

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2022
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

Select Board

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

Others Present

David Upson, Jr. Town Manager
Casey Rowell, Business Manager
Mike Henry, Interim Police Chief
Tom Fadden – Road Foreman

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 - *none*

6:00 P.M. – Communication from the audience - *none*

6:01 P.M. – 6:03 P.M. Select Board to approve minutes for the Regular Select Board meeting of August 18, 2022

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the Regular Select Board meeting of August 18, 2022, as written. Danny abstained.

6:01 P.M. – 6:12 P.M. Town Manager’s Report– Given by David Upson

David updated us on the sludge cleanout project at the wastewater plant. Twenty-five loads have been shipped at an average of 35.7% solids. Overall, the project is going well and as expected. Lagoon liners have been delivered.

David shared that he attended a meeting about the pedestrian bridge with SE Group. They will be completing their site visit after Labor Day and the bridge abutment inspection will be done by Engineering Ventures. Once the bridge has been inspected and the report is out, we can then do the historical and environmental reports. The inspection report will tell us if we are able to use the existing abutments or not. The hope is that two possible designs will be available for review near the end of October/middle of November. There will be another community meeting regarding the design.

Starting September 1, Kenny LaCasse will be the temporary water systems operator for the East Hardwick Fire District #1. David will be working with the Fire District to compensate the Town of Hardwick for travel to and from the EHFD #1 Reservoir with a town vehicle and time spent on daily tests.

David shared that the Town is creating a database of emails so that we can have an Instant Alert Notification for important notices such as boil water notices. We are encouraging people to go to our website to sign up for the alerts. You can choose “all alerts” or just water alerts. www.hardwickvt.gov

David shared that the N. Main Street Stormwater project is almost complete.

Elizabeth commented that we are fortunate to live in the area we are and not have the trouble with our water system that people in Kentucky are experiencing.

Shari asked about EV charger update. David indicated that Norwich EV is still looking for a public site because the Buffalo Co-op parking lot has proved to be more challenging than expected. There are two chargers near Lamoille Valley Ford by the car wash.

6:12 P.M. – 6:16 P.M. Road Foreman Report– Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that they fixed 3 water leaks and completed another section of the Church Street sidewalks. They also handed out 60+ notices for water/sewer disconnects. Tom encouraged people to pay prior to disconnection because it is more costly to them if it is shut off and turned back on later.

Tom also reported that they graded Pumpkin Lane, Hardwick Farms, Montgomery Rd., Ward Hill, Mountain View, West Hill, Dimick Road, and part of Bridgman Hill. They also did ditch work on Dutton Rd. and Hopkins Hill, as well as replaced a 3' culvert on Hardwick Farms Rd. The price of culverts has doubled from last year, so that one culvert used all the culvert budget for the year.

In addition to this work, they did some catch basin work on Maple Street.

6:16 P.M. – 6:18 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report - Given by Interim Police Chief Mike Henry

Mike shared that the Hardwick Police (PD) has partnered with the Health Center for distributing gunlocks to the community. They are free and anyone can get one at the Police Station at 56 High Street.

Mike gave a snapshot of cases that the PD had in August. There was a total of 266 incidents. He reported that motor vehicle enforcement is up, and they have been seeing a lot of suspended license drivers. They have also arrested several people on existing warrants during traffic stops.

Mike shared that they picked up the new cruiser – it is lettered but waiting on the fit-up parts. It will likely be a couple of months before it can be active due to supply chain issues for the fit-up. They will sell the 2018 sedan once this cruiser is available to be used.

6:18 P.M. – 6:25 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to discuss and approve options for Brush Clearing of Town Highway roadsides.

The plan is to rent tractors with boom mowers and have our crew do what they can do next week in 3 full days. This will give us an idea of what we should do next year in terms of renting or another option.

Tom did some research on options for us to purchase our own equipment.

1. Tiger mower to attach on the front of a loader \$105-\$110K
2. Champlain Valley has a Kubota for \$180K that is completely set up
3. HP Fairfield has a John Deere 22' boom \$160K

Overall, the range is \$145- \$180K depending on the brand and accessories you want. We are not going to contract with anyone at this time, so we are not accepting either bid that we received for the roadside brush clearing.

6:26 P.M. – 6:29 P.M. Item #2 Item Select Board to discuss and sign the Town Manager’s contract

The Board has prepared, and David has accepted another 1-year contract for the Town Manager position. The dates are July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022 (fiscal year 2023).

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to sign his contract for FY23.

Select Board Reports: Danny shared a little about the work that VASA has been doing on the trails - they did receive the RTP grant for Wright Farm Rd.

New Business: Eric indicated that the Select Board needs to meet with the HED Commissioners to discuss a town policy related to land around Nichols Pond. The Board may need to consult with an attorney for some advice. This is not an urgent matter, but it should be scheduled soon.

Old Business: Shari wanted to remind people about the burn ordinance and people burning whatever and whenever they want – things like yard waste. People need a burn permit from the Forest Fire Warden, Doug Casavant. The ordinance is on the Town’s website.

Shari asked about an update on the Town Property Task Force that was reviewing the idea of selling the Carey Rd. property for a housing development. David has contacted three surveyors and they are all booked out until June of 2023, but he has them on their schedules to be done as soon as possible. The Board needs to discuss what they want to do with the Carey Rd., but a survey needs to be done first.

Shari said that the developers who approached the Town recently were looking for a more concrete answer about whether the Town is interested in selling the property. It was suggested we could get an appraisal on the property or ask our Assessor for an opinion. The property card on the website shows \$182,000 as the assessed value. The group had an overall discussion about property values and land availability in Town, as well as what other properties have sold for in recent years. Shari would like to see the Task Force do some additional work, so that the Town can decide if they are interested in pursuing the sale of that property. Danny said it is not realistic to create a uniform policy for handling town properties. Each one is unique and would need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Shari brought up that the Board is supposed to be reviewing the East Hardwick walk audit. This was provided to the Board a couple of meetings ago and so she just wanted to remind the group that this needs to be looked at.

6:52 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