

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

Select Board

Eric Remick, Chair
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane
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
Casey Rowell, Business Manager
Paul Fixx, NEK Broadband

Others Present

Danny Hale

Everyone was on zoom, except for David Upson Jr.

Regular Meeting

6:02 P.M. – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

6:02 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Change Item #8 from Yellow Barn water/sewer application to Business Manager to give an update on an existing Eco Dev. loan for business being sold and remove the Executive Session

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the adjusted agenda like stated.

6:04 P.M. – Communication from the audience- None

6:05 P.M. – Select Board to approve minutes for the Regular Select Board meeting of January 20, 2022 and the Special Select Board meeting of January 24, 2022

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 20, 2022 and the Special meeting minutes of January 24, 2022, as written.

6:05 P.M. – 6:23 P.M. Town Manager’s Report– Given by David Upson

David reported on the following items:

- NorwichEV received a state grant to own and operate EV Chargers in a handful of Vermont towns. NorwichEV reached out to the Town requesting assistance with locating a host site either Town owned or privately owned land. David met with Chris Duff who is the project manager for the Buffalo Mountain Co-op move. David will be participating in conversations between NorwichEV, BMCO and Hardwick Electric to get this project off the ground.
- Spring Festival 2022 is in the planning stages. Groups and organizations within the Hardwick Community are working together to try and make this a fun and welcoming event for all of Hardwick and the Hardwick area. Funding is always a challenge so in the future David feels that it is important to put a line item in the budget for Spring Festival Activities & Planning.

- Capital Improvement Planning is on the list of priorities considering there's some aging infrastructure within town. The Pedestrian Bridge is a prime example of an asset we have that we didn't plan for the failure of or inability to function as it was built to do. With the Select Board's blessing, David would like to allocate some of the budget for capital improvements planning and additional asset management for the future. It will continue to be a challenge to write grants and ask for money to fix things that are broken if we don't have plans to maintain them and plan for their repair or replacement. David doesn't want the Town to be in crisis mode (like the Pedestrian Bridge) when something fails. In addition, David received an email stating that Cornell University has a Graduate Planning Internship Program, where they would send an intern for 10 weeks to help plan different projects out. The Town would have to match \$1875. The Select Board was in favor. The Town has until March 30, 2022 to commit.
- VOREC decisions are still being decided. The Town should hear something by the middle of February.

6:23 P.M. – 6:24 P.M. Road Foreman Report– Given by David Upson Jr

The Highway Department has been busy salting, sanding, and plowing. There have been a few breakdowns with the trucks, but they've been fixed.

6:24 P.M. – 6:34 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report - Given by Interim Police Chief Mike Henry

Mike first wanted to thank Scott Gagnon for going above and beyond for the department. Scott has been filling in shifts, helping out at the office, and overall has gone above the expectations.

Hardwick Police was randomly selected for an audit through the Vermont State Auditor's Office. The audit is for the Vermont Criminal Training Counsel for 2019 & 2020 on all the records. Amanda is helping with payroll records.

There have been two interviews in the past week for patrol officers, and there's another scheduled for tomorrow Friday, February 4, 2022. Eric asked how candidates have heard about open slots. Mike stated from word of mouth. David mentioned that the Town Manager's office is working on ads and will be posting them to the website, Vermont Academy, VLCT, and Front Porch Forum next week.

Mike reported that Katie Cimmino has given her notice, and Joe Rossi is working through health issues and may have to resign as well. With the short staff, Hardwick has been working with Vermont State Police, and that's been working well.

The Town has entered into an agreement with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department to help with drug and SIU cases.

The Select Board thanked Mike for stepping in. The Town appreciates his help.

6:34 P.M. – 6:38 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to review and consider approving various liquor licenses

Ceilidh asked where the Outside consumption was being held. Tonia stated that the legion has a few events right outside their backdoor. It's all gated off. This license is to give them permission to host and serve.

Elizabeth asked about the difference between each class. First is classified as a restaurant or bar that sells beer and wine. Second is a store that sells beer, and wine, and third is when a restaurant or bar serves spirits.

There haven't been any incidents with any of the applicants.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the following liquor licenses:

First Class license for:

Hardwick Post No. 7 American Legion, Inc.

Second Class Licenses for:

*GSB, LLC d/b/a D&L Beverage & Deli
Global Montello Group, Corp. d/b/a Jiffy Mart #457
Tops Market, LLC
Hardwick Convenience & Deli, LLC
Keg of Glory d/b/a Birdsong Beer & Wine*

Third Class Licenses for:

Hardwick Post No. 7 American Legion, Inc.

Outside Consumption Permit for:

Hardwick Post No. 7 American Legion, Inc.

6:39 P.M. – 6: 42P.M. Item #2 Select Board to authorize the Town Manager to sign a support letter for VASA grant application to purchase a track dump truck that will be used on the Wright Farm Rd RTP project slated for later in 2022

Danny mentioned that he has hired Jon Jewett to help him with this grant. This track dump will be used in three counties. Shari asked for a copy of the grant to place in the Town's files.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Michael Deering, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign a support letter for VASA grant application.

Danny also updated about the Wright Farm project and stated that it's moving forward. He met with wetlands this last week.

6:45 P.M. – 6:50 P.M. Item #3 Business Manager to give quarterly budget update through 12-31-2021

The Business Manager gave an update on the budget through the first half of the fiscal year. See attachments.

6:50 P.M. – 7:20 P.M. Item #4 Paul Fixx to give NEK Broadband update

Paul Fixx gave an overview on where coverage is throughout the Town. This information is based on the Public Service Board. It is very apparent that there are a lot of locations where there isn't internet. OSSU finds that students struggle with this.

Paul stated that in December, the NEK Broadband connected their first customer, which was located in Concord.

Paul also mentioned that the ARPA funds could go towards broadband connections. He stated that for each dollar of the ARPA fund that the Town uses, ARPA will also contribute three dollars toward the project. Paul has volunteered to look into this more, however the Town wants to think about this, and also give the residents of the Town a chance

to weigh in on how they want to spend the ARPA funds. This will be discussed again at a later date.

7:20 P.M. – 7:21 P.M. Item #5 Select Board to authorize Town Manager and Asst. Town Clerk for the 2021-1 series Fire truck Bond (so we can get reimbursed for the truck through US Bank)

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager and Assistant Town Clerk for the 2021-1 series Fire Truck bond.

7:21 P.M. – 7:22 P.M. Item #6 Select Board to authorize Town Manager to sign permission for the CVSWMD Household Hazardous Waste Event on August 27, 2022

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to accept the date of the 2022 Household Hazardous Waste Event on August 27, 2022

7:22 P.M. – 7:24 P.M. Item #7 Select Board to authorize Town Manager to accept the terms and conditions of the Yellow Barn VCDP Grant Agreement when finalized and authority to execute all appropriate documents

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to authorize Town Manager to accept the terms and conditions of the Yellow Barn VCDP Grant Agreement when finalized and authority to execute all appropriate documents

7:24 P.M. – 7:25 P.M. Item #8 Business Manager to update the Board on an existing Economic Development loan

Casey reported that Terry Coolbeth with Connie's Kitchen plans to sell the business to Stephen and Carol Parks. The Town currently has an Economic Development Loan agreement in repayment with Terry Coolbeth. Stephen and Carol plan to fill out their own application in order to assume this specific loan. The business and loan will be in their names. This application will be discussed at the next Select Board meeting.

Select Board Reports-

- The deadline for the RFQ for the Downtown Designation is Monday, February 7, 2022. The committee will meet Tuesday to review the candidate who have submitted their qualifications.
- The first 15 "Welcome to Hardwick" pole banners provided by the NEK Funds grant award are ready for pickup in Rutland at Green Screen Graphics.
- Ceilidh reported that the Equity Committee went through the website and found that there needs to be more inclusive language; more specifically, about the history or the Abenaki people in Hardwick. The committee also found that some of the links need to be updated, and they would like to see an inclusion/welcome statement on the front page.
- Shari and David are attending a Better Places webinar Thursday, February 10, 2022.

New Business-

- The informational meeting for Town Meeting will be on February 17 at 5:30 P.M.

Old Business-

- David mentioned that ATV access to the middle of Town. This will be discussed at the next Select Board meeting.
- Shari thanked Casey for the grant spreadsheet she provided and suggested the board review it to discuss further at a future Select Board meeting to determine if additional detail could be logged to track the many grants that the Town and other local organizations are managing. Elizabeth added that a chart

showing a comparison to the tax payer revenue vs. grant revenue to further illustrate the benefits for tax payers and what it takes to full finance the Town administration.

- Ceilidh brought up that the Town might want to think about social media outlets.
- Shari noted that the AARP Community Challenge grant is open for applications until late March and asked if the town will be considering an application. David commented that the current Community Development Coordinator has stated that the AARP grant is very competitive and further that Geoff does not have time to do any more work for the Town than he is currently doing. Shari commented further that 9 Vermont towns received AARP Community Challenge grants last year.
- Ceilidh would like a meeting to discuss the ARPA fund. It was discussed to put it on the date of the second Select Board meeting in March, starting at 5:30 P.M.
- Eric asked about the Swinging Bridge. David mentioned he's working to get in communications with the correct directors from the State.

7:51 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