

MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. Thursday, August 19, 2021
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR

Select Board

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

Others Present

Jon Jewett, Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Mike Sullivan, HED

Others Present

Regular Meeting

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

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Jon asked to add an Item number 5 to the agenda for the Select Board to discuss and consider contracting services for the Police Department.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, 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 August 5, 2021, and the Special Meeting minutes of August 10, 2021.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of August 5, 2021.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of August 10, 2021.

6:03 P.M. Communication from the Audience – None

6:03 P.M. – 6:11 P.M. Town Manager’s Report– Given by Jon Jewett

Jon reported that he did a health inspection on Ward Hill. The location did not exhibit any garbage, wastewater issues, or anything being handled inappropriately. The owners are working with Michaud Septic Service and Rebel Refuse LLC to handle trash and Waste water.

The Town Manager’s office has contacted Sunwise Survey for the Bayley Hazen project, which is required when upgrading the layout of a roadway. The Town has also been in contact with Sunwise to survey the old open Reservoir that is located next to the current covered reservoir on Bridgman Hill

Lastly, Jon mentioned that the Town has received funding from the USDA RBDG program for \$200,000 and \$175,000 from the USDA Community Facilities Program, which are both earmarked for the Swinging Bridge project.

Road Foreman Report– Given by Tom Fadden

There wasn't a Road Foreman report.

6:11 P.M. – 6:27 P.M. Hardwick Electric Report- Given by Mike Sullivan

Mike reported that some of their customers were behind on their utilities. Hardwick Electric made delinquent rate payers aware that there was a COVID assistance program. However, not a lot took advantage of the program. The program has now expired, but there's a new program that residents can and should take advantage of. The program offers up to \$10,000 for residential, and \$50,000 for businesses. The program is for electric, water/sewer/ telephone lines, and renters. Please see the Vermont Department of Public Service website for more information.

Next, Mike reported that the H11 project is now complete. It should have gone online in the middle of August; however, it lacked an operating permit. It's scheduled to go online September 20. Mike is hoping that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for those that want to join. Elizabeth asked how much this project should generate. Mike stated that it should generate about 7-8% of HED's current power production capability, which is very high. The Wolcott Hydro plant generates about 10% of the power.

The Wolcott Hydro power plant is currently online. They shut it down annually for two weeks; however, due to the braking system failing, and the Surge Tower project needing some work, the Hydro plant will be offline until late September.

Year to date, the Purchase Power is roughly \$1,000 under budget. Income is about 8% over budget, and expenses are about 15% under budget.

Mike stated that if anyone was interested in learning about Hardwick's Public Power Supply, they should visit www.vppsa.com and click on the Hardwick Tab. There are many links and documents that explain more about Hardwick Electric.

Bill Chidsey asked Mike if someone wanted to utilize the COVID assistance program, was applying online the only choice. Mike said you can call the department at the state, and they can help with alternatives.

Both Ceilidh and Eric asked for an update on the EV charging stations. Mike stated that they did preparations for the one being placed at HED, and it will be put into place at the end of September. He also stated that for other locations, he has answered all of the inquires, but he hasn't heard anything, so placing others around Town is on hold.

Lastly, Mike stated that HED is in a great position to help out the Community Unified District to upgrade the broadband around Hardwick.

6:27 P.M. – 6:29 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to sign off on VCDP policies for Yellow Barn grant. (Previously signed, but some updated language)

There's about nine VCDP policies that the Select Board has to sign off on in order to proceed for a Yellow Barn

Grant. The Select Board already signed off, but there were some minor tweaks to the policies.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the VCDP Policies and Codes for the Yellow Barn grant.

6:29 P.M. – 6:39 P.M. Item #2 Select Board to discuss and consider appointing Bill Chidsey to become the Town's Energy Coordinator

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to appoint Bill Chidsey to become the Town's Energy Coordinator.

