

MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. Thursday, January 20, 2022
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM

Select Board

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

Others Present

David Upson, Jr. Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Tonia Chase, Assistant Town Clerk
Michael Henry- Interim Police Chief - *Zoom*
Michael Sullivan- HED- *Zoom*
Matt Krajeski- Assessor- *Zoom*

Others Present

Brenda Bolieu
Judith Ruskin
John Brabant
James Kelty- *Zoom*
Emily Lanxner- *Zoom*

All Select Board present via Zoom

*** For the first 46 minutes, the meeting was not recorded. We apologize for this inconvenience, and it was not intentional. ***

Regular Meeting

6:01 P.M. – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

6:01 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Add an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to 1 VSA 313 to include the Town Manager

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

No Communication from the audience

6:02 P.M. – Select Board to approve minutes for the Regular Select Board meeting of January 6, 2022

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 6, 2022, as written.

6:02 P.M. – 6:13 P.M. Town Manager’s Report– Given by David Upson

David reported on several items:

- David tentatively reserved 2,000 wet tons (WT) (500 dry tons (DT) at 25% solids of processed sludge) for disposal at the Englobe facility in St. Henri Quebec. The 500 DT amount is a quarter of what P & H Senesac estimations came out to and a little more than half of what VT Rural Water’s estimations were. Englobe needed a commitment from the Town to plan for their 2022 allotment of material they accept.

The amount can be changed, but they needed something to reserve the space. The processing of 500 DT comes out to \$476,830.00 with a disposal fee of \$105,700.0. This does not include trucking which will have to go out for bid when we decide on how much we are going to process. Eric asked about a timeline, and David mentioned it will be mid to late February, however he is still working with the State on some documentations. Eric also asked about more funding. David mentioned that there are two programs, however Hardwick is not qualified for one of them. The other one is a pretreatment program, in which he is looking further into.

- David was contacted with a request to bring the Restorative Justice Program back to Hardwick. We currently have \$9,500 unrestricted program funds still available in which we have had for two years. The current Restorative Justice program available to Hardwick is based out of the Restorative Justice Center in St. Johnsbury. In the past, they have reached out for community involvement within Hardwick and people have not stepped forward to get involved. He will continue to speak with these interested folks and come up with a plan to move forward with the board's approval. The Select Board generally agrees to get the Restorative Justice Program back to Hardwick.
- David also submitted a request to the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council (VCJTC) for a waiver for Scott Gagnon. Scott has worked for the VT Medical Examiner's office as an Assistant Medical Examiner. The waiver request is for a Death Investigation Certification. This would eliminate the need for the State Police or another police agency to respond to Hardwick for a death investigation.
- Next, David is meeting with Emily Finnigan from the Caledonia County Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) and the engineers involved in the Stormwater Project in the parking lot at 64 North Main Street (lower level of the Jeudevine Manson). This project involves several easements for construction and maintenance of the system. The town will be responsible for the routine maintenance after completion. David will be attending a second meeting in February with NRCD, the land owner, and engineers to discuss construction which will have an effect on parking in the area and a mild effect on traffic. This project will be going out to bid in the late winter and will be coordinated by NRDC and run by SLR environmental consulting's Waterbury, VT office.
- Lastly, David reported that there will be a LVRT Public Meeting on January 25, 2022 at the Green Mountain Technology Career Center. The Town will post the flier on the Town's website and Front Porch Forum. The flier has zoom information as well.

6:13 P.M. There was no Road Foreman report this evening. However, David said the Highway Crew has been working hard plowing, sanding, and salting, and he wanted to thank them for all of the hours they have put in and the hard work that they've been doing. Shari asked about the parking ban and if there's a plan to clean the streets. David mentioned that there isn't a specific time, and that he will talk with Tom. When there's a plan, the Town Manager's office will put out a notice to the Town's website and Front Porch Forum.

6:14 P.M. – 6:19 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report - Given by Mike Henry

David mentioned that Mike Henry was hired as an interim Police Chief to fulfill Aaron's position while Aaron is on leave. Mike is a retired Captain from the Vermont State Police. The Town would like to thank Mike for stepping into this position and helping the Town of Hardwick.

Mike reported that his first day was January 18, 2022, and there has been a lot going on. As many know, there are staff shortages in Hardwick, but this is also an issue state and nationwide. Officer Gagnon and Officer Caldwell have really stepped up and helped above and beyond, and Mike wants to recognize and thank them for that.

Hardwick does have part time officers, but without specific certifications, it limits them as to what they can and cannot investigate.

Mike mentioned that there will be an interview held tomorrow, January 21, 2022 for a full-time certified officer.

Officer Cimmino will be leaving for the academy in March and will be there for 16 weeks.

He also wanted to let everyone know that the Vermont State Police will be covering Hardwick for emergencies only this coming weekend. On Monday, the department will investigate all other incidents.

6:19 P.M. – 6:29 P.M. Hardwick Electric Department Report - Given by Mike Sullivan

Mike reported that he gave Amanda a participation schedule. This will help notify the Town Manager's Office and the Select Board as to when HED will be attending the Select Board meetings. The plan is to continue to attend the second meeting of every month.

Mike also reported that there is a sewer line easement in place for the Warehouse located on Route 14 South. David asked when they plan to tie into the Sewer Line, and Mike said not until Spring. Mike will give David a week's notice when this occurs.

