

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING  
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2023  
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  
Tonia Chase, Town Clerk - *Zoom*  
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman  
Mike Henry, Police Chief

**Others Present**

**Regular Meeting**

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

**6:01 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda – Add an Item #8 Select Board to consider authorization of an application for Community Services Grant of \$5,000 from the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

Add an Item#9 Select Board to discuss a revised price for the Caspian Avenue tax sale property

Add an Executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 for a legal matter.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to adjust the agenda as stated.*

**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 March 16, 2023, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of March 23, 2023

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the Regular Select Board meeting of March 16, 2023, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of March 23, 2023, as written.*

**6:02 P.M. – 6:18 P.M.** Town Manager Report- Given by David Upson Jr.

David updated the group about several items including the fire station roof that needs to be replaced, the Better Connections grant, the bids for the Memorial Building roof bid, and the sludge disposal for the wastewater. See attachments for complete report.

**6:18 P.M. – 6:22 P.M.** Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that the roads are pretty good overall now, only some potholes. There are some soft spots but overall, they are holding up well. The crew graded West Hill and parts of Bunker Hill Rd. this week. Today, they fixed a section of Montgomery Rd. and worked on Bayley Hazen Rd., Dimick Rd., Mountain View Rd., and Ward Hill. Next, they will move onto Hopkins Hill and Bridgman Hill.

They have also been cleaning up intersections and aprons. Next week, they will work on some of the larger debris in the Village and the industrial sweeper will be coming in early to mid-May.

**6:22 P.M. – 6:37 P.M. Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Report - Given by Police Chief Mike Henry**

Mike reported that the West Hill repeater went down about 3 weeks ago, so they have been without radio communication. It turns out that it was a bad station control module. Initially, it would have been \$12,000 for a new repeater or \$2,500-3,000 for repair. However, Burlington Communications was able to find a used control module and it is up and running for now.

Mike shared that the PD is finished with the VAST snowmobile patrol for this year. Mike shared that they had 171 hours, covered 774 miles, did 89 checkpoints, wrote 9 tickets, and issued 42 warnings. VAST reimburses us for all the hours. Elizabeth asked Mike if the VAST activity was what he expected. It was manageable.

Mike provided some call statistics for the first quarter of 2023. He mentioned that many of the cases are referred to the Restorative Justice program. He is working with Restorative Justice for some of the offenders to do community service work here in Hardwick. Ceilidh thought it might be helpful to see a comparison when the next quarter data is out to identify any trends.

The Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) that HPD uses to interview victims are far away. Mike is working on making HPD a satellite CAC in the Sr. Ctr. Side of the public safety building. There is the possibility of getting some revenue for the cases through the CAC. They will make a comfortable space (primarily for children) in one of the rooms since victims cannot be taken through a police station. This will give them the ability to interview victims right here in Town and enter the building through the Sr. Ctr. side.

HPD will continue to do bike patrols this year. Officer Barnard was out on one of the bikes today! Mike would like to find a grant to get e-bikes.

**6:37 P.M. – 6:38 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to consider approval of several liquor licenses**

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the following alcohol and tobacco licenses:*

**Second Class Licenses for:**

*Walgreens Eastern Co Inc.*

*DG Retail, LLC d/b/a Dollar General*

**Tobacco License:**

*Walgreens Eastern Co Inc.*

*All three are renewals and have no infractions.*

**6:38 P.M. – 6:40 P.M. Item #2 Select Board to consider approval of 3-year IBEW contract for the Highway Department collective bargaining unit**

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the 3-yr IBEW contract for the highway department and authorized the Town Manager to execute it on behalf of the Town.*

**6:40 P.M. – 6:51 P.M.** Item #3 Select Board to discuss the next steps for the Gravel Pit purchase

David shared that we are working on finalizing the purchase and sales agreement. David and Tom met with Ken Davis this week and talked about leasing back a specific section of the pit after the sale that has processed topsoil on it. There is a telecommunications easement option that will be outlined in the contract. We are hoping to have it done by the end of April. The bond did pass for up to \$500,000. There was discussion about the bond and whether any fund balance would be used to lower the bond amount because several people at Town meeting brought this up.

Danny brought up what someone said at Town meeting if we use the money now, then people 20 years from now are getting free sand. It makes sense that the people using the sand now pay for it now. Ceilidh and Eric would like to see what the numbers look like with \$400K vs. \$500K. The Business Manager will provide this for the next meeting. The bond application is due by May 15, so there is time to discuss this at the next meeting.

**6:51 P.M. – 6:54 P.M.** Item #4 Select Board to appoint Elizabeth Dow & Rose Friedman to the committee working to make Town Meeting more accessible for the future

This is a committee that will gather ideas for making Town meeting better and how to gain more participation. Shari commented that the Hardwick Town House has a live feed that would be more inclusive for people who can't travel to the meeting but want to view it in real time.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, seconded by Danny Hale, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Elizabeth Dow & Rose Friedman to the committee working to make Town Meeting more accessible for the future.*

**6:54 P.M. – 7:03 P.M.** Item #5 Business Manager to present 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter FY24 budget update

The Business Manager provided an update on the budget through March 31, 2023, three quarters of the way through the fiscal year. Revenues are about 2% over budget and expenses are about 5.5% over budget. The main factors for the overage are diesel and heating fuel, as well as property and worker's comp insurances. We also have seen increased costs in advertising, professional and computer services. See attachments for the details.

