

—Slug:.....COMM-0854.opin.letter.c00_ewald
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—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers
—Format.....Opinions - Letters to the Editor - Special 3
—Dateline.....Westminster
—Article Number:.....43119



Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Switch from town manager to town administrator would
2 benefit Westminster

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

3

####END SUBHED####

4 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

5 I support rescinding the town manager form of
6 government in Westminster because I believe a town
7 administrator model would better serve the town's needs.
8 Under Vermont law, the authority of a town manager
9 derives directly from state statute and operates with a high degree
10 of independence from the Selectboard.

11 By contrast, a town administrator works at the direction
12 of and in closer partnership with the Selectboard, allowing
13 elected officials to remain actively involved in operational
14 decision-making when they choose to do so. This structure can
15 provide greater accountability and flexibility, particularly for
16 communities that prefer hands-on governance.

17 Most towns in Windham County operate with a town
18 administrator rather than a town manager. Westminster's
19 administrative budget allocates \$328,776 for salaries, compared
20 to \$95,908 in neighboring Dummerston. While every town's
21 needs differ, this comparison raises important questions about
22 cost efficiency.

23 A town administrator would serve as a liaison between
24 the Selectboard, town employees, and the public — improving
25 communication and efficiency without creating an additional
26 layer of bureaucracy. The town could potentially save more than
27 10% in FY27 by eliminating the town manager position and
28 adopting a town administrator system.

29 Westminster has a highly capable administrative assistant
30 who could transition into a town administrator role, ensuring
31 continuity and institutional knowledge during this period of
32 change.

33 As the town begins the search for a new town manager,
34 this transition presents a timely opportunity to re-examine our
35 governance structure and determine the most efficient and
36 effective way to conduct town business.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

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####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

38

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

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LINKS:

39

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VIDEO:

40

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

41

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