

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2023
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

Select Board

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

Others Present

David Upson, Town Manager
Casey Rowell, Business Manager
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
Mike Henry, Police Chief
Kristen Leahy, Zoning Administrator

Others Present

Rich Henry
Paul Luciano

Regular Meeting

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

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Remove Item #5 and shift other items up accordingly

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted 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 August 3, 2023

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the regular Select Board meeting of August 3, 2023, as written.

6:02 P.M. – 6:11 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson Jr.

David reported that the stormwater system in the N. Main St. parking lot had damage as result of the storm. The repair has been made. This was likely the contributing cause of the manhole cover popping off and the washout and damage to that parking lot.

David reported that the State of VT put out bids and plans to initiate a contract with an outside contractor to inspect sewer lines and mains in the towns affected by the flood to make sure nothing is damaged. They are going to roll out this program statewide for the affected areas. Hardwick will participate.

David had a meeting with USDA about the wastewater plant. There is a possibility that the State might enter a deal with USDA to redo the Hardwick, Ludlow, and Johnson wastewater plants damaged by the July flooding. David also had a meeting with the area director for FEMA today. FEMA is interested in mitigation efforts as the plant has been flooded four different times.

David reported that he put out a request for proposal (RFP) for a temporary bridge for the Fisher Folley bridge. Bids are due next Wednesday.

David reported that the Hardwick Area Neighbor-to-Neighbor has coordinated a group of trained volunteers to assist with FEMA, SBA, and USDA processes and will be hosting “open hours” over the next few weeks for folks to drop in and work through their questions. Volunteers with access to computers and printers will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. They will review other funding sources that may apply to your situation and help you determine the next steps needed.

You can meet with a volunteer at the Memorial Building/Town Offices (20 Church Street) in Hardwick during the following times:

Saturdays, August 19, 26 & September 2 & 9 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Wednesdays, August 23, 30 & September 6, from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Danny asked about river corridor cleanup. David indicated that the town is working with the VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to get a plan in place for clean-up. There is going to be a green up effort throughout the state on August 26 for *public property* areas.

6:11 P.M. – 6:17 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that the crew repaired an exposed sewer line on Cooper Brook Rd. this week.

Tom indicated that they are only spot grading at this point. They also did some asphalt patching in the village.

Tom shared that he ordered more culverts, a 50’ for Center Rd., one for Moore Lane, Tucker Brook Rd., and possibly Dutton Rd.

Tom mentioned that Belfry Rd. is complete with new culverts and ditching and is ready to be paved. Center Rd. and West Hill also need paving work, which he has reached out to a paving company about doing all three.

The crew has been dealing with a few broken water line issues this week as well.

Next week they will focus on Tucker Brook Rd, putting a new layer of gravel on Smith Farm Rd., Bridgman Hill, Hunter Rd., Renaud Rd., a culvert crossing on Moore Lane, and a section of Cobb School Rd.

6:17 P.M. – 6:21 P.M. Hardwick Police Report – Given by Mike Henry

The cruiser damaged in the flood came back last week, but it was not dried out and the check engine light came on shortly after they picked it up from Twinstat Ford. It had to go back to the repair shop, and it has already been another week. It is still not fixed, and it may need to have new interior carpeting. This was covered under insurance, so we anticipate the additional repairs will be covered as well.

Mike shared that the police department did an “active shooter in school” training along with Lamoille County Sheriff’s Dept., Morrisville Police, and Vermont State Police. He anticipates that going forward they will do more training like this in collaboration with other agencies.

Mike said that the new radar signs still need to be put up. Tom has ordered the posts for them, and they hope to get this done soon. One will go on So. Main St. by the cemetery and the other across from Tops Market as people come into Town after the state highway ends. They do still have the portable signs and they are currently on Hardwick Street and Spring St.

Another project in the works is to put up new speed limit signs throughout the Town. Tom ordered all the signs, and we have them in our possession. It just hasn't been a big priority since the flood, but they anticipate this will get done soon.

David mentioned that one of the officers is seeing an uptick in fraudulent check cashing cases. They are urging businesses to ask for ID when they take checks. A press release about this is forthcoming.

No Hardwick Electric Report this evening.

6:21 P.M. – 6:22 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to discuss and review the request from Hardwick Food Pantry to be added to the coin drop schedule for October 2024 - *Action needed*

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the coin drop request for Hardwick Area Food Pantry for October 2024.

6:22 P.M. – 6:29 P.M. Item #2 Review updated Hazards and Mitigation actions for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update

Paul Luciano is a consultant who was hired by our regional planning commission, NVDA, to assist with updating the plan. They are covering the cost as well. Paul went over the hazard mitigations such as floods, extreme temperature, winter storms, infectious diseases, etc. The purpose of the plan is to identify specific hazards that impact the town, prioritize hazards for mitigation planning, recommend town-level goals and strategies to reduce losses from those hazards and establish a coordinated process to implement goals and their associated strategies by taking advantage of available resources and creating achievable action steps. He mentioned that FEMA wants only natural hazards in the plan. Others are just considered hazards we could be vulnerable to.

Action #1: Reduce vulnerability to flooding by evaluating capabilities of existing road and storm water management infrastructure, public education and through municipal services and regulations.

Action #2: Improve resilience to severe winter storms.

Action #3: Reduce impact of extreme hot and cold temperature durations.

Action #4: Raise public awareness of hazards and hazard mitigation actions.

Action #5: Reduce risk and impact of major infectious disease events.

This was just a review of the proposed draft. No action is needed this evening. We have posted on our website how to obtain a copy if people want to comment on it. It will be submitted to the State and once it is approved, it will come back to the Select Board for adoption. The document is over 100 pages in length, so it is not feasible to post as an attachment to the minutes. Contact the Town Manager's office if you would like to see it.

6:30 P.M. – 6:33 P.M. Item #3 Select Board to review and consider approving *interim* zoning bylaws due to the flooding – *Action needed*

Danny asked about the length of interim vs. temporary. Kristen explained that interim is typically one year. It allows us to see how it works. It has not finished being reviewed by the State's attorney and the Town's attorney.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the interim zoning bylaws due to the flooding contingent on attorney approval of the document.

6:33 P.M. – 6:36 P.M. Item #4 Select Board to authorize waiving zoning permit fees for floodplain properties for the next 180 days and retroactive to the flooding event – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve waiving zoning permit fees and recording fees for floodplain properties for the next 180 days and retroactive to the flooding event.

6:36 P.M. – 6:37 P.M. Item #5 Select Board to authorize the Town Manager and Town Clerk to act on behalf of the Town in matters relating to its loan from the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank's 2023 Series 2 Bonds (library and gravel pit that just closed) – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager and Town Clerk to act on behalf of the Town in matters relating to its loan from the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank's 2023 Series 2 Bonds.

6:38 P.M. – 6:39 P.M. Item #6 Select Board to authorize the Town Manager to be the Town's voting delegate for VLCT, PACIF, and VERB at their annual meetings – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to be the Town's voting delegate for VLCT, PACIF, and VERB at their annual meetings.

6:39 P.M. – 6:41 P.M. Item #7 Select Board to consider providing a letter of support for Jasper Hill Farm's grant application for their Food Venture Center location (letter to be done by Town Manager on their behalf) – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to support Jasper Hill Farm's grant application for their Food Venture Center location (letter to be done by Town Manager on their behalf).

Select Board Reports:

Shari reported that this is the last night of the Chamber Players at the Town House. The show starts at 7:30 p.m. She also mentioned that Ceilidh Galloway-Kane and Geoff Fehrs offered to give the Town House an apple tree to replace the one that died. NEKarts accepted the gift last night at their monthly meeting. She wanted to make sure the Town was okay with the replacement. The answer is yes.

Eric reported that there is an official groundbreaking ceremony for Yellow Barn tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. at the Yellow Barn site. There will be representatives from Senators Welch and Leahy's offices, as well as funders/supporters of the project.

New Business: Shari mentioned that the Downtown Partnership had some success communicating with downtown businesses about having their employees park further out to leave space for customers. It seemed to help.

Old Business: *none*

6:46 P.M. *Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to enter an Executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 for a personnel matter to include Town Manager & Police Chief.*

7:20 P.M. Exited Executive session. *No action taken.*

7:21 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