



Town of Shelburne, Vermont

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P.O. BOX 88 5420 SHELBURNE ROAD SHELBURNE, VT 05482

Clerk/Treasurer
(802) 985-5116

Town Manager
(802) 985-5111

Zoning & Planning
(802) 985-5118

Assessor
(802) 985-5115

Recreation
(802) 985-5110

FAX Number
(802) 985-9550

Town Manager Report: August 2025



From the desk of Matt Lawless

Special Election to Re-Authorize Projects

The Selectboard called a special election for September 9th asking voters to approve bonds to finance several projects already supported by voters in previous years.

The Town did not correctly follow the detailed, specific requirements in Vermont law for bond votes. There are a series of public notice requirements related to bonded debt, different from an ordinance or for Town Meeting. Ruling against other towns in the past, the Vermont Supreme Court held that these errors require another vote to correct.

The errors are disappointing to our team and community, but it is important to correct the technical errors, properly issue the bonds, and maintain the Town's financial position.

I can answer any questions about the effort and encourage your vote to authorize bonds for projects previously approved by Shelburne voters.

How to Vote

Vermont makes it easy to vote!

Register: new to town? Same-day voter registration is no problem!

Absentee: everyone who has already requested an absentee ballot will get one in the mail. Mail it back, or drop it in the box at the Town Office. Request an absentee ballot at vote.vermont.gov/public/dashboard

Early: vote absentee in person at the Clerk's Office starting on August 20th.

In person: from 7am to 7pm on September 9th.

Learn more at shelburnevt.org/208/Elections-Voting

What is Vermont Bond Bank?

Bonds are used by governments and companies to finance long-term improvements. They have low interest rates and strong guarantees, but they require complex preparation which small towns cannot do on their own. The Vermont Bond Bank has a special charter to help. It pools the needs of small towns to finance critical infrastructure. The bank has 475 active loans for \$591 million, to 191 towns and agencies in Vermont. Their AA+ bond rating provides low interest rates, and they also administer special funds for disaster relief and energy efficiency. Shelburne's bond package is \$5.8 million.



Notable Upcoming Public Meetings & Events

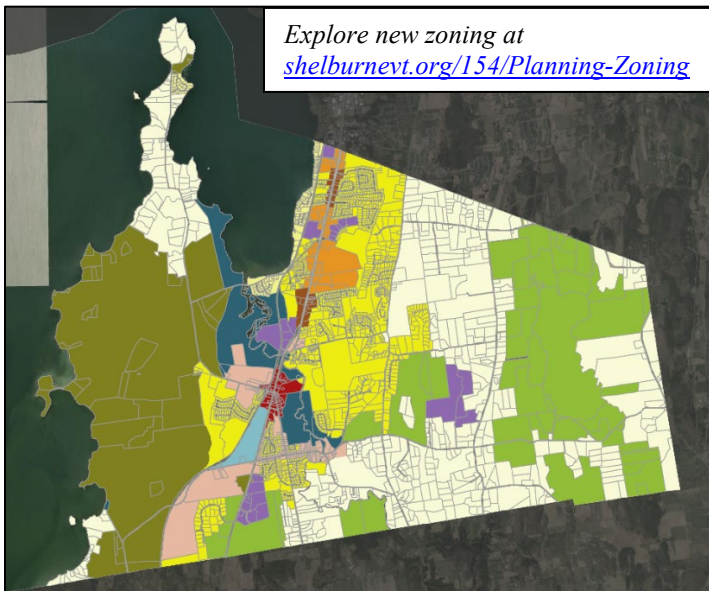
August 12: Selectboard meeting

August 16: Shelburne Day

August 28: Planning commission public hearing

September 8: Informational meeting

September 9: Special election



What's new around town

Zoning Update Progress

After a thorough process of research, outreach, and drafting, the planning commission and staff released their final version of the Town's updated zoning ordinance. It has a planning commission public hearing August 28, then heads to the selectboard in the autumn.

Zoning regulates the size and use of buildings in town and affects the future of the community. The new zoning are more clear, comply with new state laws, and advance the town's goals for the environment, housing, and quality of life.

Mission

Experience Shelburne is committed to foster **collaborative, inclusive** and **sustainable community and economic development** that benefits **residents, businesses, and visitors**.

Guided by our core values, we will preserve and enhance Shelburne's **unique character, community vitality, and environmental integrity** for future generations

Photo by Lee Krohn



Honoring Michael Thomas

In July the Shelburne community and Vermont's law enforcement community, mourned for Chief Michael Thomas. He died on June 30, with his family present, after a struggle with cancer. The July 10 funeral brought the community together to honor his life of service and share our grief.

Chief Thomas worked for over 30 years in law enforcement, and for over 15 years with Shelburne. His work saved and improved many lives, notably in animal rescue and the career development of many other police officers. The Shelburne Police Department grew and thrived under his leadership, which continues with Acting Chief Josh Flore. The Thomas family is in our hearts, as is Mike's legacy.

Experience Shelburne

The Town has a new committee focused on Community and Economic Development. One of their early projects is to improve our branding and marketing. The effort will help set Shelburne apart from other towns by showcasing what makes our community a uniquely inspiring and attractive place to live, work, and play.

Recently a premier design firm called OverUnder/Libretto sent a team to visit Shelburne. They came to understand of the heart of our community –its aspirations, assets, and opportunities. As part of this process, we hosted a few different meetings where staff and neighbors could share insights, experiences, and ideas. Their perspective and input will help shape the foundation of Experience Shelburne's brand and messaging. The group will have results to share later this year.