

MINUTES SPECIAL SELECT BOARD MEETING
8:00 A.M. Friday, July 28, 2023
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. MEMORIAL ROOM

Select Board

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

Others Present

Casey Rowell, Business Manager
David Upson, Town Manager
Michael Gagner, Horne

Others Present

Special Meeting

8:02 A.M. – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

8:02 A.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Add an Item #2 for Town Manager to give the Select Board a brief update on the wastewater plant project

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

8:04 A.M. – Communication from the audience - *none*

8:04 A.M. – 8:18 A.M. Item #1 Select Board to hear an update from the Town Manager about flood remediation efforts

David reported that he, Eric, and Casey met with AC Disaster Consulting to discuss what services they might be able to offer us in the interim until we can put out an RFP for a consultant. The typical FEMA reimbursement covers 5% of total damages for management/consultant fees.

Shari joined the meeting at 8:06 a.m.

Danny joined the meeting via phone at 8:07 a.m.

David talked about public assistance vs. individual assistance. Today is the last day that the dumpsters are going to be out to the public. He is working on a way for people to bring their flood debris to AMR after the fact; however, we need to report where everything came from to be reimbursed by FEMA.

He shared that a temporary hazardous materials site has been established at All Metals Recycling. The EPA will pick up and pay for disposal of this waste.

Shari mentioned that she saw on the news that individuals can check in with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) about river corridor clean-up. David mentioned that the State is working on a plan for those clean-up efforts. The State is likely to hire a contractor to do the river clean-up. People could start doing some themselves but would likely have to foot the bill.

There will be a disaster recovery center open at Hardwick Elementary School until school begins.

Elizabeth asked about tracking of the private efforts of the recovery. David indicated that the Neighbor-to-Neighbor group and Civic Standard are keeping good notes of the in-kind activities.

David reported that the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) expired 2 months ago. This will affect the percentage of the match. It would typically be 75% FEMA and 25% State. With the expired plan, the Town would have to contribute 17.5% out of pocket, instead of having 100% funded by FEMA and the State. We have a consultant that is going to update the HMP, and the State is willing to accept it for review, which may eliminate this issue if the revisions are accepted.

Michael Gagner mentioned that Barre is in a similar situation with an expired plan. He said that we could submit for a match waiver if we can meet hardship requirements. There is also an option to document enough volunteer hours to cover the match requirements.

8:18 A.M. – 8:30 A.M. Item #2 Town Manager to give the Select Board a brief update on the wastewater plant project

David gave an update on the project. Neagley and Chase have been on site continuing project elements that they can, while also helping with the immediate flood remediation issues. They are tracking the flood work separately. The electrical components damaged in the flood alone are estimated to be \$110,000+ already.

David reported that because we were not able to get any additional funds from the State for the sludge cleanout, we will not be able to get rid of all of it as we had hoped. Instead, we can only move the sludge from one lagoon to the other one that was already emptied.

David shared that Neagley and Chase are going to stick with us through this process and they have agreed to continue paying the subcontractors while waiting to be reimbursed from us. It could take several months to get FEMA reimbursements.

David reported that efforts to minimize discharge into Lamoille River after the flood were diligent and there were only about 36 hours of this before we could get things partially operating to treat again.

Eric asked about bringing HED into the consultant process. David said we could discuss it with the Commissioners, since a joint effort would be beneficial. Eric suggested that a board member and the Town Manager attend a Commissioner meeting to suggest working together in the disaster recovery efforts.

The Business Manager mentioned that we are likely to receive a scope of work from AC Disaster Consulting today and that to expedite the process, the Board should authorize the Town Manager to proceed if it happens to be more than his authority level. This is a reimbursable expense from FEMA.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to enter a short-term contract with AC Disaster Consulting. No vote from Ceilidh. All others yea.

Select Board Reports: Danny wants to thank all Town staff for their efforts during this process. They have been working hard and would like to see some sort of public recognition for the staff. Elizabeth is going to draft something up from the Select Board that can be posted on Front Porch Forum.

Shari reminded everyone that there will be a second public engagement event on August 2 at 6 p.m. at the Town House to gather feedback on the LVRT trailhead designs for three trailheads in Hardwick & East Hardwick.

No old or new business.

8:39 A.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Casey Rowell, Business Manager

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair