

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING  
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022  
MEMORIAL BUILDING  
20 CHURCH ST. 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

**Select Board**

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

**Others Present**

David Upson, Town Manager  
Casey Rowell, Business Manager  
Mike Henry, Interim Police Chief – *Zoom*  
Tom Fadden – Road Foreman  
Vince O’ Connell, HED  
Heather Carrington, CCDS

**Others Present**

Tracy Martin, CDC  
Bethany Dunbar  
Sandy Scott - *Zoom*

**Regular Meeting**

**6:00 P.M.** – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

**6:00 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda – *none*

**6:01 P.M.** – Communication from the audience – *none*

**6:02 P.M.** – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of October 6, 2022, the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of October 6, 2022, the minutes of the Public Hearing of October 6, 2022, the minutes of the Select Board Retreat meeting of October 12, 2022, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of October 18, 2022

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of October 6, 2022, the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of October 6, 2022, the minutes of the Public Hearing of October 6, 2022, the minutes of the Select Board Retreat meeting of October 12, 2022, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of October 18, 2022, as written.*

**6:02 P.M. – 6:08 P.M.** Town Manager’s Report – Given by David Upson

David updated us on a few items including the award of about \$450,000 in Pollution Control funds for the Wastewater project and shared that the VOREC grant agreement has been provided to us. The VOREC grant is a \$200,000 award to assist with the construction of the Pedestrian bridge and the creation of a Gateway Park on the Daniels Rd. side of the bridge.

Some water meters have not been working (zero readings). We have sent out notices to 20+ residents/businesses letting them know that we need to inspect their meters. We need people to reach out to the Town Manager’s office to set up a time to do this ASAP.

David talked briefly about the new parking lines that have been drawn in the village. We are asking people to obey those lines as we do have a Traffic Ordinance. If you are confused, ask David or one of the Town's friendly police officers. See attachments for full report.

**6:08 P.M. – 6:18 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden**

Tom brought up that people have been questioning the lines in front of Positive Pie. They have asked why there is not a no parking sign. There was brief discussion about this.

The crusher has come and gone. They believe that we can get one more year in our pit. Truck #4 is coming back tomorrow, so all the trucks will be up and ready for winter.

They have continued to haul gravel. They have done work on the following roads: Bayley Hazen, Dimick Rd., Pumpkin Lane, Porter Brook Rd., started Dutton Rd., Mackville Pond area, Atkins Lane, Bunker Hill Rd., and West Hill.

Tom shared that there was a water break in the Cooper Brook Drive area last evening. They were able to locate the issue and fix it. There was some discussion about if we might consider upgrading this section of the lines. We would need to upgrade a section of the Class 4 road to a Class 3 in the process. There would need to be public hearings and the appropriate process would need to be followed.

Danny complimented the brush cutting along the roadsides that was done. David indicated that he plans to have someone cut some of the large trees along Center Rd. this Fall. We will plan to get the tractors again next year and do additional work.

Tom said that he is expecting information about the equipment purchase for next year soon, including trade in values.

**6:18 P.M. – 6:26 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report - Given by Interim Police Chief Mike Henry**

Mike shared that he accepted a letter of resignation from one of the part-time officers. He also reported that Officer Andrew Force has finished his field training and is on his own. He is doing a great job.

Mike indicated that the Hardwick Police Department (HPD) has been using Restorative Justice for several cases. They are going beyond the scope of what the state's attorney expects.

Mike reported that they have been seeing a significant increase in scams. One of the scams is utilizing the HPD phone number and pretending to have a warrant for their arrest. Ceilidh asked if there is anything that PD can do about this. He said that they can try to trace them, but many are out of the country. They recently had a couple where the calls were from CT and AZ. There was money diverted in one case. There was another case of an email being hacked. There are a lot of scams going around, so people need to be extremely cautious.

Mike also reported that thefts of catalytic converters is high right now. There is tracking for in state salvage yards, but they cannot track them as well out of state. Mike encourages people to be aware of suspicious activity at night because people are underneath the vehicles cutting them off. If you see something, report it.

