

A meeting of the Hardwick Select Board was held on Thursday, March 17, 2011 at 6:00 P.M., in the 3rd floor meeting room of the Hardwick Memorial Building.

Members Present

Marcus Brown
Kathleen Hemmens
Shari Cornish
Danny Hale
Rhonda Barr

Others Present

Jon Jewett – Town Manager
Rosie Gillen- Executive Assistant
Joe LaPorte – Chief of Police
Ann Laporte- Resident
Tom Gardner- Gazette
David Gross-HED
Joe Wood-HED
Eric Warner-HED
Dave Upson Jr- DRB

Others Present

Mike Glodgett - HPD
Mike Gero - HPD
Aaron & Michelle Cochran
Donna Perry
Jennifer Packard
Reg & Lorraine Cochran
Pat Laggis- Jeudevine
Lisa Sammet- Jeudevine
Rachel Miller- Jeudevine
Dave Richards-Jeudevine

6:02 P.M. Marcus Brown, Chair called the meeting to order

6:05P.M. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on March 03, 2011

- Kathleen Hemmens motioned to approve the minutes of the March 03, 2011 Select Board meeting with changes.
- The motion was 2nd by Danny Hale.
- Motion passed.

6:07 P.M. Set/Adjust Agenda

Marcus adjusted the agenda by moving the Public Works report to follow Item # 4 before Town Manager's report.

Also, Action Item # 5 was added for Fire Department Roster to be approved. This will happen before Police Chief's Report in place of Public Works Report.

Also, Item # 6 was added for general discussion for the possible move and building change, to discuss where we stand at this point.

- A motion was made by Kathleen Hemmens to accept the adjusted agenda.
- Motion was 2nd by Danny Hale.
- Motion was passed.

6:09P.M. Communication from the Audience

There were no communications from the audience.

6:10P.M. Item # 5 Fire Department Roster

- Motion was made by Danny Hale to accept the HFD Roster as submitted.
- Motion was 2nd by Kathleen Hemmens.
- Motion Passed.

6:12P.M. Police Chief Report

Police Chief LaPorte introduced the Board to the newest hire at HPD. Aaron Cochran, a Hardwick resident, was hired as the new full time Sergeant. Aaron was sworn in at tonight's meeting.

Joe also did a Stat – Trax presentation the Board. Danny Hale thanked Joe for the informational presentation and stated that these reports are very important to get out to residents. Danny expressed his appreciation for the report to the Chief.

TM stated that we have a great team. People might not always see us, but we are out working, taking care of paperwork, and solving cases.

Joe LaPorte, stated that he plans to present the Stat – Trax presentation to the Board every six months. The next presentation would be August-2011.

6:40P.M. Item # 1 Discussion with HED regarding Several Items

Jackson Dam

Joe Wood stated to the Board that Jackson Dam is nothing more than a liability to the Hardwick Electric Department as it has no operational value to the HED. Joe thinks that the Town should look at the 300-400 acres beyond the lake; he feels that a lot of good things could be done with that land for recreation or development.

This issue was brought up a few years ago and the HED actually held a vote. The Town voted by a 3-1 margin to keep the dam. HED owns the dam and they are financially responsible to repair and maintain the dam.

Gravel Pit

The Town had a lease with HED to lease the gravel pit that expired in October of 2010. HED pays the Town a PILOT payment in lieu of taxes for property and electric lines that includes the gravel pit. The estimated amount of PILOT for the gravel pit is \$5000. Joe Wood feels that HED customers should not have to shoulder that cost. HED agreed to enter into a 20 year agreement with the Town to lease the gravel pit. HED will reduce its PILOT payment for the next five years by \$1000 per year to reduce their expense. In exchange, the Town will have free use of the gravel pit. The Town will have the lease agreement drawn up.

LED Street Lights

TM stated that he had signed an agreement with Efficiency Vermont to study our options regarding installing LED street lights. TM is working with HED to work out several details such as the street light tariff (cost) and other options. The Town will work with the Energy Committee to help with this issue.

Audit Schedule

The Town Manager stated the Town's calendar year is a Fiscal year calendar and HED is on a calendar year, which makes it very difficult for our audits to be included in the Town report together. Coordinating the audits would require HED to do an additional 6 month audit, and this would cost roughly \$14000 - \$18000.

Joe Wood stated that if the Town wants to request that HED perform an additional audit in order to have the Town's audit be complete, it would be unfair to the utility rate payers to require HED to pay for the additional audit. If the Town requests another audit, it will be the Town's burden to pay for it. Marcus Brown stated that the Town and its residents really want to have a single audit for the Town and HED.

HED will ask the PSB to write an opinion letter regarding this issue.