**7:03 P.M. – 7:04 P.M.** Item #6 Select Board to discuss Lamoille Valley Ford (LVF) purchasing Town property for parking and EV chargers

David reported that he heard from Rick Welcome (LVF) earlier today. They had some measurements taken and there may not be enough room at the location to complete the project. Table it for now.

**7:04 P.M. – 7:13 P.M.** Item #7 Select Board to consider approving a water connection application for Batchelder property on Lamoille Avenue

There was some discussion about the sewer for this property because the owners previously requested a variance to the ordinance. They wanted to have their own sewer system and not hook up to the Town's. The ordinance says that if a house is within 300' of the connection, it must be connected to the Town system. They indicated they would make sure it was more than 300' away. The engineer's interpretation of that and the Town's vary. The Town had told them that if the house was more than 300' feet away from the connection, they

wouldn't have to hook up to it. They did not grant a variance if it was within 300'. There seems to be some questions about if that distance is "as the crow flies" or up the right of way and then to the house.

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted by majority to approve the water connection application for Batchelder property on Lamoille Avenue.*

*Eric                yea*  
*Ceilidh            yea*  
*Shari               yea*  
*Elizabeth        yea*  
*Danny             nay*

**7:13 P.M. – 7:17 P.M.** Item #8 Select Board to consider authorization of an application for Community Services Grant of \$5,000 from the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

The Hardwick LVRT Committee would like to apply for a Municipal Services Program Grant (identified earlier as Community Services grant, but that was not correct) of \$5,000 from the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District. If received, the grant funds would cover the cost of two park-grade sets of trash and recycling receptacles. These receptacles will be placed at the two Hardwick LVRT Trailheads, one set near the Depot in Downtown Hardwick, and the other at the intersection of Stevens Lane and the LVRT in East Hardwick Village.

As part of the grant agreement, the Town of Hardwick will need to commit to maintaining these receptacles and to arrange for them to be emptied on a regular basis.

The Board generally agrees to apply for the grant. No motion is necessary. The Community Development Coordinator just wanted to get the green light to apply.

**7:17 P.M. – 7:21 P.M.** Item #9 Select Board to discuss a revised price for the Caspian Avenue tax sale property

There are some title issues with the property. The buyers plan to clean up the property and their attorney asked for a reduced price. As of now, the Town has about \$8,000 in expenses, with possibly more legal fees for deed preparation, etc.

*Danny made a motion to sell the property for what the Town has into it. There was no second.*

There was discussion among the Board. There has also been a lot of administrative time from the Town Manager's office handling this property, plus we may have more expenses prior to the closing. Several members of the board thought the \$10,000 was fair.

*Danny amended his motion to sell the property for \$10,000, seconded by Shari. The Select Board voted unanimously to sell the property for \$10,000.*

A revised "notice of sale" will need to be posted with the new purchase price. The document was circulated for signatures and will be posted in the paper next week.

**Select Board Reports:** Shari was happy to report that “The Farm Boy” screening at the Town House last week had 168 people in attendance. She also mentioned that third grade students from Hardwick Elementary School are going to have a puppet show there next week. It is great to have the building being used regularly early in the season.

Eric gave an update on the Yellow Barn project and a link to the building plans was put up on the screen. They are planning to break ground in May. The construction contract with Wright & Morrissey was signed this week. To see the details of the project and the drawings that were shown at the meeting, visit this link: [http://nvda.net/yellow\\_barn/](http://nvda.net/yellow_barn/)

**New Business:** Shari shared that NEKArts has submitted a Bruhn grant application for the Hardwick Town House Main Roof, Egress and Accessibility Project. They should hear the results at the end of April.

David announced that the Town has received notice of a successful grant award in our application for \$200K from VTRANS to support the new pedestrian bridge. We were eligible to apply for that grant because of our recent Downtown Designation.

Mike mentioned that the Town’s traffic ordinance needs several edits – he plans to have it separated into three categories: speed, parking, and signs. The draft of the changes will likely be at the next meeting. It still must go through the normal process with a public hearing and a waiting period after it is adopted by the Board.

**Old Business:** Ceilidh wanted to follow up on a couple of items from past meetings: the Cannabis Commission and where that was at and if there are any updates on the Community Center. These can be done at the next meeting. She also asked if there was an update on the municipal planning grant for planning of a highway garage. David indicated that we did not get that grant, so we will continue to look for other opportunities for that.

**7:36 P.M.** *Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Danny Hale, the Select Board voted to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 for a legal matter to include Town Manager.*

**7:50 P.M.** Exited Executive session. No action taken.

**7:50 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