

**MINUTES SELECT BOARD RETREAT MEETING
9:00 A.M. WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2022
COMMUNITY/SENIOR CENTER
56 HIGH STREET HARDWICK, VT**

Select Board

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

Others Present

David Upson, Town Manager
Casey Rowell, Business Manager
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Tracy Martin, Community Development Coordinator

Others Present

Select Board Retreat

9:05 A.M. – Select Board Chair to call meeting to order

9:05 A.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – *There was supposed to be an 11:00 Zoom meeting with SE Group; however, it was decided to reschedule this meeting for another time since we already have many other items to discuss today. David will email them immediately to let them know the Committee has requested to reschedule. Agenda will stay the same.*

9:08 A.M. – Communication from the audience - *none*

9:08 A.M. – Town Manager presentation on existing and upcoming projects, lays out the schedule for the day and expectations for the retreat.

David had a list of projects that are ongoing. A partial list of examples in list format can be found below. He laid out the presenters for the day and the topics that we will talk about. The idea is to get into deeper conversations about some long-term plans/goals.

Highway:

Town Garage/Complex
LVRT Trailheads

Yellow Barn

Wastewater/Water:

Flow Meters INF & EFF
Well Pump Meter Calibration
Lagoon #1 dewater and liner replacement (Spring 2023)
Continuation of Upgrade Project w/ A & E
Hideaway Acres Sewer Ordinance

Roads:

Ditching and Culvert install on East Church Street
Road-side mowing continued
West Hill Easement
West Church Street Rebuild
N. Main Street Grind and Resurface

Broadband Paul Fixx CUD:

Timeline and update
West Hill Repeater Connection

Sidewalks:

Identify locations to repair and replace
Health Officer

Stormwater Project:

Maintenance of N. Main System
Check on status of other swirl separators

Pedestrian Bridge

HED:

Memorandum of Understanding

Selectboard Cemeteries:

Inventory

9:55 A.M. – Presentation from Community Development Coordinator (CDC) Tracy Martin on Capital Planning

Tracy shared that she has talked with David about the Town’s desire to create a capital plan. She talked about the formal definition of a capital plan. A capital plan will help us to be more proactive, rather than reactive. She shared that we could apply for a municipal planning grant to hire someone to assist with the capital planning process. There was discussion about how hiring a consultant would work if we had someone who could come in and just get the capital planning piece done. David indicated that we could also plan something in our budget for a match or the fee for a consultant.

There was discussion about showing Town residents the grant revenues that the Town takes in, so they can see that the Town isn’t strictly supported with tax dollars. The Business Manager said that this could be done with a pie chart showing the sources of revenues and where they come from. The one downfall is that while we do have several million dollars of grant awards, they are reimbursable, so we don’t see that revenue in the current or previous year. It is not until we receive the reimbursement.

Ceilidh said that an overall capital plan can be used as a tool to communicate to the voters what is happening in the community. It will help create further transparency to let the voters know about projects. David commented that many of the projects are related to each other and having something concrete.

Tracy indicated that most capital plans are 5–10-year plans. The Select Board asked Tracy to pursue any grants that might help the Town hire a consultant to create an actual capital plan.

10:15 A.M. **15-minute break**

10:30 A.M. – Discussion with Road Foreman Tom Fadden on future projects (large and small) discussion on road, underground infrastructure, town garage building upgrade

Danny would like to see us add a seasonal employee that can operate equipment (not necessarily have a CDL), because the window is short for summer projects. Eric said that we could hire someone to do the lawns and then that would free up another person. We are also adding brush clearing and hopefully gravel pit work, which takes additional time away from other projects. David suggested that we bid out the lawn mowing as a starting point. Tom shared what we mow for cemeteries: West Hill, Bridgman Hill, Bayley Hazen, and Center Rd.

Ultimately, Danny would like to see us have some additional manpower in the summer for all the projects. It was suggested that we explore the cost of outsourcing mowing. David and Casey already discussed this and do agree that hiring it out will cost more than continuing to have an employee do that, but it would free up that person for important Town projects in the summer months.

Eric said that we need to dig deeper into the highway garage because it is in rough condition. We don't want to be in a reactive situation if something happens to it. We need to be more proactive with the replacement of the facility. He'd like to see the Town move forward with having someone design and engineering for that space. There was discussion that it would be ideal to create one building that would house public works, fire, and rescue. Obviously, it would be a very costly endeavor. Danny said maybe we could build a complex down on Carey Rd. and then eventually put housing up here in the village where the highway garage is now. There was discussion about what this might look like and what the space could look like (a brainstorming session).

The overall recap is that we need to research the possibility of using the Carey Rd. Town owned property for a municipal facility that would house fire, rescue, and public works.

The group talked about what housing might look like on Creamery Rd. if this idea came to fruition. Eric reiterated that we should have a design firm draw some conceptual drawings for a facility. Danny said that we need to figure out exactly what our needs are before we do any drawings. We would need to hire someone to do a needs assessment in terms of space, square footage that could house fire, rescue, and public works. Then from there, determine what amount of space is adequate. We should put out an RFP to find someone to do the needs assessment for a new town complex facility. The Town Manager's office will work on this.

Regarding underground infrastructure, Tom reported that the section of water pipes from the well to the reservoir should be replaced. It is something that needs to be addressed sooner than later. If it were to break, it would affect the water supply for everyone. They discussed logistically how we might go about accomplishing this and how it could be paid for. David suggested that partnering with USDA who can handle a large project of this magnitude.

Danny asked if Tom is researching equipment pieces that are due to be replaced this year. He has started looking at them some, but the budget has not been approved at Town meeting, so he cannot order them at this time. He will get multiple quotes on the excavator, loader, grader, etc. The equipment schedule does have several pieces of equipment that are planned to be replaced. Tom discussed going down to one loader – we currently have two.

11:42 A.M. – Presentation from Casey Rowell on building projects planning & budgeting

The Business Manager shared a spreadsheet that she is working on for building maintenance and major repairs of each facility. This is a work in progress as research is being done to find historical info about when things were last replaced. It outlines each asset, the major items such as roof, heating system, and painting, etc. Then it has when it was last replaced and the cost. Then it looks to when it next needs to be replaced with potential cost. Items that need attention in 5 years will be highlighted. This will be a planning tool for budgeting to identify more urgent needs.

12:00 P.M. – Review and discussion of DRAFT Intermunicipal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hardwick Electric Department.

The Board was given a copy of a draft document to review. No action will be taken today at the retreat. It was just for review and discussion. They looked it over for clarification and grammatical errors. They will come back to this after lunch.

12:13 P.M. *Break for Lunch*****

12:40 P.M. Casey Rowell left the meeting. Amanda Fecteau took over minute taking at that point.

Meeting resumed:

12:40 P.M. – Continued review and discussion of DRAFT Intermunicipal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hardwick Electric Department.

The Board discussed in further detail about the MOU and that they would like to see some changes made. The Town Manager will discuss changes that were discussed with town legal counsel and bring it back to the Select Board for a second review.

12:55 P.M. – Discussion on Select Board managed cemeteries and related practices & policies.

The Select Board discussed the different cemeteries, who's in charge of them all, and the different protocols that each cemetery follows, such as the cost, who maintains the properties, and more.

Elizabeth and Ceilidh mentioned that they would like to collaborate and make policies and procedures that will be applied to all cemeteries in the Town of Hardwick. They would also like to reach out to the DER for some guidance, and to include the Town Clerk in the process.

The Town Manager's office gets a lot of requests on cemeteries, so the Board asked that Amanda make a fillable form in which the recipient can fill out for more information. This will help staff guide the recipient in the right direction.

The Town recently received a request from the Fairview Cemetery, Main Street Cemetery, and the Maple Street Cemetery requesting money. The Board would like the Town Manager to reach out to Karen Richardson, who is on the board of all three cemeteries, asking for more details.

The Town Manager also received a request from Tom Bellavance stating that Tom owns property on West Hill in which he's looking to put in Land Trust. However, there's a cemetery on West Hill and Tom is specifically looking to determine the property around the cemetery. The Board asked that the Town Manager reach back out to Tom for further details and to bring it back to the Board at a further date.

1:30 P.M. -- Discussion of Town of Hardwick Community Collaboration Council project.

Jessie Upson, Kristine Burke, and Barb Delzio are partnering up to form the Hardwick Community Collaboration Council pilot program. This would be another program where community members could go and talk to someone, feel safe, and get guidance about their situation. Right now, people can talk to the Police Department, AWARE, or mental health; however sometimes residents don't feel like they fit into the missions of those organizations, or don't feel like it's a big enough emergency. This pilot program is still in the early stages; however, the Town Manager stated that the next steps are for Jessie, Barb, and Kristine to reach out to these other organizations and figure out each mission, projects, what's working for them and what's not

working. Once the information is gathered, the pilot program will create their own mission, and start creating a safe place to offer guidance to the community.

The Public Safety Building (located in the same building as the Police Department) would be a great place for this specific program. There are offices that could be used for telehealth, and Ceilidh mentioned that there's space for a play area for children. She mentioned that someone might need guidance, but do not have a place to bring their children. The Town Manager mentioned staffing that part of the building, along with the Police Department 24/7. The Town Manager has also talked to NEK Human Services to use part of the building; however, that was placed on hold for the time being.

This discussion lead into vision of the Police Department and what the Town's ability is for the future. They also discussed Hardwick Rescue and how important it is for the Town of Hardwick to have Emergency personnel. Danny would like to see a plan of the future projections. In the meantime, Tracy Martin is going to look for grants that could benefit the Town.

2:19 P.M. – Discussion on ARPA disbursement reporting requirements.

The Select Board would like to see updates on the organizations that received ARPA funds. This report will include what the money is being used for, and if the money hasn't been spent, then the board would like to see what the plan is for how it's going to be spent.

The Select Board would also like to see a page explaining job descriptions of the Select Board and other committees within the Town to encourage other residents to get involved.

Elizabeth mentioned that she has seen other Town's report specific marriages, births, and deaths in their Town reports.

Ceilidh mentioned that the Town could also add activities such as a word search. The Board mentioned that the report should include the Town business and financials, but to also make it a tool for residents.

2:30 P.M. – Closing with action items for TM, Select Board and/or standing committees

The Town Manager mentioned that the Town received a property from the 2020-2021 Tax Sale that was held in October of 2021. The Town plans to clean the property up and sell it.

Shari mentioned the trash next to the Town House. The Town Manager is going to look further into if it violates the Trash Ordinance.

2:30 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Casey Rowell, Business Manager

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair