: A motion to approve the Consent Agenda made by Deputy Mayor Oakleaf and seconded by Councilor Ogilvie. Motion passed 4-0.



V. Council Reports

Mayor Thomas Renner: The Planning Commission will not be meeting this week but will be meeting next week instead on the 29th. At their last meeting, the Planning Commission is talking a lot right now about the Comprehensive Plan. As you remember, there were a series of open houses that were hosted where we were gathering feedback and presenting some of what exists already. The Planning Commission is now essentially skimming all of those many documents adding their changes which were necessary discussing the different sections. The last meeting we discussed the economic vitality section a lot. One thing that came up that I always like to share is how a grocery store still remains one of the biggest needs that people were hearing about during those open houses. There also was a lot of talk about wayfinding, which I thought was interesting as we've started to do some of that work but as a council have recognized that we need more, so we'll see how that continues to play out.

We also talked about just understanding the Winooski economy more; a lot of data we have is about Chittenden County or larger data on Vermont itself, but we know that obviously in Winooski we are extremely unique. Some of that Chittenden County data may not be granular enough, so there was some talk about how if we were to have a Community and Economic Development Office director, that would be a project that they could engage in. There was also at the end a discussion about the notification we received from Verizon as they are looking to put an antenna on the top of 31 East Spring Street. There already is a T-Mobile antenna there and there is a way for the public to provide feedback for that proposal. You have to go to epuc.vermont.gov if you're looking to provide any feedback about that project.

Additionally, Downtown Winooski is planning for pumpkins and the big pumpkin Halloween celebration that we do in the city. If you would be interested in participating in making that amazing annual tradition happen, turns out that pumpkins don't just carve themselves. We actually need lots of lots of volunteers to do it, so you can learn more at downtownwinooski.org. It's a lot of fun and I'm seeing a lot of faces in here who have done in here who have done that activity. Stop by any of the available carving dates and you can find those at downtownwinooski.org.

Deputy Mayor Oakleaf: I attended one of the National League of Cities webinars recently talking about opportunities to engage the community on budget and projects. I learned about a neat software that kind of takes our budget hands-on in person budget activity and digitizes it and it's called "Balancing Act". It's by Poleco if anybody is interested. It was interesting to learn about how other municipalities engage their community members as their working to get insights about budget prioritization. I am happy to share more insights on that that I learned.

I also attended the first merger study buddy meeting this past Wednesday and my summary for that is in the Consent notes, so I won't go into that too much. Council can ask more questions when we gather the school board members for that agenda item tonight. It was an excellent kickoff meeting and am really excited to be a part of the process and am looking forward to that.

Safe, Healthy, Connected People Commission is having a joint meeting tomorrow night at the library with the Library Committee. That's an annual joint meeting that we do. The Housing Commission is scheduled to meet the following Tuesday here at City Hall and that agenda will be noticed later this week.

Councilor Al Turkos: Our next Inclusion and Belonging meeting will be Monday, October 26. The meeting will begin at 7 PM in order to accommodate for gubernatorial candidate Amanda Janoo who is having an open house at the Winooski Performing Arts Center at the Winooski School District. We



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would welcome anyone to attend that open house at the Performing Arts Center and then come and join us at City Hall. The Airport Commission will have our next meeting on Wednesday, November 4th.

Councilor Elsie Goodrich: The October Finance Commission meeting was canceled due to lack of quorum. The Commission plans to meet next on November 10th at 6 PM at City Hall and on Zoom.

Councilor Eli Ogilvie: We will be postponing the Municipal Infrastructure Commission meeting by one week as we are having conflicting schedules. Our current date is going to be Thursday, October 29th, and we will continue to discuss our commission structure and ways to improve it.

VI. City Updates

John Audy, Acting City Manager, gave the following updates:

The **General Election** is Tuesday, November 3rd, from 7 AM to 7 PM at the Winooski Senior Center. The Vermont Secretary of State will mail ballots to registered and active Winooski voters beginning in October, using the address on your voter registration. This is your ballot! Once you receive your ballot, you can return it by mail to Winooski City Hall, drop it off at the City Clerk's Office, or bring it to the Winooski Senior Center on Election Day. You can check your ballot status and register to vote at vote.vermont.gov.

Are you a resident with an extra vehicle? Are you a college student, business owner, or employee looking for a steady parking option? Need a spot in the parking garage during winter parking bans? Just looking for a place to park? **The City of Winooski is now offering long-term parking space agreements in the Winooski Parking Garage on Cascade Way to individuals or households.** Multi-month and month-to-month agreements are available – to learn more and fill out the inquiry survey to get started, please visit winooski.vt.gov/news.

VII. Regular Items

- A. Discussion: Joint Meeting with Winooski School District - Mayor Thomas Renner, Winooski School District Board of Trustees, and Wilmer Chavarria, Winooski School District Superintendent

Minutes: This item started with an introduction of both City Council, Winooski School Board Members, and the District Superintendent. The Mayor led the City's presentation to the School Board and gave an overview of the 2026 legislative priorities, with a request to the board to update any priorities for the following legislative year. The Deputy Mayor questioned when new legislative priorities will be in place with the Mayor preferring them to be ready in early December. The Mayor outlined the budget initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year and is continuing to implement a strategic investment budget, with staff assisting to dictate where this could be.

The School Board then gave their presentation and first focused on the merger study update and budget process. There was a high-level overview of recent legislation and how it affects the merger process, and the school board is going to follow the protocols with a good faith effort. Voters ultimately need to decide if the state were to approve any recommendations and all municipalities included in the potential merger would also need to vote "yes". The school district has until 9/1/2027 to finish and report their findings. Further discussion ensued about the values of the study, and the district wants to ensure they engage with the community with these major values. There is no data for future reference on how a merger would impact taxes with a possible new foundation formula at this time.

The Superintendent then gave an overview of the budget cycle as well as a high-level overview of



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overall and per pupil spending, staffing levels, operational spending, and homestead tax rates. Overall, the tax rate went down, operational spending went down, per pupil spending was down, but the district isn't counting on a similar increase this year. Their goal is to keep the tax rate low while retaining services.

There was some information about the FY28 budget calendar, with adoption being anticipated sometime in January. The district seeks similar support related to the budget that they had in the previous year and solicited all to participate in the discussion. The Superintendent noted that participation makes a difference to help make a good community.

B. Discussion: Town Meeting TV Prior Year Reports and Next Year Budget Request - Elaine Wang, City Manager, Jordan Mitchell, Meghan O'Rourke, and Matt Davis

Minutes: The Mayor started this discussion by giving a brief overview and then allowed Town Meeting TV to present their report on the previous year's coverage.

The Co-Director gave an extensive overview related to fund usage during the previous fiscal year and asked the Council for continued support in the next fiscal year. Town Meeting TV serves seven municipalities with gavel-to-gavel coverage and presented an overview of services and programming for these members with Winooski having forty-two Council, Planning Commission, and Development Review board coverages, in addition to fourteen additional events that occurred in Winooski, as well as the "In the World of Winooski" monthly programs.

Town Meeting TV is requesting a fourteen-thousand-dollar contribution, which is an increase of one thousand dollars from the previous fiscal year (due to a lack of cable usage). They spoke about the additional work their organization has accomplished this past year such as increasing language access, an updated website with new accessibility features, and they are even testing language AI software that could be used for our municipality.

The Mayor shared their appreciation for the services in support for upholding democracy and their programming, and it justifies all costs associated with their programming. They shared many people's opinions on the services, thanked Town Meeting TV, and noted that it would be a huge loss without them. The Mayor gave their commitment to providing support and shared their appreciation of their agreements and not asking for more than presented. The Deputy Mayor also had some questions related to a possible merger with the overall structure of their operations, with Town Meeting TV answering all questions.

C. Discussion: Treasurer's Reports Fiscal Year 2026 Quarter 4 (April-June) and Fiscal Year 2027 Quarter 1 (July-September) - John Affinito, Treasurer

Minutes: The Treasurer presented to Council the key takeaways from the fourth quarter report as well as information about the annual surplus and balance increase compared to the previous fiscal year. The current outlook according to the Treasurer remains stable. There are going to be some costs from long-term projects coming into play soon and recommends closing out the Main Street Revitalization Project this year as anticipated.

The Mayor gave kudos to City Staff and Deputy Mayor Oakleaf asked questions to both the Treasurer and Finance Director about revenue sources and enterprise funds with extensive overviews given by



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both members of City Staff. Councilor Ogilvie also enquired about enterprise and parking funds, especially with the Burlington-Winooski Bridge Project construction starting soon.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion: Motion to adjourn made by Deputy Mayor Oakleaf and seconded by Councilor Ogilvie. Motion passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.

Attest: _____
Adam Hoffnung-Warantz, Assistant City Clerk