

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING  
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2025  
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING  
20 CHURCH ST. 3<sup>rd</sup> FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

**Select Board**

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

**Others Present**

David Upson, Town Manager  
Casey Rowell, Finance Director  
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman  
Michael Henry, Policy Chief  
Daphne Kalmar, Library Trustee

**Others Present**

**Regular Meeting**

**6:00 P.M.** – Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Vice Chair, called the meeting to order.

**6:01 P.M.** – Set/Adjust Agenda – Remove Item #5 – it will be handled at the September 18 meeting

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Danny Hale, the Select Board voted to approve the adjusted agenda as stated.*

No communication from the audience

**6:01 P.M.** – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of August 21, 2025

*Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Danny Hale, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of August 21, 2025, as written.*

**6:01 P.M. – 6:10 P.M.** Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David shared about several items including the flower garden in the Memorial Park, a new Fairview Cemetery sign being donated, FEMA merging the two disasters (DR4720 & DR4810) into one bi-weekly meeting, the Mill Street scoping study, and an update on the pedestrian bridge project. See attachments for the detailed report.

Shari asked about the markings on the sidewalks near the Clip Joint for borings. David said that they are there to mark where borings will be drilled and they have to restore the sidewalks to the original condition after. Shari asked when the school construction would be done. David indicated he was told November.

**6:10 P.M. – 6:15 P.M.** Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that they have held off on grading a lot of roads due to it being so dry. They did, however, do West Woodbury, Marsh Rd., Bunker Hill, West Hill, Hopkins Hill, Scott Rd., Brown Farm Rd., Porter Brook Rd., as well as Mountainview and Ward Hill in East Hardwick. They are having to double their chloride use to make it effective.

Tom shared that they recently finished the grant in aid project on Wapanaki/Tucker Brook Rd., so it is all ditched and brought to grade to assist with drainage. He also mentioned that a crusher will be coming next week to our pit to crush more gravel.

The crew fixed some hydrants, a water leak, and did some other miscellaneous items around town. They are planning to install more meter pits next week. They have already done 12 and expect to do 12 more for a total of 24 done this year. Tom also mentioned that they will move the excavator up to the Hopkins Hill and Scott Rd. area for ditching.

Shari asked about touching up the crosswalks before winter. Tom said that we do have enough paint to do that, but the weather will need to be warm enough to do it. The paint he ordered was for next year, but he could order more if we use some of it now.

Ceilidh asked how our water reservoirs were with the dry conditions and Tom said they are fine.

**6:15 P.M. – 6:23 P.M.** Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Report – Given by Mike Henry

Mike reported that we are going to bring Joe Donna on as a full time Level II officer. He hopes he will become Level III certified in the future, but with Officer French leaving, we really need the coverage. He is trying to create a schedule that would have two people on the night shift. It is not safe for officers to be one on at a time.

Ariana Morris starts the part-time Police Academy on Monday (Level II) and then she will do her field training right after, so that she can be ready to work after doing the Level III Academy in February.

Shari asked if we had made any changes to the union contract about people leaving prematurely after we put them through the academy. The contract is not under negotiation at this time. It was a 3-yr contract. In the meantime, Mike has drafted an agreement for officers to make a 2-yr commitment if we send them to the Academy.

Shari had an idea that we would offer them a higher hourly wage, but they only take home part of it and the difference we would set aside for them (like in a savings/escrow account). If they fulfilled the time commitment, they would get the money then and if they leave, then the town could keep the funds. It would be like getting a sign on bonus after the 2-yr commitment.

**6:23 P.M. – 6:23 P.M.** Item #1 – Select Board to consider appointing Ariana Morris as a part-time officer of the Hardwick Police Department – *Action needed*

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to appoint Ariana Morris as a part-time officer of the Hardwick Police Department.*

We skipped to Item #3 and then came back to Item #2 when Daphne arrived.

**6:27 P.M. – 6:46 P.M.** Item #2 – Select Board to hear from Daphne Kalmar, Library Trustee Chair, asking the Town to consider authorizing \$20,000 of library capital funds be spent towards the balance of the project – *Action needed*

Daphne shared the numbers of visitors to the library have doubled since opening and the meeting rooms have already become popular. Daphne came to request that the Town release \$20,000 of capital funds that are currently set aside for the library building to assist in paying the final balance due to Rearch for construction/retainage. A budget outline was presented showing the remaining funds to be collected and how they plan to deal with the shortfall. If the Town agrees to the \$20,000, the project will still be about \$29,000 short. They have put in pre-application funding request to Vermont Community Foundation (VCF) for a grant and if that does not work out, they will put in a request to VCF to withdraw those funds from the library's existing endowment fund. They would like to avoid withdrawing from the endowment.