7:25P.M. Item # 2 Cloud Alliance Presentation, Michael Birnbaum

Cloud Alliance is a small internet company founded in 2005 that provides WIFI services in Plainfield and Marshfield. The company has received a grant from the State of Vermont to expand broadband services to the Town of Hardwick and to surrounding communities. The company wants to erect a 130 foot communications tower in Hardwick. The purpose of Mr. Birnbaum's attendance at this meeting was to discuss the issues surrounding the tower and its installation.

The Hardwick Town Plan recognizes broadband as an important communication mechanism impacting the continued development of the Town. The plan set 10 years as a milestone to have cell service, DSL and cable throughout the community. To date that milestone has not been reached.

Cloud Alliance received \$250,000 in funding to construct 3 towers in and around Hardwick (Hardwick, Wolcott and Woodbury). The intent is to provide broadband service to those places that aren't yet covered by other means. The antenna provides very low energy radio waves – 3 watts that are triangulated with two other towers. The towers are 130 feet high in order to allow the low level waves to travel through the top of trees rather than having to go through them. This allows power use to be kept at a minimum.

The project does not require a permit from the Town, but Cloud Alliance would like a letter of support from both the Select Board and the Development Review Board. Cloud Alliance has to get approval from the Public Service Board 248 a Section of the PSB regulations. They are requesting a certification of Public Good to operate.

The planned location for the Hardwick Tower is on the Rod Mayo property on Hopkins Hill, south of Route 15.

8:15P.M. Recess - back in session at 8:20pm

8:21P.M. Item # 3 – Discussion of Library Needs for Space

The idea that was presented by Marcus Brown that if the Town offices moved to the old Northern Counties building the Library could move over to the Memorial Building and use the additional space that was being freed up.

Dave Richards stated for the Library Trustees (LT) that they had no interest in taking a position on the move until the bond issue was passed. The LT cannot make a decision at this time. He also stated that there was not enough information available for them to make a good decision. The LT is also concerned with what would happen to the current Library building if they did move. They had no answers yet.

There were a number of comments from the Select Board and the Town Manager suggesting that if the Library should wait too long in making a decision that someone else might use the space at the Memorial building if it should become available. The LT were concerned that if they held a vote on the move, and there was a majority vote to move, that the Town would make the Library move when the time came.

The Select Board asked the Town Manager to work with the LT and the Librarian to locate an architect to help design out what the space and costs would be for the Library's to move to the Memorial building.

9:10pm Road Foreman's Report

The discussion was held on clearing sidewalks on West Church Street. Tom Fadden explained that the Department could not keep up with clearing the sidewalks because people were parking on them. There is not sufficient room to run the bobcat and no room to put the snow without hampering one lane of traffic. Rhonda Barr lives on West Church Street and is very concerned about kids and older people having to walk in the road. Many cars travel at high rates of speed and this is a very highly traveled road.

Danny Hale asked Tome to clean the snow and leave the parking issues to the Police Chief. Joe LaPorte suggested that the street become a one way road. It was suggested by the Town Manager that the Town add parking at Hardwick Electric and ban parking from the Library to the Food Pantry.

Shari Cornish asked what the policy was in regard to clearing all sidewalks in the Town. The Town Manager stated that only select sidewalks are cleared at this time. There was no mention as to how those sidewalks get on the list to be cleared.

Tom Fadden informed the Select Board that there were two trucks out of service. He also said the bid estimates for trading in the two dump trucks were coming back quite high – he would be providing more details for the next Board meeting.

9:30P.M. Town Manager's Report

9:40P.M. Select Board Report

The Town House will open on April 1, 2011

9:45P.M. New Business

Rosie Gillen informed the Select Board about the Vtrans 2011 Structures grant, for bridge construction regarding Porter Brook Bridge. Vtrans recommends the Town apply for \$40,000 for engineering and design work this year and then next year apply for construction. This year will be spent doing planning and designs then go to bid in spring 2012 and apply for construction money then.

The Select Board discussed having one half hour of the next 4 Select Board meetings set aside for a public forum to allow citizens to be involved in the decision-making pertaining to the proposed move of the Town Offices.

Rhonda Barr suggested that the Select Board and Town administration work on a list of frequently asked questions.

10.00P.M. Old Business

Survey questions should be added to the website.

Post it on the website

NVDA - requested the Select Board appoint a representative from the Town to NVDA.

10:05P.M. Adjournment

- Motion made by Shari Cornish to adjourn at 10:05P.M.
- Motion was 2nd by Rhonda Barr
- Motion Passed.

Marcus Brown, Hardwick Select Board Chair

Minutes Taken by: Rosie Gillen