6:39 P.M. – 6:51 P.M. Item #3 Select Board to consider start-up funding for the Downtown Commission in the amount of \$5,000

The committee is working on a couple of projects, with the main project being the Downtown Designation. Shari attended a meeting about the Municipal planning grant, with the help from NVDA. They are embarking on a non-profit status. However, there are fees to do that. Their request for funding from the Select Board is \$5,000.

Elizabeth asked if there was a line in the budget for this funding. Considering there's no line item, funds can sometimes be moved if appropriate.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to move \$4,000 out of the Community Development Coordinator fund, and put it in the Downtown Improvement fund.

The motion was modified & amended.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to amend the motion.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to move \$2,500 out of the Community Development Coordinator line, and put it in the Downtown Improvement fund for use by the Downtown Designation as needed.

6:51 P.M. – 7:01 P.M. Item #4 Select Board to discuss and consider approval of the identified fee (\$20,000) and scope of services for architectural work and engineering work on the swinging bridge replacement project. Also, discuss and consider approval of preliminary survey by Little River Survey LLC for \$2,000.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager, on behalf of the Swinging Bridge Project to enter into a contract for architectural & engineering work, and a topographical survey by Little River Survey for the amount of \$22,000.

7:01 P.M. – 7:05 P.M. Item #5 Select Board to discuss and consider authorizing the Town Manager to begin contracting for services to provide Police Department staffing due to staffing shortfalls caused by officer attrition.

Jon stated that the Police Department was a 24- hour Police Department; however, with the loss of the

Greensboro contract, and with officers leaving, Hardwick is now a 16-hour department. At current staffing levels, there is a shortfall and a lack of appropriate coverage on all shifts and it is becoming a safety issue. Jon would like to contract for services to provide the Hardwick Police Department the help that is needed.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to begin contracting for services to provide the Police Department staffing due to staffing shortfalls.

Select Board Reports:

- Shari reported on some of the events happening at the Hardwick Town House. These events include:
 - Craftsbury Chamber Players playing tonight, August 19.
 - Open house on the 21st, and 28th of August from 10 AM to 2 PM.
 - The Diary of Anne Frank, presented by the Greensboro Arts Alliance and Residency/The Mirror Theater. This will be August 20 & 21 at 7 PM and August 22 at 2 PM.

For more information please visit <http://hardwicktownhouse.org/>.

- Ceilidh reported that the Equity Committee has been going through the website and has a list of changes that they would like to see. They have also had professional development opportunities for the committee, and they would like to find a way to provide those services to the Select Board and the Town Employees. Lastly, Ceilidh mentioned that Audrey Grant is stepping down from the committee, and Ceilidh would like to thank her for her time!

New Business:

- Shari asked if information about WIFI can be posted for guests that are using the building. Amanda stated that the Town Manager's office would work on it.
- Eric mentioned that there's a committee working on the VOREC Grant. This grant will connect businesses to the outdoor recreations. For example, it will connect them to the Rail trail, it will provide more parks, bike racks, picnic tables, and provide more availability to WIFI. The grant is up to \$5.1M. There isn't a match, and there's not a limit on how much you can ask. The letter of intent is due next week.

Old Business:

- Shari asked for an update on the Charter Change. There are several changes that the Town wants to make. This will include a Town wide vote, public hearings, and for the changes to go to the Legislature. This subject will be on the next agenda.
- Ceilidh asked about the bike racks and kiosks to put downtown. Shari mentioned that Casey is working on this.
- Ceilidh also asked about a community meeting in regard to the Police Department. Shari mentioned that there wasn't any more mention, but it should be brought up at another meeting.
- Eric mentioned that the Town Manager search is underway. He wants to thank the community members that were involved in the process. There were about 20 applicants; however, the committee has decided to interview six for round one. Their hopes are to narrow it down to two or three for the second/final round. There should be a new Town Manager in place in September.

7:23 P.M. Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313; to include the Town Manager

8:05 P.M. Exited Executive Session. No action taken.

8:05 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator