

MINUTES SPECIAL SELECT BOARD MEETING
1:00 P.M. Wednesday, July 13, 2022
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM

Select Board

Eric Remick, Chair
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane
Elizabeth Dow
Shari Cornish
Danny Hale - *absent*

Others Present

David Upson, Jr. Town Manager
Casey Rowell, Business Manager
Tracy Martin, Community Dev. Coord.
Rose Friedman, Civic Standard
Norma Wiesen, Conservation Commission - *Zoom*
Heather Davis, Hardwick Food Pantry - *Zoom*

Others Present

Steven Garelick
Kathy Hemmens
Paul Fixx

Special Meeting

1:04 P.M. Select Board Chair to call the meeting to order

1:04 P.M. Set/adjust agenda – none

1:04 P.M. Communication from the audience – Paul Fixx asked if the requestors will be able to provide input and the answer was yes.

1:05 P.M. – 1:13 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to choose 20-year (debt service approx. \$138,000/yr.) or 30-year term (debt service approx. \$101,000/yr.) for Wastewater project

Ceilidh put a motion on the table to do a 30-yr term and it was seconded by Elizabeth. Upon further discussion and the vote, all members voted no. Motion failed.

Elizabeth made a motion to do a 20-year term, seconded by Ceilidh. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

1:13 P.M. – 2:51 P.M. Item #2 Select Board to review ARPA requests received to include feedback from any of the requestors if present

1. Caledonia Grange #9
2. Civic Standard
3. Craftsbury Community Care Center
4. East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization (EHNO)
5. Hardwick Area Food Pantry
6. Hardwick Conservation Commission
7. Hardwick Downtown Commission
8. Hardwick Town House
9. Judevine Memorial Library
10. Mandy Spaulding – *request withdrawn*
11. NEK Broadband
12. Town of Hardwick – Cyber Security

Ceilidh thanked those present for coming and asked if we could hear their comments about their projects while they are here. Eric agreed that would be a good method. The Board agreed to go through these one at a time in this order.

Steven Garelick commented that the Grange has been an important meeting space for E. Hardwick and the surrounding area. The accessibility limits attendance to events. They would like to use the ARPA funds as potential match funds for grants.

Rose Friedman was present on behalf of the Civic Standard. One half of the costs is for electricity and building related expenses. The other half is to pay staff to help run the programming. Rose wanted to mention that the location is just for the office headquarters. She mentioned that any amount of support would be helpful because it would allow them to leverage other funding by showing they have means of community support.

Kathy Hemmens commented that the Craftsbury Community Care Center is one of two centers located nearby where elders can go to. It also provides employment opportunities for Hardwick residents. At least 25% of the current residents are Hardwick residents.

For the EHNO submission, there was not a specific amount, but sidewalks and drainage were mentioned. In addition, a late application came in referencing speed signs and guardrails. David indicated that he has been on a walking tour and there are safety issues that should be addressed soon. This is something that could either be funded in the regular budget or ARPA. Tracy mentioned that there used to be a grant program called "Safe Routes to Schools," that she wondered if it might fund sidewalks.

Heather Davis, with the Hardwick Food Pantry, wanted to point out that their programs cover maintaining vital public service and the funds would provide general operating expenses. They are experiencing increased food costs, which is creating uncertainty. They have seen increased demand. The funds would help with their general operating costs. Ceilidh asked about any plans to fund any gaps. Heather indicated that as of now, there isn't a gap, but there may be soon. They have expanded into other communities such as Albany and Craftsbury.

Norma Wiesen was present for the Conservation Commission. Elizabeth asked if the cost figure was vague. Norma said that they have consulted the Agency of Natural Resources who gave them the estimate of the cost. Michael Lew-Smith also concurred with the \$15-\$20K estimate, so the estimate is fairly accurate.

Shari completed the request for the Downtown Commission. Eric asked for examples of what the money would be used for. It would possibly be used to fund an Executive Director, events or grant programs that would benefit businesses.

Shari completed the request for Hardwick Town House. She went over the work that they are looking to do to the building. Eric asked a few questions about the scope of work.

The Jeudevine Library request was discussed briefly. However, Elizabeth spoke with Jodi Lew-Smith prior to the meeting and the library is likely to get grant funding and a bridge loan, so there was limited discussion about their request.

Mandy Spaulding withdrew her request, which was more suggestion based and not specific.

Paul Fixx was present on behalf of NEK Broadband. There is state money that will assist, so every dollar received results in a \$1 from the State and \$1 from NEK Broadband, so the ARPA funds account for 33%. He

spoke briefly about their request and the timeline for completing projects. The state match is available until September. For example, if the Town committed \$140,000, there would be match funds of roughly \$289,000. This is time sensitive, so they will need to know soon because they must apply to the State as well if the Town decides to fund this project. Paul indicated that it would get done regardless of this funding, but it would help to speed it up.

For the Town's Cyber Security – David indicated that this needs to be addressed ASAP, but the consensus was that it should be handled in the regular Town budget even if it meant dipping in the fund balance. It should be done right away, but not with ARPA funds.

It was mentioned that there were a few other Town projects that were mentioned at the informational meetings that did not have request forms filled out. Elizabeth thinks we need to focus on the 12 requests and make decisions today. Elizabeth thinks we should fund each for some of what they asked considering what we have available to distribute. Since the library is anticipating getting funding through grants, it seems logical that we would eliminate that from the list of projects to fund. Some members were concerned about making decisions today. However, it was decided that someone should just start the conversation about how the money can be allocated.

With group discussion, here is the proposed ARPA spending:

NEK Broadband	\$139,500
Hardwick Town House	\$50,000
Caledonia Grange #9	\$40,000
Hardwick Food Pantry	\$15,000
Downtown Commission	\$10,000
Conservation Commission	\$15,000
Civic Standard	\$35,000
Craftsbury Community Center	\$2,500

Total: \$307,000

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to allocate the ARPA funds as proposed above.

This leaves about \$48,000 unspent. There are plenty of things to spend this on, but for now, the Board is going to leave that portion uncommitted.

Select Board Reports: Shari let everyone know that the Chamber Players first concert is this Thursday at the Town House. Eric shared that next Tuesday evening there is a community fun race at the Hardwick Trails for mountain bikers and runners. Yellow Barn is still working through shrinking the scope to the budgeted amount. The physical structures have been adjusted but the tenants and program are similar. The project will need to be rebid after the revised design has been completed.

Elizabeth commented that we had a very civil and good process for the ARPA. The group took their time, discussed, didn't raise any voices, and got through the applications and made educated decisions.

2:56 P.M. *Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to enter Executive Session per 1 V.S.A. § 313 to discuss a loan contract.*

3:03 P.M. Exited Executive Session.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve an Economic Development loan request from The Flower Basket for \$50,000 for a 10-year term with the identified co-signer and second lien on business assets.

3:05 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Casey Rowell, Business Manager

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair