

MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. Thursday, August 5, 2021
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR

Select Board

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

Others Present

Jon Jewett, Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Aaron Cochran, Police Chief
Alberta Miller, Clerk/Treasurer
Ken Davis

Others Present

Paul Fixx
Norma Wiesen
Sherry Lussier
Kristen Fountain
Connie Bellavance
Bob Bellavance

Regular Meeting

6:00 P.M. – Elizabeth Dow, Select Board member, called the meeting to order.

6:01 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Item number 7, Select Board to consider start-up funding for the Downtown Commission in the amount of \$5,000 will be removed from the agenda. It will be replaced with the Town Manager to correlate the Trash Ordinance to match the State Statute.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, 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 July 15, 2021, and the Special Meeting minutes of July 17, 2021, July 22, 2021, and August 2, 2021.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of July 15, 2021, and the Special Meeting minutes of July 17, 2021, July 22, 2021, and August 2, 2021.

6:02 P.M. Communication from the Audience – None

6:02 P.M. – 6:16 P.M. Town Manager’s Report– Given by Jon Jewett

Jon reported that there were complaints of junk cars at four different properties around town. The complainant wants action taken.

There is funding from ARPA that the Town will be receiving. For 2021, the Town will be getting \$149,756, and for 2022 the Town will be receiving the same amount, for a total of \$299,512.

There are three requests for water and wastewater hookups. One would cross Wolcott Street, one would cross Mill Street, and one is on Mackville Road. The property on Mackville Road would not need to cross any road. Crossing the main road will require cutting the concrete pad beneath the paved road. This will be done at the

property owner's expense. Wolcott Street and Mill Street are due to be paved in the near future, so once these projects are completed, the road won't have any damage or speed bumps to worry about.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board voted to approve the water hookups for the Mackville Road property, and for the Wolcott Street property.

The Town Manager's office is waiting on further information from the property owner that wants to cross Mill Street.

Next, Jon reported that the bids came in very high for the Wastewater Treatment Facility upgrade. The expected total cost is \$2,111,825; however, the bid price was \$2,861,560. Without added alternates the bid was \$2,615,524, which is still a shortfall of \$503,699. There are two choices that the Town could do which is rebid in December, or figure out how to make up the difference. Using the ARPA funds is one way the Town could potentially make up the difference.

Lastly, the Town is working on three different projects that will need to be surveyed. The projects are straightening out the bottom of Bayley Hazen Road near Route 16, the old (open) reservoir on Bridgman Hill. The owner of the property near Bridgman Hill wants to gift the property to the Town. The last property is the Swinging Bridge to develop topographical information and to determine the property lines.

6:16 P.M. – 6:19 P.M. Road Foreman Report– Given by Amanda Fecteau

The Town Highway crew has graded and graveled several roads.

They have also finished ditching and laying stamatt on Bridgman Hill Road, replaced a culvert on Carey Road, replaced a hydrant on Elm Street, and installed another meter pit on Glenside.

Lastly, they have been dealing with a beaver issue on Dusty Swamp Road.

6:19 P.M. – 6:24 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report – Given by Aaron Cochran

Aaron reported that the staff is working with schedule adjustments due to the decrease in current staffing, and staff members being on leave. They are also adjusting to being on call.

Aaron reported that the Town has posted the open position. You can contact the Police Department or go to the Town's website to get more information about the application.

Next, Aaron reported that he met with Senator Sanders and they talked about the different trends of Law Enforcement and the problem with recruitments, which include the low pay rate that officers tend to have. They also talked about the issues with individuals not wanting to volunteer for Fire & Rescue. It was a very good meeting, and Senator Sanders will look into some of the issues and work towards making a difference.

Lastly, Aaron reported that they have placed another order for Narcan. They are seeing a lot more overdoses that are caused by fentanyl rather than heroin. Fentanyl is much stronger, so it's taking a lot more doses of Narcan to bring a patient out of a drug coma.

6:24P.M. – 6:32 P.M. Item #1 Update on Conservation Commission activity presented by Norma Wiesen

Norma Wiesen, Secretary of the Conservation Commission, presented some of the projects that the commission

has been working on.

In 2019, they had an Elderberry plant fund-raiser at the Farmers Market to introduce the Commission to the community. They also did walk-arounds and surveyed trees along the Village residential streets. Next, they obtained a \$1,000 grant from the VT Urban Community Forestry Program to buy trees, and lastly, they met with Michael Lew-Smith to learn more about the Natural Resources Inventories.

In 2020, they obtained a \$1,300 grant from the VT Urban Community Forestry Program to mulch, prune, and deep fertilize the crabapple trees along side Wolcott Street and near the Village Restaurant. They also attended webinars and talked with biologists to learn more about Lamoille River, Jackson Dam, and Hardwick Lake.

In 2021, they trimmed, mulched, and fertilized the crabapple trees along Wolcott St, and near the Village Restaurant. They created a master list of map resources for Hardwick, and unfortunately, the grant that was provided in 2019 was canceled.

There is an Emerald Ash Borer walk on Saturday, August 14 starting at 10:00 A.M. This will start at the Health Center parking lot and continue on the Rail Trail. There is a Pollinator Walk on Saturday, September 11 at 1:00 P.M. and starts at Atkins Field.

6:32 P.M. – 6:34 P.M. Item #2 Select Board to review and consider approval of the Annual Financial Management Questionnaire (presented by Alberta Miller, Clerk/Treasurer)

Alberta presented the Annual Financial Management Questionnaire. The State Treasurer and Auditor requires that this be presented to the Select Board each year. It lets them know how Town funds are handled and procedures for internal controls. The only change that occurred since last year was that the Town Manager's office no longer has their own Petty Cash box, as they didn't use it that often. It made more sense to share one with the Town Clerk's office instead.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board acknowledged receipt of the Annual Financial Management Questionnaire and authorized Elizabeth to sign.

6:34 P.M. – 6:40 P.M. Item #3 Kiwanis to ask permission to have a parade in town on October 2

For the past two years Kiwanis has had to cancel their Spring parade due to Covid. Kiwanis feels it would be beneficial to the community to have a parade this fall. After this year, it would resume back to a Spring festival. Sherry Lussier stated that there will not be any activities on Atkins field. Sherry also mentioned that the Chicken BBQ and the craft fair will also be held that same day. Shari Cornish asked that the Downtown Commission be involved in planning the parade.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board approved Kiwanis to have a parade in Town on October 2.

6:40 P.M. – 7:16 P.M. Item #4 Update on NEK Community Broadband efforts from Paul Fixx and Kristen Fountain

Paul Fixx reported that the NEK Community District Broadband (CUD) was formed after Town Meeting March 2020, however, the business plan was just formed. Paul and Kirsten Fountain are visiting communities that are part of the district to give updates.

Paul and Kristen have been working diligently to see if the CUD can actually provide services like they want,

and if they can afford to do this project around the State of Vermont. They have found that, yes, services can be provided, however, it will be a 6-to-10-year project, and that it is affordable. CUD won't be making much of a profit, at least not to start off with. Paul mentioned that once this project kicks off, it could provide job opportunities in the future.

Shari asked if the Broadband will give an alternative to Comcast. Kristen said that yes, it should. The business plan states that there are four different phases. They will start with the most efficient route that needs to be served. Kristen mentioned that most of Hardwick, unfortunately, does not fall into Phase 1. However, the East of Route 14 falls into phase 2, and Phase 3 will include the part of Town that is close to Wolcott, and close to Glover. The customers that have Washington Electric (WEC) could potentially be in phase 4, however the Broadband hopes that WEC will make their own fiber and bump those customers into phase 2.

Elizabeth asked if this is a non-profit organization, and Kristen said that it is set up to be similar to that.

Michael asked if utility companies have offered to put anything on their electric poles. Kristen said no, but both WEC and Hardwick Electric are both willing to help on this project.

There was a Broadband Key Date Point table that was created. Elizabeth asked about Hardwick's served and unserved. Currently 68% (or 945 households) of Hardwick received internet. 32% (or 454 household) are currently without internet at their residents.

7:16 P.M. – 7:18 P.M. Item #5 Select Board to review and consider approval of a 3-year contract for winter sand with the recommended vendor

The Town received two winter sand bids. Gravel Construction was \$7.50 per yard and Davis Contracting was \$6.00 per yard. The town's bid said 4,000 yards per year. In the past, the Town has done an analysis and both had good sand. Ken Davis mentioned that his pit is closer so there would be cost savings for mileage as well.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board voted to accept the bid from Davis Contracting Service for a 3-year contract for Winter Sand.

7:18 P.M. – 7:21 P.M. Item #6 Select Board to review and consider accepting donation to Town of a .12-acre parcel in East Hardwick from Montgomery family

This piece of property is along the Rail Trail. There was talk about a potential bench being put in for people to stop at.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board voted to accept the donation of a .12-acre parcel in East Hardwick, made by the Montgomery Family.

7:21 P.M. – 7:22 P.M. Item #7 Town Manager to Correlate the Trash Ordinance to match the State Statue

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board authorized Jon Jewett to correlate the Trash Ordinance to match the State Statue.

Select Board Reports: Shari mentioned that the Town House is still having open houses on Saturdays from 10 A.M to 2 P.M.

New/Old Business: None

There wasn't an Executive Session

7:23 P.M. Elizabeth Dow, Select Board Member, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator