

MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, February 20, 2025
HARDWICK 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, Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Mike Henry, Police Chief
Kristen Leahy, Floodplain Administrator

Others Present

Rose Friedman
Perley Allen
Helen Sher
Jo Lander

Regular Meeting

6:04 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

6:04 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – None

6:04 P.M. – Communication from the audience – None

6:04 P.M. – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of February 6, 2025, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of February 14, 2025

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of February 6, 2025, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of February 14, 2024, as written.

6:05 P.M. – 6:12 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David mentioned that he has been in communication with USDA, and they have approved of the two bids that the Town received for the Swinging Bridge project. There are a few items that the Town and the SE Group need to complete to move forward. This project is still \$350,000 short, but the Town has a grant waiting to be approved for \$200,000, leaving a \$150,000 gap.

David spoke with VTRANS about the Creamery Road right of way and they are willing to accept the road as it currently sits at no cost.

The Town received two bid proposals for Bridge 31 on Main Street (going towards Greensboro Bend). David mentioned these are not apples to apples, so he needs to ask the construction company some follow up questions.

Text MyGov is now live. There are a lot of people that have signed up already. If you would like to sign up, please text "Hardwick" to 91896.

David thanked the Neighbor-to-Neighbor group. They are doing great emergency preparation work, and they are a value to the Town.

David had a meeting on February 20 with Rural Edge about the Mill Street property. Rural Edge is moving forward. Shari asked about the apartments and whether the tenants are back in. David said they'll hopefully be back in by May.

Danny asked about the Repeater grant and the Town did not get it. The reasoning is because Homeland Security feared that the Town wouldn't be able to turn around and spend the money by September, which is unfortunate because the Town would've been able to. The Town is moving ahead and ordering a new repeater. David is going to make a public records request to see who got the grant.

6:12 P.M. – 6:14 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that the road crew has worked hard, keeping up with the snow, the banks, the wind, and the equipment maintenance. David mentioned that he appreciates the Road Crew very much.

There is an issue with a catch basin on South Main Street. The Sewer Supervisor plans to look at this issue on February 21.

David also mentioned that the Town purchased a new snow blower for the tool cat. This will arrive soon.

6:16 P.M. – 6:16 P.M. Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Report – Given by Mike Henry

Mike reported that everything is going well.

Hardwick Electric Department (HED) Report – Unfortunately, Sarah Braese had a death in her family and was not able to join us tonight. The Town has her and her family in our thoughts.

6:17 P.M. – 6:22 P.M. Item #1 – Select Board to discuss and consider approving the Hardwick Fire Dept. to purchase a used tower truck (2000 Seagrave Apallo 105 Tower) to replace the current ladder truck. – *Action Needed*

Perley approached the Select Board previously about purchasing a new tower truck. He has since seen this specific truck and done a thorough walk through. The ladder, air tanks, and pumps are all certified. They will sell it to the Town, deliver it, and train the personnel on this truck for \$165,000.

Danny asked what the department would do with the old one, and Perley said that they would place it out for bid. It's completely drained.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve the used tower truck 2000 Seagrave Apallo 105 Tower for \$165,000.

6:22 P.M. – 6:40 P.M. Item #2 -- Select Board to review and discuss Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant for downtown Hardwick- *Possible Action Needed*

This grant will conduct a scoping study of the Downtown Lamoille River from Mill Street to the Cottage Street bridge, not including the bridge, with the result of 100% of engineering, Benefit Cost Analysis, and Cost Estimates for the best alternatives. After this is completed, the next step will be the Hazard Mitigation Grant to pay for the actual work.

David mentioned that the Town is trying to leverage the cost to complete projects that have needed to be completed for a while.

Kristen stated that the idea would be if there was another flood then the Town would use Hazard Mitigation Grant funds for the damages; however, the funds for 2024 flood have not been granted yet, so Hardwick would benefit from these funds sooner than anticipated if this proposal is approved. The State has chosen Hardwick as they feel the damage to this area is significant. They also feel that Hardwick can spend the money appropriately, rather than sitting on the money.

Ceilidh mentioned that the timeframe is 3-5 years for the work to be completed, but it's urgent to get this process started.

Danny asked about the match. Kristen mentioned that the Town does not know what it will be, but if the Town was shovel ready in the past, then the Town would've had a 100% match; however, the Town is not ready so the Town will not get the full 100%.

Ceilidh mentioned that the \$75,000 Budget Act Adjustment that was given to the Town by the State could help cover the match and would prevent the Town having to spend money from the fund balance. The Town has not committed the money to a specific project yet, but David approved that the funds would be set aside to cover this match.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted 4-1 to apply for the Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities grant.

Ceilidh- Yes

Eric- Yes

Tim- Yes

Shari – Yes

Danny- No

6:40 P.M. – 6:53 P.M. Item #3 -- Select Board to review and discuss an additional flood plain acquisition on the Lamoille River- *Possible Action Needed*

This buyout is for the old Hardwick Gazette building and due to the relationship between the Town and the State, the State is offering a 100% match to cover the buyout.

Rose stated that she came in front of the Select Board a few years ago to apply for the ARPA fund to maintain

the building. However, there needs to be a lot of work done on the building to make it safe. They recently received a \$100,000 reimbursement grant, but the exterior painting needs to be done, the roof needs to be fixed, and due to the last two floods, the foundation needs to be fixed. Rose is conflicted as to what needs to be done, and how the public views this building. Rose feels like this is an urgent issue. She has many options, and she doesn't know what direction is best, but she's coming to the Select Board to request the buyout. Even if she's in the buyout, she's able to pull out of the program, but to join the program is urgent.

Tim asked about the feedback from the public so far. Rose stated that some have said "I love that building but would understand seeing that building go." Others don't feel comfortable going into the building.

This property is in the flood way, so Shari pointed out that even if Rose did the work, she still wouldn't be eligible for future grants to potentially restore the building.

Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane the Select Board voted to approve the Civic Standard to be placed into the buyout program as an additional flood plain acquisition.

Select Board Reports:

- Shari mentioned that the Town House will open for the season on March 1, 2025.

New Business: None

Old Business:

- The Select Board signed the Social Media Policy (approved at the February 6 meeting).

6:57 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