

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, June 15, 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 Jr., Town Manager  
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator

**Others Present**

Nat Smith, HED  
Paul Fixx  
Mike Sullivan- *Zoom*

**Regular Meeting**

**6:05 P.M.** – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

**6:06 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda- None

**6:06 P.M.** – Communication from the audience – Paul Fixx has recently become the co-chair of the Northeast Kingdom (NEK) Broadband board. He announced that the board is looking for an alternative. If interested, please send a letter of interest to the Town Manager’s office, or call them for more information 802-472-6120.

**6:09 P.M.** – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of June 1, 2023

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of June 1, 2023. Eric abstained.*

**6:10 P.M. – 6:15 P.M.** Town Manager Report- Given by David Upson Jr.

David reported on the LVRT trailhead in East Hardwick, the lagoon clean-out, sidewalks on Church Street, and the public bathrooms being fixed at the Town House. Please see the attachments for further information.

He also reported that there will be a meeting tomorrow, Friday, June 16, regarding the Better Connections grant for East Hardwick. There is a master plan for the Village upgrades that is currently being reviewed.

Lastly, he reported that Heather Carrington, the Planning Commission, and Tracy Martin, the Town’s Community Development Coordinator, have all been working on a project for infill housing. The state will choose five pilot towns for this project. There is no cost to apply, and this process is very informative.

**6:15 P.M. – 6:19 P.M.** Hardwick Road Foreman Report- David Upson Jr.

David reported that the new excavator arrived, and the crew has all of the winter sand. They have also been ditching Montgomery Road and working on some water & sewer issues.

The Town did not receive any roadside mowing bids, so the Town Highway crew will be working on clearing the roadsides soon. Danny asked to look at South Main Street as there is brush intruding the sidewalks, and it’s becoming a safety concern.

**6:19 P.M. – 6:21 P.M** Hardwick Police Department Report- David Upson Jr.

David mentioned that everything is going great with the Hardwick Police Department. There was great feedback about the patrol at graduation, and they will also continue to patrol the Village and the rail trail with their E-bikes.

**6:21 P.M. – 6:34 P.M.** Hardwick Electric Department (HED) Report - Given by Nat Smith

Nat Smith reported that the electric car charging station will be installed next week at the office on West Church Street. He stated that the state is requesting the automatic meters, and Hardwick Electric is resisting that. Elizabeth Dow asked what the reason behind not getting the automatic meters was, and Nat stated that Hardwick Electric doesn't find there will be savings. Lastly, Nat stated Hardwick Electric hasn't had a rate increase in the past eleven years. Recently, Hardwick Electric requested a 13% increase, and that has been shown on the last two monthly bills. The Public Utility Commission (PUC) denied the percentage increase and proposed a 6.5% increase, effective immediately. Hardwick Electric is looking into giving customers credit, and how the process is going to work. Mike Sullivan joined the meeting and explained that the PUC would like HED to have some debt, borrow money, and spread the funds out between what is needed. However, Mike disagrees, and wants the department to be debt-free. Mike's prediction is that HED will apply for another rate increase with the PUC soon, as this will help with the financial aspect of the Department.

Paul Fixx stated that his understanding is that the residents that are paying their bills currently would benefit from the service that is provided, and not pay for something that will be provided in the future. Mike agreed with that statement; however, Mike would like to spend money on projects that don't require a lot of debt. Ultimately, between Mike, the PUC, and the Board of Commissioners, there will be conversations happening on the overall understanding of overall pictures on the financials.

Lastly, Mike stated that the purchased power generated from the Mystic Station is being driven by the dependence of natural gas. Hardwick Electric has had some unexplained, and unexpected invoices that they've had to pay recently. However, New England Utilities is fighting back, and Mike is hopeful that HED will get some of their money back.

**6:34 P.M. – 6:35 P.M.** Item #1 Select Board to consider appointment of Amy Rosenthal for the Equity Committee

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to appoint Amy Rosenthal to the Equity Committee.*

**6:35 P.M. – 6:40 P.M.** Item #2 Select Board to read a statement in support of Juneteenth

Ceilidh spoke about the new federal holiday, Juneteenth. Ceilidh also read some of the Proclamation on Juneteenth Day written by President Joseph R. Biden Jr. Please see the whole Proclamation within the attachments.

**6:41 P.M. – 6:41 P.M.** Item #3 Select Board to review and approve the 2023 Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the Local Emergency Management Plan.*

**6:41 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.** Item #4 Select Board to discuss the logistics of the East Hardwick Fire District using the Town of Hardwick's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) for the purpose applying for an Assessment Management Grant (AMP).

David explained that the East Hardwick Fire District is now required to chlorinate, and they are looking to make improvements to their water system. They asked the Town of Hardwick to use their UEI number to apply for an assessment management grant.

Elizabeth Dow explained that the East Hardwick Fire District was formed by the Hardwick Select Board in 1911, when the voters of East Hardwick submitted a petition which 20 people signed; the number the law required. After the Selectboard approved the creation of a Fire District, the people of East Hardwick organized as an independent municipal entity, which the people of East Hardwick ran effectively for decades, before management became lax. Recently, there have been new members on the Fire District Board, and they are working to correct a long list of items which have suffered from deferred maintenance.

Elizabeth asked why the East Hardwick Fire District doesn't already have their own UEI number, the timeline of this grant, and for more information on the improvements that need to be done in order to navigate a future plan.

The Select Board has asked the Town Manager to gather more information. The Select Board is willing to provide support, but with a plan in place for how to move forward.

**7:01 P.M. – 7:03 P.M.** Item #5 Select Board to review bids and select fuel vendor for FY24 & authorize Town Manager to execute any applicable contract(s)

The Business Manager reached out to five companies, and only received two bids. The Business Manager recommended Irving for Heating Oil and Propane, and Dead River for On-Road Diesel.

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, the Select Board voted unanimously to approved Irving for Heating Oil, and Propane, and Dead River for On- Road Diesel, and they authorized the Town Manager to sign the appropriate documentations to move forward.*

**7:03 P.M. – 7:09 P.M.** Item # 6 Select Board to review bids and select Fire Station roof replacement vendor for FY24 & authorize Town Manager to execute any applicable contract(s)

There were two bids that the Town received. The first company, F.K. Roofing, gave an estimate for an asphalt shingle replacement for a total of \$27,800. The other company, Rodd Roofing, gave two estimates. One was for an asphalt shingle replacement for a total of \$76,980.00, and the other was for a standing seam replacement for a total of \$116,090.00.

The Select Board would like the Town Manager to call references for F.K. Roofing.

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Danny Hale, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve F.K. Roofing pending the Town Manager's approval of the references, to approve the Town Manager to execute any appropriate documentation, and to not exceed the Town Budget set aside for the Fire Station.*

Ceilidh asked what the Town Budget was, and David reported that it was around \$50,000.

**7:09 P.M. – 7:15 P.M.** Item # 7 Select Board to review the Hardwick-LVRT Connector Loop recommendations

from the Planning Commission that were “generally accepted” on the April 20, 2023 meeting.

On April 20, the Select Board discussed the LVRT connector loop that was recommended by the Planning Commission. The USDA agreed to allow the fund, \$175,512 from the Community Facilities grant, for the completion of the LVRT to be transferred to the Pedestrian Bridge project with the contingency that a portion of the funds to be used to create a loop between the LVRT and the Pedestrian Bridge/Downtown Hardwick. The loop will start at the LVRT of North Main Street, next to the Memorial Park, travel down North Main Street, onto Highland Ave, down brush street, and stopping at the Daniels Building Parking lot. There will be bike racks, and individuals will be able to walk across the bridge to visit the Downtown. Please note this loop won't be accessible until the Pedestrian Bridge is complete.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to accept the recommendations from the Planning Commission for the LVRT Loop, and will be implemented at the first opportunity.*

**Select Board Reports:**

- Ceilidh announced there was a Equity Health event at the Health Center and it went great. There will be another event soon.
- Eric reported that the Yellow Barn has had testing done on their soil, and there's arsenic within the soil. There is a plan that is being developed on how to proceed.
- Eric mentioned that the Library has had water within the soil that is being dug up. They are also coming up with a plan on how to proceed.
- Ceilidh asked that the Library come to a Select Board meeting and update the Select Board on the project.
- Eric also reported that there is a presentation at the Depot Friday, June 16. Eric will be presenting on Hardwick Trails.

**New Business:** None

**Old Business:** None

**7:19 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