**6:26 P.M. – 6:44 P.M. Hardwick Electric Department (HED) Report - Given by Vince O' Connell**

Vince shared that HED is in the process of reviewing and acquiring advanced metering infrastructure. This would replace current meters. The larger utility companies like Green Mountain Power (GMP) already have this. At their next Board meeting, VPPSA is going to do a presentation, so they can decide to move forward with this.

HED has not had a rate increase in 13 years. However, labor costs, power supply costs, and supply costs have all increased. They are currently reviewing a rate increase through data collection that they share with PUC for consideration of the rate increase.

Vince mentioned that the H-11 solar project and Wolcott Hydro are both generating quite a bit of power, but water levels are down, so Hydro is not as much as they would like to see. HED has entered a wind power contract with an entity in NY state. Research data indicates that over 5 years the savings could be \$1M+ for them, based on the results of other partnerships with that entity.

At the State level, net metering is being reviewed. However, the public comment recently closed for the proposed changes. He also shared that electric incentive policies in the State are being reviewed as well. Vince shared that there is a push from the Public Utility Commission to develop a low-income rate. Green Mountain Power already has one in place. VPPSA wants more information about the structure before deciding if it will fit into HED's rate structure.

There is some rule making coming down the road for Electric vehicles. Like net metering, the public comment period for that closed recently. Vince shared that the HED crew reconfigured several lines to increase efficiency. It has lowered the losses in the system.

Elizabeth asked a follow up question from last month. Last month, the comment was made that the solar panels that people have cost HED more than buying on the market. Vince indicated that this is true because incentives that the State created for people makes the net metering 60-90% more expensive per Kwh for HED than buying on the market. There was discussion among the group about the coordination of the net metering for the smaller accounts that are in the service area.

Ceilidh asked if there was a sense of how much the rates were going to increase. He is unsure. Stowe and Enosburg requested about 13% and 11% respectively. It has been discussed that it might be more appropriate to have more regular rate increases, since it has been 13 years since the rates have increased.

**6:44 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. Item #1 Heather Carrington of Carrington Community Development Services to give presentation about Downtown Commission progress and Select Board to consider approving and signing the resolution "Authorizing Application for Downtown Designation under the Downtown Development Act" and the Community Reinvestment Agreement**

Heather Carrington with Carrington Community Development Services (CCDS) was present to go over the progress that the Commission has made with moving forward to become a designated Downtown. She is assisting the Town with a Downtown Designation application. As part of the process, the Downtown Commission created bylaws. She presented the draft by-laws for the formation of the Downtown Commission, as well as the resolution for the formal application. There are several action items needed this evening to submit the formal application for Downtown Designation. A map was provided outlining the specific areas (in red) that will be a part of the application. See meeting attachments for the map and by-laws draft, etc.

Ceilidh asked if we could lose some of the designation areas upon submission of the application. Heather did indicate that we could lose some of the parcels that we are asking to be a part of it, but she has already made compelling arguments for keeping them.

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the proposed Downtown Designation application boundaries as delineated in Map 1, dated 10/10/2022.*

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the Hardwick Downtown Partnership Bylaws.*

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the Municipal Resolution to Apply for Downtown Designation.*

*Upon motion Danny Hale, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to sign the Community Reinvestment Agreement.*

**6:57 P.M. – 7:01 P.M.** Item #2 Select Board to authorize CDC, Tracy Martin, to move forward with an application for a” Bylaw Modernization” grant for the Hardwick Planning Commission (HPC)

The Hardwick Planning Commission would like to apply for a grant to take a broader look at the Zoning bylaws. The max amount is \$25,000 and that is the amount that they want to apply for. The grant would enable them to hire a consultant to work with the Zoning Administrator and the Planning Commission to take the in depth look at the bylaws. The goal is to find ways to help tweak the bylaws to help the development of additional housing in our walkable area. This would be a more comprehensive approach. The grant money is used to hire a consultant. The match is only 10% (\$2500), but if it results in changes, we will get that back.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to apply for the Bylaw Modernization grant and authorize the Town Manager to sign any necessary documents.*

**7:01 P.M. – 7:08 P.M.** Item #3 Select Board to consider appointing Cheryl Ducharme to the Hardwick Cannabis Control Commission

Cheryl did submit a letter of interest, but others have expressed verbal interest and have not submitted a formal letter. The Board decided to table this because we need four other people. It makes sense to wait and appoint them all at once. The Board indicated they would follow up with people that they knew were interested and encourage them to submit their formal letter or email of interest so we can move forward with the formation of the entire Commission.

Interested parties should email or write to the Town Manager.

**7:08 P.M. – 7:16 P.M.** Item #4 Business Manager to provide Fiscal Year 2023 Quarter 1 budget update

The Business Manager provided an update on revenues and expenses for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2023. The expectation is that we would be at 25% and we are remarkably close, so we are on track with the budget as of this time. See attachments for the full report.

**7:16 P.M. – 7:46 P.M.** Item #5 Select Board to review LVRT Grant Letters of Support & discussion and approval from the Board to participate in the Consortium Grant as well as a Design and Construction grant for the two Hardwick trailheads

There are two components to this. The first is if the Town should join with other Towns in a Consortium Grant for developing the Town trailheads. Eric said that we should support this because we could look at other things in Hardwick such as a connector to Atkins Field or to the Hardwick Woodbury Trail. The extent to which the Town benefits is going to depend on how much effort each Town puts into it. The visitor experience is going to be better if other Towns also have good amenities. It would be a good collaboration among Towns that could benefit all the Towns in the end. Tracy mentioned collaborating on signage where we would get volume pricing. It would cost the Town about \$3,000 for a grant match.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted by majority to participate in the Consortium Grant and authorize Tracy Martin, CDC to complete the application and the Town Manager to sign the documents. Eric, Ceilidh, Elizabeth & Shari - Yea. Danny – nay Motion passes by majority.*

The second piece of this is about a Design and Construction grant for developing two Hardwick trailheads. Tracy talked about this and explained that this is the first year of the grant, so we will have other opportunities in the future if we do not want to apply this year. The scoping study for this concept shows a significant cost. The total project is estimated to be \$148,455 for both trailheads (Hardwick by Creamery Rd. and East Hardwick near Stevens Lane). This is for all the site work and the building of shelters and facilities. Our ask would be \$118,764 due to the required 20% cash match for the project (\$29,691) We do have three organization that are willing to contribute \$1,000 each to the match – NEKArts, East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization, and Hardwick Historical Society. The Town would need to be prepared to spend \$26,000 for that cash match.

There was discussion about how high the budget was for these proposed improvements, and we could do some small improvements such as a picnic table or mowing spots, rather than taking on the full-fledged \$148K project at this time. Ceilidh said that we should still invest in the trailheads to improve them. Let's see what the use is and where people are stopping before we jump in and build elaborate facilities along the trail.

Ceilidh said we should do the Consortium Grant and put funds in our next year budget for some of the improvements. There are community members who could assist with materials and labor. The group agreed with her. The consensus was that we would not apply for this grant at this time.

Tracy did mention that it is important for us to do some small things to protect places along the LVRT. She used the Depot as an example with people wanting to use a restroom or throw their trash away. It would be helpful to get a portable toilet or trash receptacle. Ceilidh also mentioned that we should wait until we know what we are doing with the Highway Garage too.

David indicated that we would need to select someone to be a contact for the Consortium Grant. It can be the Town Manager and he is willing to be the contact.

**7:46 P.M. – 7:47 P.M.** Item #6 Select Board to authorize Town Manager to enter into an agreement to switch the Memorial Building sprinkler system to nitrogen, estimated to cost \$12,000

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Danny Hale, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with a vendor (TBD) to switch the Memorial Building sprinkler system to nitrogen, estimated to cost \$12,000.*

**Select Board Reports:** Shari shared that on Saturday, October 22, the Rec Committee is showing *The Lost Boys* at the Town House. It is rated R, so this is more of an adult movie night. She also shared that on Wednesday, November 2 from 4-7 p.m., there will be an Open House for bridge designs and park designs. All are welcome to come check the designs out. She also noted that the Town House will be the official Town polling place for the Town of Hardwick voting on November 8.

*No New or Old Business.*

**7:51 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