There's a big upgrade project between the substations and they are adding express circuits, which includes building a hemp facility to help with the circuits. They are predicted to be one of the biggest customers. There is also a Light- Art project that they are also working on.

Mike stated that he's had a truck on order for the past nine months, and he was told that it will be at least another 15 months for HED to receive the truck. The parts are on back order.

The revenue is up, expenses are down for the year, and the Vespa coverage rate is at about 96%.

Lastly, Mike mentioned that the 2021 audit is about to begin.

Eric asked if the H11 project is online, and Mike mentioned that it's been online since November. Eric also asked about the status of the website. Mike stated that it will be up and running at the end of February.

6:29 P.M. – 6:38 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to decide on in person vs. Australian ballot Town meeting

The Select Board discussed this at their last Select Board meeting due to the high COVID cases in the area.

Elizabeth asked if there will be any funding for the Town if the Town Clerk sent out Australian Ballots. Tonia said no, and that it would cost the Town between \$4,000 and \$4,500. Eric asked if the Town needed to provide postage on return envelopes, Tonia said yes.

Michael mentioned that he is okay with not having an in-person Town Meeting and just voting with Australian Ballots.

Tonia mentioned that if the Town doesn't do an in-person Town Meeting, the Fire Station can be used again and would not interfere with COVID testing.

Elizabeth asked what is easier for the Town. Tonia mention that it would be easier if someone wants to request a Ballot ahead of time to notify the Town Clerk's office instead of mass mailing. David mentioned that if residents want to vote in the Memorial Room ahead of time, they are welcome to.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve to have an Australian Ballot Town Meeting. This includes the Town Manager's and Town Clerk's office putting out mass information letting voters know.

Tonia also requested a setup for the tabulator. Last year it was about \$3,600, but that included helping with the set-up of the ballots last year. The cost would not be that much this year.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve for the Town to use the tabulator again for the year.

6:39 P.M. – 7:25 P.M. Item #2 Judith Ruskin and Associate to discuss request for an article on Town meeting warning about a "right to know" policy on wireless communication technologies

Brenda Bolieu mentioned that they are trying to get it so that the Town can notify the residents when there are changes with wireless technologies.

Eric mentioned that the Public Utility Commission reports all of the changes.

Elizabeth asked Brenda how they are envisioning the information to get to residents. Brenda stated that it's difficult to know how the Town would properly get the information out. John Brabant, who is on the Calais Select Board, mentioned that Calais is discussing the same concern. Specifically, it's to do with the 5G frequency, which is highly directional, and powerful. He mentioned that transmitters for 5G could be on telephone poles, and those walking by the poles with a cell phone, could activate the transmitter. By law, the power company has to leave space on their poles for transmitters.

Elizabeth asked what about the language and the process. John had the language that Calais was using, but he

also mentioned that the Town would receive the notice, and could put this on the Town's website and Front Porch Forum. He stated that when a change occurs, not all the homeowners are aware or notified.

Emily Lanxner stated that language was submitted to the Town last year. She stated that people in Town are interested in knowing, they just don't know how to get the information.

Michael stated that he would like a policy shift stating that the Town would notify the public, but he doesn't think it needs to be on the warning. Judith disagreed and stated that the Town should have the public decide if they want a "right to know" when changes occur.

Elizabeth and David wanted a lawyer to look over the specific language. John said that it doesn't need legal guidance.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve for a "right to know" policy on wireless communication technologies to be placed on the warning. Language will be similar to Calais's language like presented.

7:25 P.M. – 7:28 P.M. Item #3 Select Board to discuss and consider a warning item for retail cannabis

There wasn't any information for this item. The Select Board decided it would be best to discuss this at a Special Meeting. The Special Meeting will be Monday January 24 at 10AM at the Memorial Building.

7:28 P.M. – 7:30 P.M. Item #4 Select Board to consider appointing the Assessor to fulfill all Lister duties until Charter change is processed and accepted

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve Matt Krajewski to fulfill all Lister duties until the charter has been accepted.

7:30 P.M. – 7:31 P.M. Item #5 Select Board to authorize the Town Manager to enter a contract with KAS Consulting for Brownfield remediation at the Yellow Barn

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the Town Manager to enter into a contract with KAS Consulting for Brownfield remediation at the Yellow Barn.

7:31 P.M. Item #6 Select Board to review and consider approving the 2022 Town meeting warning

This item was also moved to the Special meeting which will be on January 24, 2022 at 10AM.

Select Board Reports-

- Shari mentioned that the Downtown Commission is working on a template for Town Organizations to design their own banners. The first 15 organizations that submit their template will be the ones that get printed. There is no cost to the organization, as it's part of the grant that was awarded to Downtown grant award.
- Eric reported the passing of David Raphael. The Town worked with him on design projects. Our

thoughts are with his family.

New Business-

- Tonia reported that voters running for office do not need a petition, but they still need to turn in their Consent to be on the Ballot Form no later than January 24 at 5PM.

Old Business

- Elizabeth asked the status of the Yellow Barn. Eric mentioned that the goal is to go out to bid at the end of January.

7:45 P.M. *Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA 313 for a personnel matter.*

8:15 P.M. Exited Executive Session.

8:24 P.M. *Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the separation agreement for Sergeant Darin Barber. Michael abstained his vote.*

8:24 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair