

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING  
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 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 - *Zoom*

**Others Present**

David Upson, Town Manager  
Casey Rowell, Business Manager  
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman  
Steve Fortmann  
Kathy Fortmann

**Others Present**

Michael Ambrosino, HED  
Andrew Meyer

**Regular Meeting**

**6:00 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

**6:02 P.M.** – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of October 5, 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 October 5, 2023, as written. Danny abstained.*

**6:03 P.M. – 6:09 P.M.** Town Manager Report- Given by David Upson Jr.

David reported that he is working on completing the Essential Elements of Information (EEI) in the FEMA Grant portal for each project. Getting this information input is key to us starting to get reimbursements for some of the completed projects.

FEMA was here on Wednesday to view several bridges including Fisher Folly, East Main Street bridge near Greensboro Bend, the retaining wall by the swinging bridge, and Tucker Brook Rd. bridge.

David shared that on Tuesday a disaster debrief was held with the Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor group and community stakeholders that were part of the disaster. They talked about what went well and what we can do better next time. They also discussed what to do to update our emergency response plan. Communication gaps were addressed and how we can fill those holes going forward. They also talked about what we can have on-hand if another emergency or disaster should happen. Eric asked about minutes or a summary of the meeting to share with the Board. David said that he can work on getting that together.

David reported that the VOREC marketing project of a recreation logo and map for Hardwick is coming along nicely. Peltz Creative is working on the final touches of the map and the final product will be a nice recreation packet for visitors to Hardwick.

David mentioned that the slate repair of the Memorial Building roof started today. He also gave an update on the sludge cleanout from Lagoon 1 at the wastewater plant. There have been 15 loads taken out so far, which is roughly half. He expects about another 3 weeks to finish up.

**6:09 P.M. – 6:10 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden**

Tom reported that the Hideaway Reservoir was cleaned last week. Last week, the crew prepared Hardwick Farms Rd. for a temporary bridge and put that together this week. It is one lane, but the road is open. They also did some light grading on a few roads just outside of the village. Next week, they will continue grading and do truck maintenance to get the trucks ready for winter.

**6:10 P.M. – 6:11 P.M. Hardwick Police Report- Given by David Upson**

Chief Henry was not at the meeting. David shared that the Police Department has written 12 parking tickets on Main St. in the no parking zone.

**6:11 P.M. – 6:15 P.M. Hardwick Electric Report (HED) - Given by Michael Ambrosino**

Michael reported that HED is looking into borrowing options to bring the Wolcott hydro plant damaged in the flood storm back up to par. They estimate they will need \$2M to make the necessary repairs. At this point, it will likely be out of commission for 9-12 months. With the plant out of order, they have been fortunate that purchased power was not as expensive as it has been in recent years.

HED is working on another rate increase to help with expenses they are about to incur. Michael shared that crews are working overtime to replace poles. They have been bringing in outside crews to get work done before winter.

Michael reported that HED's revenue is 4% under budget and expenses are 1% under budget.

The Select Board would still like to coordinate a joint meeting with the HED Commissioners for November 20. Michael will check with the other Commission members for availability.

**6:15 P.M. – 6:32 P.M. Item #1 Select Board to discuss the air and water quality concerns on Bridgman Hill**

Steve Fortmann presented a short presentation on concerns about water dispersal from a farm on Bridgman Hill. See attachments for the PowerPoint slides. Some of the surrounding neighbors wrote a letter to the manager of the farm, the State, and the Select Board. Eric asked why Steve thought the Select Board could help with the matter. Steve explained the State told him if it's a nuisance, they should go through their local government. Steve said there has been dialogue among the neighbors about this, but there has been no progress on improvement. He feels that it has gotten worse in 2023.

Steve went through his PowerPoint presentation. Steve would like the future dialogue to be more public since he believes that their previous communication with the manager of the farm has been ineffective. At this point, there is no action that the Select Board can take.

**6:32 P.M. – 6:33 P.M. Item #2 Select Board to consider appointing Jan Mueller to the Hardwick Equity Committee - *Action needed***

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to appoint Jan Mueller to the Hardwick Equity Committee.*

Jan joined the meeting just after he was appointed. He is looking forward to continuing working with the Equity Committee.

There was brief discussion about the sound system because Danny was on Zoom and was not able to hear the audience members. Eric said we should do a test session outside of a Select Board meeting and he suggested that we add another microphone. Danny indicated he can hear the people at the table, but anyone else in the room, you cannot hear them at all.

**6:37 P.M. – 6:39 P.M.** Item #3 Select Board to consider approving a cannabis cultivator license for Michael Parker – *Action needed*

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve a cannabis cultivator license for Michael Parker.*

**6:39 P.M. – 6:52 P.M.** Item #4 Business Manager to provide a budget update for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of FY24

Business Manager, Casey Rowell, presented the first quarter results of the Town's FY24 budget. Revenues are slightly ahead of schedule at about 28% and expenses (excluding flood expenses) are at 21%. Overall, we are in good shape. The Town is very fortunate that we have had the cash flow to handle the flood repairs without borrowing money. This is due to residents paying their taxes, water, & sewer in a timely manner. We appreciate this! See attachments for the full details of the budget update.

**6:52 P.M. – 7:03 P.M.** Item #5 Select Board to discuss the current and future classification of The Lane

Shari led this discussion giving some background that "The Lane" is the traveled way parallel to So. Main St. behind the Main St. buildings and is not currently maintained by the Town.

The sign says PVT on it meaning it is private. Claudia Gohl has taken responsibility for part of the lane that is behind buildings she owns. There is parking for residents and some business owners. There have been water and snow melt issues off of the bank. Owners have had to place sandbags to protect their buildings from water.

Shari said that it is located in the Town's designated downtown. She thinks that the Town should offer some required standard of maintenance or advice to property owners. Eric said that with it being private, then the users should plan for the maintenance. It was suggested that the owners get together and create some sort of private road maintenance agreement that could address the issues they are experiencing.

David mentioned that he had spoken to some owners and made some suggestions on what they could do.

**Select Board Reports:** Eric wanted to thank everyone for attending what he believes was the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Pumpkin Walk hosted by the Hardwick Trails. He estimated that they had 500 attendees. He also thanked Beth Lecours for coordinating carving 400 pumpkins for the event.

Shari shared that the Town House is winding down their season. Rebecca Ann Locicero, a psychic medium, will be at the Town House this Friday evening and this is the last event of the season.

She also shared that the accessibility and egress project for the Town House is going out to bid in early November with work expected to start in the spring.

**New Business:** Ceilidh mentioned that a local student wrote a poem about the flood, which was submitted to the Young Writer’s Project and will be in the Times Argus this week. She suggested that maybe we could put it in the Town report if there is space for it.

**Old Business:** *none*

**7:07 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