



WHEELOCK NEWS

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

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



Meeting notices are on the Town Hall message boards and the town website at:

<https://bit.ly/4vMBRPv>

You can also join **Selectboard and Planning Commission meetings by phone or via the Internet.**

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

SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

Tues. September 1 & 15 @ 6:00 PM

to attend these meetings remotely see the link at the top of this column

PLANNING COMMISSION

Updating the Wheelock Town Plan

Wednesday Sept 2 8:30 AM

Wheelock Town Hall

Meeting agenda & minutes at:

<https://townofwheelockvt.org/>

Go to the **"Government"** tab, then **"Agenda & Minutes"** and scroll down to **"Other Committees"**

SHEFFIELD FOOD PANTRY

Wednesday September 2

11:30-2:30

Sheffield Town Hall

Open to income eligible seniors & families

Contact number: 802-397-4929

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday October 4

2:00 PM

Special WCI Community Event

Details in the September Wheelock News

PROPERTY TAXES DUE

Thurs. Oct. 15 by 5 PM

See details on pg. 1

Selectboard News and Notes

There is ample evidence that grants provide much needed resources for small municipalities like Wheelock to tackle any number of projects.

They also significantly reduce the tax burden on residents.

While it is well understood that applying for grants is a complicated and time consuming process, there is less awareness of the additional time and documents required **before** the money is actually in hand to begin the project.

It is with appreciation that we note the considerable time and attention our Selectboard has given to these tasks over the summer months, especially on those grants that will keep our roads in good shape for winter conditions!

Full Time Road Crew Opportunity

Duties: operate road equipment (incl. snow plowing) and perform general mechanical maintenance. Requirements: self-motivated, hardworking, mechanically inclined, CDL Class B. Pay: \$25-\$30/hour, based on experience and ability. Benefits: health insurance, paid time off, retirement plan. To apply: Send resume with 3 references and contact info to the Wheelock Selectboard: wheelocktown@gmail.com

Advice and Notice to Taxpayers

The "Notice to Taxpayers" inserts with our 2026 tax bills outline some important changes in how and when taxes will be collected.

The due date of **October 15, 2026** at 5:00 PM (extended office hours) is a slight change from a more traditional early November deadline.

Paying online at <https://bit.ly/4ggoAak> offers an electronic check option (\$1.50 fee) or a credit card option (2.65% fee). Fees do NOT go to the town, only the taxes paid.

Although there has been some "sticker shock" with the new property reappraisals, many residents' 2026 bills are similar to the ones they received in 2025. The **Vermont Homestead Declaration (Form HS-122)** is an **annual filing** required by the state to classify your primary residence so it is taxed at the correct residential education property tax rate. **Failing to do so means you will be incorrectly billed the higher non-homestead tax rate, even if you live full-time on the property.**

Taxes received after the October 15 deadline will be considered delinquent. Postmarks are no longer accepted as proof of an on-time payment.

Town Clerk/Treasurer: Erin Swigart

New Hours! Tues., Wed., Thurs.

8:00 am - 3:00 pm or by appointment

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

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



Selectboard:

Ann Lawless, Chair

Mike Richardson

Chuck Dill

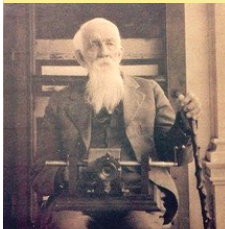
GOT HISTORY?

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

Early History of the Phonograph

Many thanks to Patti Baker for providing the background for this month's column by sharing her research at the Sheffield Historical Society.

Stephen G. Cree (1834-1917) has a long history in Wheelock. This 1906 account credits him with inventing a phonograph before Thomas Edison. An item appeared in the April 1906 edition of *The Talking Machine World* a monthly news report out of N.Y. City (in part):



Stephen G. Cree, the veteran Town Clerk, of Wheelock, Vt., has a rare curiosity in his possession in the form of a phonograph which he made 30 years ago.

That Mr. Cree's talking machine is as old as he claims is evidenced by the fact that there are scores of men in the little town of Wheelock today who can place the time they first saw and heard the wonderful machine at the district school when the owner gave them an exhibition. The natives of the village were equally astonished, and some of the more superstitious were inclined to believe that the voice came from the spirit land.

In making his machine Mr. Cree preserved the greatest secrecy, and continued to adopt this policy until he discovered that Edison had perfected a machine. After this discovery Cree gave up his efforts at machine improvement, and the machine has laid for the past 20 years in the attic of his home. "Yes, I thought I had something great nearly 30 years ago when I succeeded in perfecting a talking machine; but Tom Edison was ahead of me and I was glad to see him rewarded if he had to work as hard as I did to make his machine."

Planning Commission Update

Wheelock's Planning Commission continues to meet monthly (twice in August) and members are now outlining a draft that combines the legal requirements for a Town Plan, with feedback from residents (community meeting and survey), the selectboard, and other stakeholders. It will present a vision of the town that considers the community as a whole.

A broad range of topics will be covered in the plan: land use, housing, transportation, utilities and facilities, energy, economic development, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, climate resilience, and "Wheelock's Neighbors and Beyond". **The Commission is announcing a photo contest** and accepting entries of Wheelock photos to be published in the Town Plan. Send submissions to wheelockpc@gmail.com.



Commission:
Carol Amos, Chair
Meaghan Rinehart
Teresa Stimpson
Kim Crady-Smith

Phishing Alert

There have been several instances recently where an individual, posing as either the Wheelock Town Clerk or a Selectboard official, sends email requests to community members. The emails ask the recipient to "pay a bill" or "send money" electronically with a promise of reimbursement. These bogus emails are sent from email addresses that on quick inspection do not look like legitimate email addresses, plus no town official would make such a request.

Opportunities with NEKCV Broadband

Thanks, in part, to a successful application for federal **BEAD** grant, NEKCV is growing and now employs over 30 people. NEKCV is a municipal district, known as a **communications union district**, so any profits are reinvested in the district for the public good.



They hire predominantly local and provide their own technician training sessions in partnership with North Country Training Center. Visit <https://nekc.org/careers/> for career updates (four positions currently under recruitment). For NCTC training information contact Chris Damato at 802-334-5469 or christian.damato@ncsuv.org.

Local Schools/Libraries and the E-Rate Program

The **Federal E-Rate** program, started in the late 1990s, and administered by the Federal Communications Commission, makes internet access affordable for **low-income schools and libraries** across the country by providing an **internet service discount based on need**. The FCC is proposing that the job is done and this support should end, which has been compared to end maintaining a highway because it has already been built.

If the E-Rate ends, our local schools and libraries will have to find a way to pay the full service cost, which could mean cutting staff, programs, or services. You can learn more about E-Rate at the **Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition** website <https://www.shlb.org/save-our-e-rate> and consider [making a comment to the FCC](#).