

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**6:00 P.M. Thursday, June 17, 2021**  
**MEMORIAL BUILDING**  
**20 CHURCH ST. 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR**

**Select Board**

Eric Remick, Chair  
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Vice Chair  
Elizabeth Dow  
Shari Cornish  
Michael Deering - *absent*

**Others Present**

Jon Jewett, Town Manager  
Casey Rowell, Business Manager  
Aaron Cochran, Police Chief  
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman  
Roger Prevot, HED Commissioner

**Others Present**

Mike Lance

**Regular Meeting**

**6:00 P.M.** – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

**6:00 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda – Include the minutes for the Special meeting of June 16, 2021, to approve with the other minutes

Add an Item #11 to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Library Bond commitment letter.

Add an Item #12 for discussion about an easement for the LVRT.

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to adjust the agenda as stated.*

**6:02 P.M.** – Select Board to approve minutes for the Regular Select Board meeting of June 3, 2021, the minutes of the Special meeting of June 11, 2021, and the minutes of the Special meeting of June 16, 2021

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular meeting of June 3, 2021, the minutes of the Special meeting of June 11, 2021, and the minutes of the Special meeting of June 16, 2021, as written.*

**6:03 P.M. – 6:11 P.M.** Communication from the Audience – Mike Lance came to request a letter of support from the Select Board to officially identify Buffalo Mountain as such so that it can be recognized in the US Geological Survey database and the VT database. Mike shared results of some his research on the mountain. He has been collecting signatures for the required petition. He asked the Select Board for a letter of support. He has a draft that the Board can use as a guide. Shari will take the draft and review and then bring back to the Select Board next meeting. He mentioned that the Town’s logo appears to have Buffalo Mountain on it. He has not been able to find anything concrete to support this officially.

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to write a letter of support as requested.*

**6:11 P.M. – 6:23 P.M. Town Manager’s Report– Given by Jon Jewett**

Jon reported he is working on two new health related situations. One is a tenant/property owner dispute, and the other is a request from the Department of Children and Families to be involved in determining the appropriateness of a foster care home.

Jon reported that there is a bill in process that would have the State Dept of Public Safety take over the health officer roles. The hope is that this bill will be passed before the Legislature adjourns for the year. They might expand the fire marshals or other roles to accommodate this change if it passes.

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to have Jon write a letter of support for the concept of a statewide public safety officer.*

Jon has been collaborating with the owner of property located near the old Depot which is considered land locked. He indicated that we would need to meet to consider options for resolution if that is possible. He has spoken to the owner several times, the VT Railroad Division, and others about this. Elizabeth reported that the attorney office that conducted that closing on the property is currently doing research to find a solution for the error that was made in not finding that the property was landlocked.

Jon met with Larry Hamel to discuss easements for straightening Bayley Hazen Road where it meets Route 16 in East Hardwick. There is work to be done to obtain an easement.

Jon mentioned that there is a stormwater treatment project pending for 64 N. Main Street. He is working on the necessary easement for construction and maintenance.

Jon reported that there are eighty-three households that are delinquent for water and wastewater, amounting to a deficit of \$64,000 between both categories. A notice for disconnection and tax sale is going out of the Town Clerk’s office immediately.

The Business Manager shared information about the arrearage program for renters. Eric encouraged us to be proactive and reach out to some of the delinquent accounts that are renters to let them know about it.

**6:23 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Road Foreman Report– Given by Tom Fadden**

Tom reported that it is too dry for grading. They have focused on ditching – the upper part of Town Farm Rd., and Dimick Rd. They have also been working on Bridgman Hill Road.

The crew spent a couple of days patching holes with hot mix. They are also working on repairing guardrails near Greensboro Bend and have been exploring some water lines that they are having trouble locating in a specific part of Town.

The red sidewalk paint is still backordered. The consensus was that they should just go ahead with the white for the remaining sidewalks until the other paint comes in.

There was brief discussion about not being able to put crosswalks where the Rail Trail breaks in a couple of different spots.

Tom also reported that paving bids went out today for Cedar St., Belfry Rd., and Brickhouse Rd. in East Hardwick. We will be presenting that information at the July 15 meeting.

**6:30 P.M. – 6:44 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report – Given by Aaron Cochran**

Aaron followed up on the Valcour software that he talked about last time. He learned that they have two options, one to stay on their own or go with the Agency of Public Safety. For option two, the State will pay the cost which is about \$2,000/year. He is going with that option since it would be a savings to the Town.

Aaron shared that the Chair of the Woodbury Select Board contacted him about going to a Select Board meeting. They are looking for some police services, not 24-hour coverage. Aaron will report back when he knows a little more.

Aaron wanted to talk about the FY22 cruiser purchase. Eric had asked after the last meeting why we were buying a cruiser in a year that we know that the PD will be running a deficit. The reality is that we have an aging cruiser, and we still need the same number of cruisers. This was a planned purchase, and the car is significantly less than anticipated. The money comes out of capital not the operating budget. There is always an option to skip a purchase in FY23.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to move forward with the purchase of a Dodge Charger for \$28,022 from Goss Dodge, plus fit-up costs.*

Eric said that at some point the Town needs to consider what direction they want to go with the Police Services meaning if they focus on just Hardwick or continue to do regional policing. Jon reported that he has reached out to the Law Enforcement liaison at VLCT to see if they can assist with this process.

**6:45 P.M. – 7:07 P.M. Hardwick Electric Department Report – Given by Roger Prevot, Commissioner**

Roger reported several items including that the first solar panels for the H-11 project were installed this week. If the project moves as schedule, they expect to be energizing it by the end of August.

Automated metering is something that HED has been looking into for a long time. They will be executing a pilot project with Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) to see if it really works. They will look at difficult geographic areas. This program claims to be tailored to the Vermont landscape.

Roger spoke about the budget and that it was challenging to plan for the coming year. YTD and MTD revenues are higher than expected, about 7% over budget. Expenses are under budget by around 3%. They do expect to start working on projects that were delayed by COVID soon, so that will start creating some additional expenses.

They have completed purchase of a transmission line from Green Mountain Power (GMP) that will create a savings for them, since previously the service area relied 100% on that GMP line.

They have gained a new industrial customer that previously used a diesel generator. They will get renewable energy credits from the diesel that the customer is no longer using. This is an economic benefit to the rate payers.

Wolcott Hydro has been operating well YTD. This is a suitable time for them to take it down for maintenance.

Roger reported that their 2020 Audit is in progress and should be complete in 3-5 weeks.

Regarding the NEK Broadband efforts, Roger reported that Christine Hallquist and Paul Fixx from the Communications Union District plan to update the HED commissioners at their next meeting. Roger reminded everyone that their meetings are public. The next meeting is Monday, June 21 at 5:00 p.m. at Hardwick Electric Department's office.

Roger wanted to make people aware that the typical lead times for HED projects, are much longer than normal due to delays in materials. In addition, he reported that the costs of items such as conduit, poles, etc., are up to 2-3 times more than what they have been.

Roger talked about the disconnect moratorium and that they anticipate this to end in the next several weeks. Public utility bills will need to be paid or people will be disconnected.

Roger wanted to take a minute to thank Jessica Patterson who worked for HED for 20+ years and is moving on to a new opportunity. Her work over the years is appreciated.

Elizabeth asked where HED is at in terms of charging stations. Roger indicated that they continue to review this regularly. Funding and the location are the issues that need to be addressed. It is key to make the right choice for location.

There was some brief discussion about the Commissioner seats that expire on June 30. The plan is to make appointments at the July 15 meeting.

Jon asked when the HED office will be opening back up to the public, as he has had people asking. Roger did not have an immediate answer but will investigate this.

**7:07 P.M. – 7:11 P.M.** Item #1 Discussion of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Wastewater Treatment Facility upgrade project

As part of the process of obtaining a FONSI, we need to let the public know about the project, why the FONSI is necessary, and that there is a public comment period for 30 days. Eric summarized the project. Jon explained that because the property is in a flood zone, there is some environmental due diligence that needs to be done as part of the process. It has been determined that a FONSI will be issued because the impact is very minor. The public has a 30-day comment period.

**7:11 P.M. – 7:13 P.M.** Item #2 Select Board to review and consider approval of a Liquor license

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the Second-Class Liquor License for Hardwick Convenience & Deli, LLC*

**7:13 P.M. – 7:21 P.M.** Item #3 Select Board to review and consider approval of the FY22 Sewer Expense budget

The Business Manager presented the FY22 proposed sewer budget and capital plan. See attachments. There was some discussion about the capital plan and the amount that is being reserved for the bond, as well as the

items in the capital plan that are already being addressed by the Bond project. Jon and Casey indicated that those specific categories in the plan have been reviewed and the current project improvements have been taken into consideration.

The goal is to provide gradual increases to ratepayers over the next 2-3 years to support the bond payment, rather than a significant increase in the first year of the bond payment.

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the sewer budget as presented.*

**7:21 P.M. – 7:23 P.M.** Item #4 Select Board to review and consider reappointment of Conservation Commission member

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to appoint Ken Davis to a 2-year term on the Conservation Commission.*

Shari would like the Conservation Commission to come and let the Board know what they are working on at a future meeting.

**7:23 P.M. – 7:25 P.M.** Item #5 Select Board to review and consider appointment of Development Review Board and Hardwick Planning Commission members

*Shari Cornish nominated Edward Keene, Ruth Gaillard, and Helm Notterman to be reappointed for another term to the Development Review Board. Ceilidh Galloway-Kane seconded the nomination, and all voted yea in favor of the slate of nominations.*

*Ceilidh Galloway-Kane moved to reappoint Michael Haveson, Joyce Mandeville, and Jim Lewis to the Hardwick Planning Commission for another term. Elizabeth Dow seconded, and all voted yea in favor of the reappointments.*

**7:25 P.M. – 7:27 P.M.** Item #6 Select Board to consider road name change of Sawmill Road to Independence Lane due to 911 address issues associated with existing Sawmill Lane

The Business Manager explained that there is a Sawmill Lane and a Sawmill Road in Hardwick. There has been a great deal of confusion with mail and parcel deliveries. The State 911 coordinator suggested that one of the roads could have a name change. Since Sawmill Lane was here first, the easiest route is to rename Sawmill Rd. The residents have requested Landing Way. They requested Independence Lane at first, but they changed their mind after the agenda was posted.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to rename Sawmill Rd. to Landing Way.*

**7:27 P.M. – 7:28 P.M.** Item #7 Select Board to approve and sign the FY22 Municipal Grant-in-Aid Letter of Intent

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve and sign the FY22 Municipal Grant-in-Aid Letter of Intent.*

**7:28 P.M. – 7:31 P.M.** Item #8 Select Board to review and accept audit engagement from Sullivan, Powers & Co., for FY21 audit in the amount of \$29,000

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to accept the audit engagement with Sullivan, Powers & Co., for the FY21 audit for \$29,000.*

The Business Manager reported that we will plan to put out an RFP this Fall for the FY22 audit. We are not unhappy with Sullivan Powers, but have been with them since the late 1980's and we should explore some other options.

**7:31 P.M. – 7:33 P.M.** Item #9 Select Board to authorize Town Treasurer to accept the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds by accepting the terms and conditions for spending

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to have the Town Treasurer accept the ARPA funds for the Town.*

**7:33 P.M. – 7:34 P.M.** Item #10 Select Board to authorize the FY22 Fuel Bid Contract and for Town Manager to sign corresponding contracts

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to enter a contract with Irving for our FY22 fuel needs.*

**7:34 P.M. – 7:35 P.M.** Item #11 Authorize TM to sign the library bond commitment letter

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign the library bond commitment letter.*

**7:35 – 7:39 P.M.** Item #12 Grant an easement for the LVRT

The State of Vermont is looking for an easement for the LVRT for a bridge to be removed and replaced on Stannard Mountain Rd. They are offering \$500 for the easement.

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign the easement.*

**Select Board Reports:** Elizabeth reported that the Historic Depot will be open to the public starting on July 6. They plan to be open on Saturdays in July and August from 10-2. Shari indicated that the Town House is also planning some open house days on Saturdays as well around the same time. They hope that people might stop in from the LVRT or passing through.

Shari reported that the architect for the Pedestrian Bridge visited this week. The community event will be 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. on July 17. There will be a tent, food, kids' activities, etc. The event will be over by the Daniels Building.

Shari reported that the Downtown Commission had its first meeting.

**New Business:** None

**Old Business:** The Business Manager noted on the Easement form that it was looking for the Town's Agent to Convey real Estate to sign, not the Town Manager.

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, the Board voted that Elizabeth should sign the easement for LVRT as the Agent to Convey Real Estate.*

Eric reported that the Town Manager search is ongoing. The job description and ads were finalized, and ads are going to be posted starting next week.

**7:48 P.M.** Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair

Minutes taken by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Casey Rowell, Business Manager