

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING  
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025  
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING  
20 CHURCH ST. 3<sup>rd</sup> FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

**Select Board**

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

**Others Present**

David Upson, Town Manager  
Casey Rowell, Business Manager  
Mike Henry, Police Chief  
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman  
Tonia Chase, Town Clerk/Treasurer  
Karen Whitcomb

**Others Present**

Michael Drake, Positive Pie, Inc.  
Anne Galloway  
Jan Mueller  
Maria Amador  
Rose Freidman

**Regular Meeting**

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

**6:00 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda – Add an additional banner application to Item #2 for the Hardwick Downtown Partnership for the Hardwick Spring Festival

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve the adjusted agenda as stated.*

**6:01 P.M.** – Communication from the audience – Anne Galloway was present to ask the Select Board to vote to accept the Better Connections recommendations for East Hardwick and follow through with those recommendations as funds are available. Shari mentioned that it is not a final report. It has to go to the Planning Commission. David mentioned that the draft document was presented, and the State and the consultant are still working through it. Her second request is for the town to develop a plan and execute it this summer to repair the hazardous sidewalk between O'Brien's house and the post office in East Hardwick. She also mentioned that there is a significant drop off at the new culvert on Hardwick Farms Rd. between her house and McClellan's old house. Tom mentioned that it was fixed the other day and while it does look like it is an open ditch, it was fixed. Ceilidh suggested that we might look to see if we have any guardrails on hand that we could put there.

**6:04 P.M. – 6:05 P.M.** Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of April 17, 2025, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meetings of April 22, 2025, and April 24, 2025

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of April 17, 2025, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meetings of April 22, 2025, and April 24, 2025, as written. Tim abstained.*

**6:05 P.M. – 6:13 P.M.** Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David shared that the past couple of weeks have been focused on project management. The Community Center has new baseboard heat so that we can discontinue the air handling system in the ceiling, which created

a risk for an oil leak with oil pipes running above the ceiling. In addition, new carpeting has been installed as well. Painting was done last year, so the overall space is coming along nicely. These improvements were funded by a Vermont Community Foundation grant.

David also noted that the electrical service was repaired/upgraded at the public safety building from storm damage that occurred a couple of years ago.

The Town House project had some existing conditions that affected the current fire escape project, so he has been coordinating with the Clerk of the Works and the contractor to resolve the issues.

David reported that the Town Clerk is working to get a new vault door for the basement vault. It has been challenging to find a concrete cutter to even come look at the proposed work. They finally had a contractor show up this week. We may not be able to get more than one quote for the concrete cutting in light of this.

David shared that we were awarded a \$30,000 Municipal Planning Grant for flood resiliency in the Granite Street district. This was the maximum amount of award for this grant.

He was also happy to share that the Town was granted the Downtown Transportation grant for \$200,000 for the Pedestrian Bridge. David met with USDA today to finalize how to get the notice to proceed for the bridge. We are close and just need to get a couple more times to them. Eric asked about the USDA RBDG that is expiring at the end of May. Our new representative is trying to find a way for us to get reimbursed for all of our expenses to date before the grant expires, which is about \$187,000.

David also shared that the Town obtained a small \$8,000 VTrans grant to complete a new road erosion inventory, which is due in 2027.

Shari asked for an update on the trailheads. David said that we are reaching out to local contractors.

#### **6:13 P.M. – 6:17 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden**

Tom reported that they have finished grading for the most part, including Kate Brook Rd., West Woodbury end, West Hill Rd., Tucker Brook Rd., Smith Farm Rd., and Town Farm Rd. They also did areas in East Hardwick including Stagehouse Rd., Bayley Hazen, Dimick Rd., Ward Hill, Mountain View Rd., and part of Hardwick Farms Rd.

The crew has been doing a lot of spring cleanup in the downtown, and at town facilities. They also started on crosswalks today and will continue to work on those as weather allows. They have a couple more lawns to clean and then mowing will start in another week or so. The street sweeper will be here in 2 weeks. They will be hanging up the banners and flags downtown. Shari mentioned that there are new spring banners coming soon.

The bank of the lagoon along the LVRT near the sewer plant has been cleared, and the guys assisted with some of that work.

In addition, the crew put up several replacement road signs, including speed limit signs and ones that were ran over last year. One of the signs included "No overnight parking" on Depot St.

David mentioned that when the crew was cleaning the peace park, it was noticed that a sink hole was starting to form and the retaining wall between the diner and the bridge was tipping out and starting to cave. Fortunately, the bridge project will include the repair of the retaining wall.

**6:17 P.M. – 6:19 P.M.** Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Report – Given by Mike Henry

Mike shared that the Police Department (PD) has a Norwich University student intern that is going to be doing some administrative tasks for the PD and also ride along with the officers on occasion. This is an unpaid position.

Mike reported that they are busy planning for local events such as the Bernie Sanders event at Hazen on 5/17 and the Springfest.

**6:19 P.M. – 6:20 P.M.** Item #1 – Select Board to consider approving a liquor license for the new owners of Positive Pie, Inc.– *Action needed*

Michael Drake was present from Positive Pie and introduced himself. He is the new owner of the business. He owns other restaurants and has extensive experience in the industry.

*Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the First Class and Third Class liquor license, and the Outdoor Consumption Permit for Positive Pie, Inc.*

**6:20 P.M. – 6:24 P.M.** Item #2 – Select Board to consider approving of a banner application for the Hardwick Farmer's Market and a banner application for Hardwick Springfest – *Action needed*

There was discussion about how many locations there are between Main St. and Wolcott St. for banner placements. Casey and Shari both said there are locations on both streets. We have had as many as three banners out at a time, but they are typically staggered. The Farmer's Market is the only one that is typically out all season. The others we have are usually up for just a couple to a few weeks at a time.

*Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the banner application for the Hardwick Farmer's Market and the one for Hardwick Downtown Partnership for Hardwick SpringFest.*

**6:24 P.M. – 6:34 P.M.** Item #3 – Select Board to consider providing a letter of support for The Civic Standard for a cultural facilities grant with the VT Arts Council and authorize the Town Manager to sign the letter (sample letter provided) – *Action needed*

Maria Amador and Rose Friedman explained that they are under contract to purchase the Flower Basket building. This grant application is for an ADA accessible bathroom in the new building. The maximum grant is \$30,000 with a 50/50 match. Rose explained the issue with the current building and their desire to move across the street.

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted by majority to provide a letter of support for The Civic Standard for a cultural facilities grant with the VT Arts Council and authorize the Town Manager to sign the letter.*

*Eric – yea*  
*Ceilidh – yea*  
*Tim – yea*  
*Shari – yea*  
*Danny - no*

**6:34 P.M. – 6:50 P.M.** Item #4 – Select Board to discuss East Hardwick recommendations from the Better Connections presentation

Ceilidh would like to see us take some time before the final report is issued to see what we can do immediately and then ultimately create a task force for larger projects. She would like to see the Town have an action plan and specify the areas in East Hardwick that we can make immediate improvements.

Danny expressed concern about adding to our list of things to do but then not fulfilling our promise. He is not saying that we have not done anything, but just that we have not done enough. It seems like we are constantly reviewing things that need to be fixed and talking about fixing them, but then it does not get done because we do not have the capacity or funds to make it happen. David said that he does not really agree with Danny. David said that a lot of the projects are multi-phase and action happens later on. He used the example that the planning commission had a walking audit done for Mill Street. We have since obtained a grant for a scoping study for Mill Street. We have taken some steps on many projects, but it takes time.

Anne Galloway has lived here since 1988 and has seen dramatic improvements to the Town over the years. She thinks that East Hardwick is forgotten. She thinks that there are simple improvements that could be made. She indicated that she has not seen any improvements in East Hardwick done in 30 years and that the residents have been patient over the years, but the Town needs to take some action to fix what needs to be fixed. She understands being fiscally responsible but does not think that anything has been done in East Hardwick for a long time.

Ceilidh mentioned that the Better Connections recommendations are not all huge and do not necessarily cost a lot of money. When it is final, we can address some of the simple items. She brought up making a sidewalk schedule similar to paving, so people can actually see the plan in writing.

Anne said that communication is key and just letting residents know what the plan is.

David reminded everyone that "East Hardwick is Hardwick." He said that he hears a lot that the Town does not help East Hardwick and he does not agree with that statement. He said that specifically the Better Connections grant was done in an effort to help East Hardwick. The Town supplied a water operator to the fire district for several months for hardly any cost at all. The Road crew has helped with leaks in the water system up there.

**Select Board Reports:** Shari reported that the Town House season started.

**New Business:** *none*

**Old Business:** Shari wanted to talk about the sharros for bikers that were supposed to be put on N. Main Street as part of the USDA grant to make the LVRT loop connector with the bridge. She wants to make sure we fulfill

our part of the grant. David said that it is a Class 2 highway, and the yellow lines have to be painted. There are statutes about the markings. We have time to figure this out, so we do not need to do it right now. Highway can get a stencil to paint them when we get to that point.

Tonia reminded everyone that taxes are due by May 12. Since May 10 falls on a Saturday, payments will be accepted on May 12. The Town Clerk's office will be open Friday, May 9 from 7:30 – 3:30 (not closing at 11:30) and on May 12 from 7:30-4:30 (regular hours) to accept payments. *While they do accept postmarks, payments still must be postmarked by May 10 to not be considered late.* The late fee after the due date is 9% (interest and penalty).

**6:55 P.M.** *Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to enter executive session pursuant to 1 VSA § 313 for a loan contract discussion for Vittles Kaef LLC to include Karen Whitcomb, the Town Manager and Business Manager.*

**7:20 P.M.** Exited Executive Session.

*Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, the Select Board voted to approve the loan request from Vittles Kaef LLC for \$12,500.*

Danny wanted to talk about the parking lot on Treatment Plant Rd. near the Yellow Barn Complex where signs were put up by the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) indicating that it was "Farm Connex parking only."

A couple members of the board wondered if the trucks could park at CAE in the Industrial Park. David said that he had discussed with Jon at CAE that it was probably going to be an issue to use half of that parking lot, which is also used for LVRT and overflow parking for the Yellow Barn (YB).

Ceilidh said we should look back at our records about what we agreed to. Eric commented that the YB project paid for the resurfacing of that gravel parking lot and that the whole four acre parcel is already leased to the project from the town which includes the parking lot.

Tim asked about parking near Dona's /Tops. At this time, that is not an option. Eric noted that it would be ideal if the Yellow Barn could lease the lot that Lamoille Valley Ford (LVF) has on the same side of the road as the YB, but it is not likely that LVF would want to give up that space. We need to look further into the parking by talking to CAE.

**7:33 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