

MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024
MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3RD FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM

Select Board

Eric Remick, Chair
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane
Shari Cornish
Tim Ricciardello
Danny Hale

Others Present

David Upson Jr., Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Mike Henry, Police Chief
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
Tonia Chase, Town Clerk
Kristen Leahy, Zoning Administrator
Kenny LaCasse, Water/Wastewater Operator

Others Present

Jason Booth
Les Mawson
Roger Prevot, HED
Todd Lindenstruth

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- Wes Mawson introduced himself, and made a public service announcement that there are Alcoholics Anonymous meetings every Monday night at 7 P.M. at the Church of God, and every Thursday at 8 A.M. There are both open and closed meetings. If you would like to learn more about the program you are more than welcome to attend a meeting, go to their website at www.aavt.org, or call the Northeast Kingdom District III at 802-334-1213.

6:05 P.M. – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of October 3, 2024

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway- Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of October 3, 2024, as written.

6:05 P.M. – 6:14 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that he, Jason Booth from Aldrich & Elliot (A&E), and other staff members have been collecting data for the Lead Service Inventory. This is a mandatory project that the Town must complete. This inventory is to identify what type of pipes are being used for the Town's water system. If you are on the Town's water system and have not completed this survey; please do so or call the Town Manager's office for more information. As of 10/16/2024, the Town has collected 78% data on what types of pipes are going into residents' houses, and 55% data on the Town's service side. This is a working project, and the Town is hoping to get to 99% for both.

David also reported that he met with the Town's sexton who manages all the cemeteries in Town. Most recently, there has been work completed within the cemeteries. This work includes straightening of 306 stones, repairing 48 stones, and fixing 12 sunken graves.

The Fire Department self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) system, which was ruined in the July 2023

flood has been installed and is operational.

The Business Manager has been working on the preliminary budget and that will be presented to the Select Board at the next meeting.

There has been one additional dog bite in the past two weeks.

Lastly, David reported on the town's gravel pit. Currently, it's costing the Town \$12.25 per cubic yard getting it from the Town's gravel pit, whereas before it was costing the Town \$16.75 per cubic yard to travel to Danville to get stay mat. David also reported that the Town has \$20,000 left from the \$75,000 they committed to spend from the real estate sale. There's an Act 250 that needs to be submitted, which will cost \$7,500 and the Town plans to reduce that from the \$20,000.

6:14 P.M. – 6:18 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that they have recently worked on various roads. Some of those roads include; Nichols Pond Rd., Dutton Rd. Mackville Rd., Smith Farm Rd., Tucker Brook, Marsh Rd., Bunker Hill Rd., Hardwick Farms, and more.

They placed crushed ledge on Hardwick Farms road and chlorinated it, in order to improve that area.

The Town Manager's office gave the road crew a list of areas that needed attention after the recent flood event. This list has been worked on, and they plan to finish it by next week; weather permitting.

Lastly, Tom placed an order for various road signs, and the crew has been busy putting them up.

6:18 P.M. – 6:19 P.M. Hardwick Police Department Report – Given by Mike Henry

There's currently an officer at the full-time academy, who is doing great and is expected to be back at the station by January 1st.

6:19 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Hardwick Electric Department Report- Given by Roger Prevot

Roger reported that the interim General Manager, Scott Johnstone, has had a great effect on Hardwick Electric. He's been listening to both customers and employees. He has been able to make changes, address the concerns and has gotten HED back up to fully staffed. He's changing the culture in a great way. He's also been making a list of projects that need to be addressed and bringing them to the commissioners and then making sure the tasks are completed. Both Eric and Danny confirmed that they had heard great things about Scott!

HED is in the middle of recruiting a General Manager and also assessing the repairs that are needed for Wolcott Hydro Plant. There will be more to come on these projects.

Hardwick Electric has recently been told that a new ruling has been put into place where instead of being charged for transmission fees, HED is now expected to receive \$223,000 a year.

VPPSA is working on a technology road map to help with gathering information about metering. There will be more to come on this project as it develops.

Lastly, HED Commissioners approved a policy at the last meeting to state that if you have a transformer that needs to be upgraded, HED will now take the value of the current transformer and give you credit towards the new, upgraded transformer.

6:30 P.M. – 7:03 P.M. Hardwick Flood Resilient Report- Given by Kristen Leahy

Kristen Leahy, Zoning and Floodplain Manager, gave an update on the flood resiliency. Please see the report attached.

Eric asked about the timeline for Mill Street. Kristen stated that the application is due in November, but it won't be completed for another 2-3 years. For the Craftsbury Road property, the Select Board talked about placing more trees in that section. Kristen will talk to the Hardwick Conservation Commission about this project.

The two properties in East Hardwick are not scheduled for armoring and Kristen asked what the Select Board's thoughts were on the next steps. Ceilidh suggested that Kristen talk to the East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization.

All properties that we discussed on slide eight will be taken down by Spring of 2025.

Ceilidh asked if there was coordination between different towns when it came to flood repair, and the answer is no.

7:03 P.M. – 7:04 P.M. Item #1 – Select Board to review and approve liquor and tobacco licenses for M&M Beverage- *Action needed*

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the following permits:

Second Class Licenses for:

NU Beverage, LLC d/b/a M&M Beverage

Tobacco License:

NU Beverage, LLC d/b/a M&M Beverage

Tobacco Substitute Endorsement:

NU Beverage, LLC d/b/a M&M Beverage

7:04 P.M. – 7:21 P.M. Item #2 – Representatives from Aldrich & Elliott (A&E) to provide the Select Board a report of recommendations for making the Wastewater Treatment Plant flood resilient.

Jason from A&E presented a final Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) flood mitigation/relocation study. During the July 2023 flood, significant damage occurred to the facility placing it out of service and making it, so it was unable to provide treatment. The Town quickly made the necessary repairs so that the WWTF could get treat accordingly. The Town experienced another flooding event in July 2024, where it caused additional

damage.

The Town of Hardwick has been working with FEMA on the best course of action to protect Hardwick's WWTF. Within the report, A&E presented three different options for FEMA to review. The three options are: replacing the WWTF controls and keeping the structure of the building the way it is currently, raising the building up, or relocating the building. Raising the building will cost \$8.4M and relocating will cost \$21M. Once FEMA reviews the study, they will provide the town with an estimate of what they will cover. A&E will then help the Town determine what is best with the project cost.

To see the full report, please visit the Town Manager's office.

7:22 P.M. – 7:32 P.M. Item #3 – Follow up discussion on So. Main Street bike lane discussed at the last meeting

The Town received an additional estimate for the South Main Street project. Amanda also looked up what it would cost for reflective posts that the Town could use instead. Danny stated that the money needs to be budgeted, and this won't be happening until at least next Spring. He would like the Town to come up with a plan for this section.

Currently, within the budget, the Town has a paving timeline. Ceilidh asked that we create a timeline for sidewalks in Town.

This will be discussed during budget season, but no action will be taken on quotes until next Spring.

Additionally, David suggested that the Select Board attend Better Connections meetings as this could help with the planning process. The next meeting is in November.

7:32 P.M. – 7:39 P.M. Item #4 – Zoning Administrator to present a new walkability study to the Select Board

Kristen talked about the AARP Community Walk Audit. The section identified between Elm Street and Main Street should be studied and improved as soon as financially possible.

This tied into item #3, and the Select Board stated that they need to come up with a plan for sidewalks.

Additionally, Ceilidh mentioned that Hardwick is lacking signs to identify where the Rail Trail is.

Kristen talked about the Planning Commission looking to create a new Village Center District, which will positively impact both East Hardwick and the Village of Hardwick! This is still in draft form, but there will be a public hearing in December to answer questions. More to come on this.

7:39 P.M. – 7:39 P.M. Item #5 – Select Board to set a Public Hearing date for the close out of the VCDP Library Grant- *Action needed*

The Select Board decided they would have the Public Hearing on November 7, 2024, at 5:45 P.M.

7:39 P.M. – 7:42 P.M. Item #6 – Select Board to review and approve a contractor’s bid for the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) work.

The town received four bids to armor two properties on Route 15. The Town is not paying for this, but the Town in charge of administrating the project.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve G.W. Tatro bid for the EWP Project for \$138,500.

Select Board Reports:

1. Danny reported that the CAE Building on Route 15 has installed their windows, and it looks good.
2. Danny reported that VASA has been working on Wright Farm Road. They are using material from the Town’s gravel pit. Most of this project will be completed next year, but it will be useable to for snowmobilers this Winter.
3. Danny also reported that Hardwick Woodbury Rail Trail recently had a meeting. He was unable to attend; however, they discussed and focused on getting the Woodbury section under control.
4. Eric had a thought about bikers taking a turn to Sawmill Lane in the future and connecting to the Lamoille Rail Trail. There might be a discussion on this in the future.
5. Shari reported that there are two more events at the Hardwick Town House before the building will be closing for the season. The events are as follows:
 - a. Monday, October 21 at 7:00 P.M. there will be a free lecture presented by Hardwick Historical Society. The lecture will be hosted by author Thomas C. Hubka on How the Working-Class Home Became Modern, 1900-1940.
 - b. Friday, October 25 from 7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. There’s a suggested \$10 donation. This event is called VerMonster Mash. An all-ages Costume Dance Party featuring the Birdhouse Band.
6. Share also reported that the construction on the Town House is coming along nicely and will continue to be worked on until its completed.

New Business: None

Old Business:

1. Eric reported that Town should re-engage with the SE Group on the Pedestrian Bridge. David mentioned that bids don’t need to go back out for the wall work, but they do for the bridge itself, and Kristen reminded the board that it needs to get permitting again. The Town needs to go for an anticipation bond, but FEMA has obligated the money to fix the wall. The wall and the bridge are two separate projects, but they could be done at the same time. There was some confusion as some board members thought the Pedestrian Bridge was put on hold; however, the grant money has been extended until next year. Additionally, the Town still needs to come up with additional funding for the bridge. The Select Board would like to discuss this further as an item at the next Select Board meeting. Furthermore, the board members were concerned about how much it will cost to fix the wall. More to come on November 7, 2024 as this topic will be added to the agenda for that meeting.
2. The Select Board asked about the two real estate purchases. David reported that Vermont Huts has a signed purchase agreement, but they are working towards their final fundraising and will need to get

- permitting before going before the DRB. The property on Carey Road is going before the DRB next week.
3. Danny asked about the cannabis meeting, and Kristen stated that she attended, and it focused more towards the Zoning Administrator/Planning.

8:03 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