Ceilidh expressed concern about only leaving \$6,000 in capital. Shari asked about the Friends doing an appeal. Daphne said they are focused on programming, but that is something that could be considered.

*Shari made a motion, seconded by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, to spend \$20,000 of capital funds that have been earmarked for the library in the Town's capital general fund to help pay the final construction bill to Rearch. Motion passes by majority.*

*Ceilidh Galloway-Kane - yea*

*Shari Cornish - yea*

*Danny Hale – nay*

**\*\*At the meeting, it was indicated that the motion failed because not 3 out of 5 Select Board members approved the motion. However, the following day, the decision was subsequently corrected that the motion did actually pass because there was a quorum with a majority vote of 2-1.\*\***

David commented that large public projects take time, and we need to step back and look at every possible scenario. Danny said that it is important to have the funding fully lined up as the price increased. Danny expressed concern about how the project was managed and that the cost just kept increasing over and over and he is not in support of taking additional taxpayer dollars for the project.

Danny would like to see a policy created about managing the library facility at the town level. The Town did not have a lot of oversight into the project, as the Trustees managed it.

**6:23 P.M. – 6:27 P.M.** Item #3 – Review change of job title from Business Manager to Finance Director and consider approving the updated job description – *Action needed*

A new job description was proposed as well as a title change for the current Business Manager role to better reflect the roles and responsibilities for the position. See the attachments for the current Business Manager position job description and the proposed changes to the new Finance Director title.

*Upon motion by Danny Hale, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to accept the job position title change from Business Manager to Finance Director and accept the proposed job description.*

**6:47 P.M. – 6:53 P.M.** Item #4 – Select Board to discuss Town Meeting 2026 and how to encourage more attendance

Shari said that the Town House is now handicapped accessible and the plan is to move Town Meeting back there, since voting can be done on the stage. Danny asked about collaborating with town partners such as Civic Standard, Hardwick Downtown Partnership, etc. for ideas on more public engagement.

Ceilidh said that last year it was mentioned moving to an evening slot, so more people can attend. David said that Saturday might also be an option, maybe with a pancake breakfast before the meeting. It was suggested that we create a survey about public interest, maybe using a Google form.

Casey commented that it was important to loop the Town Clerk into any discussion about changes to Town meeting.

**6:54 P.M. – 7:02 P.M.** Item #5 – Select Board to hear from Danny Hale with Hale Transport LLC about a new economic development loan request

Danny summarized his request to get a loan to build a shop on his property. He has asked for a \$50,000 loan from the Town's Economic Development loan fund to build a garage/shop at his home for his business, Hale Transport LLC. He hopes to add a part-time mechanic performing light maintenance on trucks in the shop. He gave background on his business which he started in 2018. He went full time in 2022 and now has a tractor trailer and dump truck. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find places locally to work on his trucks. With the new shop, he would be able to have the maintenance done at his shop either by him or a part-time employee.

Tim Ricciardello will call in for the Executive Session to deliberate on the loan request.

**Select Board Reports:** Shari reported that the tree grant that the Hardwick Downtown Partnership received for 30 trees to be planted in Hardwick is coming to fruition. They worked with the Hardwick Conservation Commission on where to plant the trees and the trees will be delivered September 15. They will be planted throughout the downtown in the following 7-10 days.

### **No New Business**

**Old Business:** Ceilidh mentioned that they had a presentation on a proposed Creamery Rd. complex for highway, fire & rescue at a recent meeting. She wants us to start thinking about how we can engage the public early on since we plan to propose a bond at the Town Meeting for the project. She asked if maybe Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) could assist. David mentioned that he recently talked to Helen with N2N about having another series of Town Manager visits to a few different locations in the Town where this could be talked about with community members.

*Tim Ricciardello joined the meeting via phone at 7:07 p.m.*

**7:07 P.M.** *Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA 313 for a loan contract discussion to include the Town Manager, Finance Director and Danny Hale, owner of Hale Transport LLC.*

Tim Ricciardello called in for the Executive Session so that there would be enough voting members without Danny Hale who will need to exit after the Board asks him any questions about his personal finances. That will leave Ceilidh, Shari, and Tim to deliberate on Danny's loan request. At the last Select Board meeting, the Board was given all of the materials and information about Danny's loan request, but Danny was not there to speak in open session about his request and the Board wanted that to happen before they decided because other borrowers have always summarized their request in the open portion of the meeting.

**7:15 P.M.** Danny Hale left the Executive Session so that the remaining members could discuss the loan request.

**7:18 P.M.** *Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to exit Executive Session.*

*Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the loan request from Hale Transport LLC in the amount of \$50,000 and instructed the Finance Director to prepare the commitment letter.*

**7:19 P.M.** Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Casey Rowell, Finance Director

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Remick, Select Board Chair