

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, September 7, 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  
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator  
Mike Henry, Police Chief - *Zoom*  
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman  
Tonia Chase, Town Clerk  
Tracy Martin, Community Development Coordinator

**Others Present**

Ryck Morales  
Dave Gross  
Perry Hollyer  
Freda Hollyer

**Regular Meeting**

**6:01 P.M.** – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

**6:01 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda – None

**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 17, 2023, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of August 30, 2023

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of August 3, 2023, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of August 30, 2023. Ceilidh abstained from approving the August 17 meeting minutes as she was absent.*

**6:03 P.M. – 6:17 P.M.** Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson Jr.

David reported that the State of Vermont is going to lead the debris cleanup efforts along the Lamoille River. They have asked that residents report to the Town Office any debris that has landed on private property. The State of Vermont does not want the Town of Hardwick or private homeowners to put machinery into the river; they will clean up the debris properly without contaminating the water. There will be further information on the Town's website.

David also reported that there are several state and federal programs to help with the flood event. In addition, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) has extended their program another 90 days to help families with water and sewer bills. More information about these programs is also on the Town's website.

The Town is moving forward with the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade including sludge clean out. Currently, lagoon one is emptying which will make that part of Town smell temporarily. David continues to collect data, including the inventory of damages for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and is continuously in contact with the project manager.

There is a memorandum of understanding (MOU) about the Pedestrian Bridge on the Town's website. This is where the public can comment on the project. In addition to the Pedestrian Bridge project, David has discovered

that the foundation of the bridge, on the Main Street side, received damage due to the flood, and will need to be replaced. David is hoping to submit for repair as this is major infrastructure as it's holding up that side of Main Street.

Tracy Martin, Hardwick's Community Development Coordinator (CDC) has been looking into a Building Communities grant program for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT). This grant program has different categories; however, Tracy is looking specifically into the Recreation Facilities program. This grant would provide kiosks, and sign stands along the LVRT. The sign stands would provide interpretation and information for the LVRT. Tracy would like to propose that Hardwick submit for two kiosks; one to put near Creamery Road in Hardwick, and one to put in East Hardwick. Tracy would also like to propose that Hardwick submit for three sign stands. Two sign stands would be placed in Hardwick between the Depot and the Memorial Park. The third sign would be placed in East Hardwick. With the five items that Tracy is proposing, the total cost is \$15,340. However, East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization (ENHO), Hardwick Historical Society, and the Downtown Partnership have all committed money towards this project. The remaining amount that Tracy is asking the Select Board to approve is \$1,370. The due date for this grant to be submitted is Monday, September 11. This does not include installation. The Town Manager stated that the Town crew would help with the installation.

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the Recreation Facilities grant.*

**6:17 P.M. – 6:22 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden**

Tom reported that the following roads have been recently completed: Renaud Road, Hunter Lane, Tucker Brook Road, Smith Farm Road, and Morin Lane.

Tom reported that most of the roads have been graded, and they will continue to grade next week. The new grader should be here tomorrow, September 8. They have also worked on some bridge abutments and installed some culverts.

The Town Crew has been working on Carey Road. The water is now flowing through the box culvert, making it so the bridge could be reinforced. The crew will go back next week to continue to secure the area some more, but Tom is hopeful it will be open soon.

Fisher Folly Bridge repair has started, and that bridge will be fixed within the next couple of weeks.

Tom reported that the following roads will be worked on in the next couple of weeks: Stevens Lane, Cobb School Road, Catamount Road, and Kate Brook Road. Once all the roads are back to where they were prior to the flood, then the State will go into mitigation so that this doesn't happen again.

**6:23 P.M. – 6:25 P.M. Hardwick Police Report – Given by Mike Henry**

Mike reported that the cruiser that was flooded in July is still being worked on. Twin State Ford fixed the engine; however, after receiving it back, the Town of Hardwick needed the cruiser to be reappraised for further water damage. The cruiser is now at Lamoille Valley Collision to fix the interior water damage.

Mike also reported that the Police Department has updated their Public Records request form. Individuals will be asked to use this form going forward. They have also upgraded their security system in the office.

Lastly, Mike reported that Hardwick Police Dept. has hired Daniel Brunelle. He started this week and has over 25 years of experience in law enforcement.

**6:25 P.M. – 6:26 P.M.** Item #1 Select Board to consider appointing Daniel Brunelle as a Hardwick Police Officer

Ceilidh asked if Daniel Brunelle would be a full-time officer, and Mike replied yes.

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to appoint Daniel Brunelle as a new Hardwick Police Officer.*

**6:27 P.M. – 6:42 P.M.** Item #2 Select Board to review a presentation provided by the Small Business Administration (SBA)

Ryck Morales, who is with the SBA, stated that he has been working with the Town Manager and Tracy Martin, CDC, to provide information on how the SBA and FEMA would be able to assist the community. Ryck explained that if Hardwick was interested in setting up a meeting with a panel of FEMA representatives, it would be an opportunity to answer residents' questions. For example, why did someone get denied, or why didn't someone receive as much assistance as they requested, and to ask further questions.

Elizabeth clarified the request which is Ryck asking the Select Board if Hardwick would be a mutual point for help facilitate this meeting. David stated that if Hardwick was interested, he would have to reach out to State Emergency Management and submit a request. The Select Board decided they would talk about it in future discussions.

Ceilidh stated that the Hardwick Neighbor-to-Neighbor organization has been helping residents with submitting forms to the SBA or to FEMA. This Saturday, September 9, 2023, will be the last Saturday that there will be open hours at the Town Offices. After that, residents can still reach out to the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Organization for further information. The deadline for FEMA applications is October 12.

**6:42 P.M. – 7:02 P.M.** Item #3 Select Board to discuss the Carey Road property and possible sale

There is a property on Carey Road that the Town acquired through a Tax Sale about six years ago. The Town has been looking into this property for critical assets; however, with the recent flood event, the Town Manager is bringing the idea to the Select Board that the critical assets should not be down there, and that the Town should move forward with other possibilities. The Town has had that property recently surveyed.

Perry & Freda Hollyer, the owners of the Inn By The River, were majorly affected by the July flood. They had the Inn as their business, but recently made it so there was a section that was their primary residence. Unfortunately, the flood took out the motel, and the Hollyer's lost everything, including personal belongings. Since purchasing the motel, the Hollyer's have loved this area, and feel very supported by the Town Manager, Select Board, business owners, and many individuals. When the devastation occurred, they weighed their options. One option that they have considered would be rebuilding in the same spot. However, the flood took over an acre of land, so they're not sure the remaining property would be enough. Due to the uncertainty of the future, they're not certain they would even want to rebuild there. Instead of rebuilding, there's a possibility of a FEMA buyout and making it a recreation piece of land. They have thought about retiring completely. However, it's been brought to their attention how much of a positive impact they had on this community, so they feel devastated to potentially walk away from this community.

While researching other areas where they could rebuild, they discovered the Carey Road property that the Town currently owns. Due to losing everything, they can't afford to borrow a ton of money to rebuild. They are looking for grants; however, they are approaching the Select Board to ask if the Select Board would be interested in selling the Carey Road property for what they have put into it.

They want to continue to provide a motel for this area, and to keep it affordable. They have generated a lot of revenue for the Town and for the State and they would love to be able to be given the opportunity to do that again.

Eric stated that the Select Board would like to talk to community members and have this as a public meeting item. If the time comes, he would also like to see a business plan from them.

David Gross said that the Planning Commission is working on this piece of property and has an overlay which can provide what the property looks like and what can be done where.

There will be further discussion of the possibilities in the future.

**7:02 P.M. – 7:05 P.M.** Item #4 Select Board to discuss the required petitions for appropriations and requests to waive the requirement for Town meeting 2024

The Craftsbury Community Care Center (CCCC) reached out to Eric asking if petitions for appropriations could be waived. The Select Board stated that the only time that it was waived was during COVID. This year appropriations would need 120 signatures from registered voters. Tracy asked if the CCCC would need signatures from multiple Towns, and the Select Board said yes; however, 120 signatures is only 5% of Hardwick's voters.

The Select Board reviewed this item and decided not to move forward with any action.

**7:05 P.M. – 7:06 P.M.** Item #5 Select Board to review and approve the loan documents from the Vermont Bond Bank for the Water Service Inventory project (100% forgivable note)

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the Vermont Bond Bank Water Service Inventory project and authorize the Town Manager to submit the documentation.*

**7:06 P.M. – 7:08 P.M.** Item #6 Select Board to approve the Hardwick Downtown Partnership to apply for the Downtown Vibrancy Fund grant program for \$25K to support organizational capacity and resources

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the Hardwick Downtown Partnership to apply for the Downtown Vibrancy Fund Grant program for \$25K.*

**7:09 P.M. – 7:11 P.M.** Item #7 Select Board to review and consider approval of the building addition architectural design for the Town House and agree to support and facilitate the project and allow it to go out for bid

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the building addition architectural design for the Town House and to instruct the Town Manager to find and hire a project manager.*

**7:11 P.M. – 7:20 P.M.** Item #8 Select Board to authorize the Town Manager to sign the VCDP Grant Agreement Resolution for the Jeudevine Memorial Library

Danny asked where the money was coming from for the undetermined expenses that are unexpectedly coming forward due to the redesign of the project. The Select Board asked the Town Manager to reach out to the Trustees to give a presentation. David mentioned that the trustees and the project manager are still working on getting concrete numbers. He is hopeful that the numbers will be complete within the next 3-4 weeks. After the budget is redesigned, he will have the trustees come to a Select Board meeting.

*Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign the VCDP Grant agreement resolution for the Jeudevine Memorial Library.*

**Select Board Reports:**

- Shari reported on the following events happening at the Town House:
  - Book signing by two local authors; Barry Andrew Dimick & Melody Dean Dimick on September 9, 2023, from 2-4 P.M.
  - Blackfly Story Hour: An Open-Mic Storytelling Event. The theme is called Broken. This will be on September 15, 2023, at 7:30 P.M.
  - On Wednesday, September 27 there will be a public meeting to discuss the LVRT scoping study. The Public can give input for the trailheads along the LVRT. This will be the last time the public can make comments. Time is to be determined. Check <https://hardwicktownhouse.org/events-at-the-town-house/> closer to the event for more information.
  - Thursday, September 28 there will be a public meeting to discuss Town By-Law Modifications. Heather Carrington and the Town’s Zoning Administrator, Kristen Leahy, will both be present at this event. Time is to be determined. Please check the website closer to the event.
- Eric reported that Hardwick Trails is celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Saturday, September 9 from 9 A.M. until noon. There will be multiple locations. Please check out <https://hardwicktrails.com/> for further information.

**New Business:** - None

**Old Business:**

- Danny asked that the Select Board discuss Downtown Parking at a future Select Board meeting. This topic will also be discussed at the next Planning Commission meeting. Shari asked that it be placed on the October 5 agenda.
- The Select Board also asked that there be a discussion at the next Select Board meeting about the East Hardwick bridge.

**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