

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

Select Board

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

Others Present

David Upson, Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Michael Henry, Police Chief

Others Present

Coco Holton

Regular Meeting

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

6:02 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Add item 5 to have the Select Board authorize the Select Board chair to sign the contract between the Town of Hardwick and the SE Group for the Pedestrian Bridge. Add item 6 to have the Select Board authorize the Town Manager to sign a letter of support for the Northern Forrest grant. Add item 7 to have the Select Board adopt the new cemetery policy.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted unanimously to adjust the agenda as stated.

6:05 P.M. – Communication from the audience - *None*

6:05 P.M. – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of February 2, 2023

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of February 2, 2023, as written. Danny abstained.

6:06 P.M. – 6:04 P.M. Town Manager’s Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that the East Hardwick Fire District will soon have a link on the Town of Hardwick’s web page. He reported that an RFP will be advertised for the repairs on the Memorial Building roof. The cost of the repairs will be covered by a Historic Preservation Grant. Next, VTrans is in the process of providing towns along the LVRT with wayfinding signage. Jackie Cassino from VTRANS is asking the Town for permission. Lastly, David reported on the Business Opportunity Conference. This conference is for local businesses or perspective businesses coming into the Hardwick area. See the link at hardwickvt.gov for further information or to register for the event.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve VTRANS to put signage up in the Town of Hardwick’s right of way directing rail trail users.

There was not a Road Foreman report tonight.

6:09 P.M. – 6:20 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report - Given by Police Chief Mike Henry

Mike reported that the Hardwick Police Department (HPD) has been doing snowmobile patrols. There is a contract between HPD and VAST stating that HPD can patrol the Hardwick trail system, as well as surrounding areas. With that being said, VAST paid for the snowmobiles, and is paying for the officers wages, and the maintenance of the machines. Mike wanted to clarify that the patrol of the trails is not taking away from the regular patrolling. There are additional officers coming in specifically to patrol the trails. Additionally, Mike wanted to remind everyone that we need to share the trail.

Next, Mike reported that Jim Sullivan from VTRANS did a speed study on Route 14 near the UPS store. The speed limit in that area is 25mph, and the report showed that over 80% of travelers were traveling over the posted speed limit. Jim is going to work with HPD to find a solution for that area. Mike also gathered data from over the past 30 days. In the past 30 days, the peak time for criminal offenses was around 3pm. The least amount of calls were surprisingly on Fridays. The top arrests in the past 30 days include active state warrants, suspended licenses, DUI's, violation of conditions, and arrests on drugs.

There was not a Hardwick Electric report tonight.

6:21 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to consider replacing the temporary Hardwick LVRT Working Group with a more formal Hardwick LVRT Committee.

The Hardwick LVRT Trailhead Working Group was originally formed in August 2022. At the time, an application was being prepared to the VTrans LVRT Community Grant Program for construction of two LVRT trail heads in the Town of Hardwick. With new developing details and the anticipated use and economic impact of the LVRT, the working group would like to be a formal Hardwick LVRT Committee. See the attached report for more details.

There was a concern with another committee forming in the Town of Hardwick, and being able to staff that committee. Shari pointed out that the volunteers of the working group would be on the committee. Eric asked what would happen to the committee once the work was completed. Shari mentioned that the Select Board would decide at that specific time. Elizabeth mentioned that the Town of Hardwick could give the staff the same term date and then decide further details once the terms expired.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish the Select Board voted four to one to approve the Hardwick LVRT Working Group to be a more formal Hardwick LVRT Committee and to be under the umbrella of the Hardwick Recreation Department.

Eric- yay

Shari-yay

Elizabeth- yay

Ceilidh- yay

Danny- No

6:30 P.M. – 6:41 P.M. Item #2 Select Board to discuss and authorize the Town Manager to proceed with the buyout application under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to purchase the property located at 166 Wolcott Street.

David reported that this property is in the flood zone and has been for sale for many years. There's been a lot of potential buyers, however, with the amount of permitting and the process to repair this property, it turns people

away. It was brought to the Town's attention that the Town could apply for a FEMA application. If approved, FEMA would provide the Town with funds to purchase the building, and funds to tear the building down. The total asking price for the property is \$78,130. However, the total for the project, which includes the purchase, would be \$120,380. FEMA would give the Town \$108,342, and the local share would be \$12,038.

Elizabeth asked what the Town would do with that property. David mentioned that it could be used as additional parking, however, we can't put another structure there.

The Select Board generally accepted the Town Manager to move forward with filling out the application, with two conditions. The two conditions include; the space could be approved for parking, and the seller gives the Town the \$12,038.

6:41 P.M. – 6:42 P.M. Item #3 Select Board to authorize the Town Manager to sign the annual Hardwick Hazardous Waste event on July 8, 2023 located at 155 Creamery Road.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Hardwick Hazardous Waste event on July 8, 2023 at 155 Creamery Road.

6:42 P.M. – 6:44 P.M. Item #4 Discussion and amendment of project value thresholds fees for the Zoning office

David mentioned that there is a proposed change to the project value threshold. The Zoning office would like to increase the project value amount, but keep the same fee. See attached report for more information.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed project value threshold.

6:44 P.M. – 6:46 P.M. Add- Item #5 Select Board authorize the Select Board chair to sign the contract between the Town of Hardwick and the SE Group for the Pedestrian Bridge

Shari mentioned that the contract should be ready for signature next week.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve that the Chair of the Select Board to sign the contract with SE Group.

6:46 P.M. – 6:50 P.M. Add- Item #6 Select Board authorize the Town Manager to sign the letter of support for the Northern Forrest grant

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Danny Hale, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign the letter of support for the Northern Forrest grant.

6:50 P.M. – 6:54 P.M. Add- Item #7 Select Board to adopt the new cemetery policy.

Thank you to Elizabeth Dow for writing the cemetery policy! Elizabeth still would like to add request forms and links for those wishing to get information for specific cemeteries. This will be added at a later date.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted unanimously to adopt the cemetery policy.

Select Board Reports:

- Shari reported that the Vermont Preservation Trust bus tour of the NEK made stops in Hardwick on February 15th. They stopped in Downtown and were primarily interested in what was happening with the Pedestrian Bridge and the former Hardwick Gazette Building. David, Tracy, and Shari met Ben Doyle and the group on the bus. Each were given a packet that Shari created including information about those specific project updates with current budget & timeline for the bridge replacement along with information about the recent downtown designation and the many projects related to historic buildings. The group visited the Civic Standard where Rose Friedman spoke with them. The next stops were at Atkins Field to get an update on the Granite Shed project and the Yellow Barn where Eric Remick met them to update the group on that project. Shari gave the Town Manager, and the Select Board members present the same packets that the bus tour participants received. Ceilidh thanked Shari for providing such wonderful information and asked if it could be provided at Town Meeting. Shari mentioned that there could be some boards to show some of this information alongside the SE Group boards.

New Business:

- Shari mentioned that the SE Group will have a board at Town meeting showing the preliminary riverside park designs as a first round of public engagement to gather feedback. The park will be located next to both sides of the new pedestrian bridge.

Old Business:

- David mentioned that there will be a Public Hearing about the gravel pit on March 2 at 5:30 at the Memorial Building.
- Danny mentioned that he’s going to start work on the Wright Farm Road. The Town Manager’s office will get specifics on the project, and will provide the appropriate land owners details on the project and what trees will be removed due to the project. Danny would like to make this a legal trail in the future.

7:05 P.M. Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Board voted to enter an Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 to include Town Manager, and the Police Chief

7:30 P.M. Exited Executive Session. No action taken.

7:30 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