MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3rd FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM

Select Board	Others Present	Others Present
Eric Remick, Chair	David Upson Jr., Town Manager	Bruce Larrow
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane	Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator	Mallory Greaves
Shari Cornish	Casey Rowell, Finance Director - *Zoom*	Sara Behrsing
Tim Ricciardello	Mike Henry, Police Chief	Norma Spaulding
Danny Hale -a*bsent*	Tonia Chase, Town Clerk	Renaud Demers
	Matt Krajeski, Assessor	Joe Rivard
	Diane Grenkow	Jack Travelstead
	Daphne Kalmar	Rachel Kane
		Andrew Gilbert
		Teddy Wennetes

Regular Meeting

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

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – The Select Board would like to remove the executive session and move it to a future meeting.

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

6:01 P.M. Communication from the audience – None

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

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve the regular meeting minutes as written.

6:02 P.M. – 6:06 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that two community presentations on the Hardwick New River Flood Modeling Project will be held on December 3 at 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. on the third floor of the Hardwick Memorial Building. He also noted that a public meeting regarding the proposed bylaw changes is scheduled for December 9 at 6:30 p.m., also on the third floor of the Memorial Building.

Scott Johnstone, the Interim General Manager for Hardwick Electric, is currently overseeing Hardwick Electric, Morrisville Water & Light, and Hyde Park Electric. He informed David that he has conflicting meeting schedules but will provide an update soon.

The Pedestrian Bridge is finally moving along. A pre-construction meeting has taken place, and a notice to proceed is expected within the next few days. CCS has ordered the bridge, and a temporary walking bridge may be installed in December, followed by the demolition of the old bridge. A permit amendment will be submitted soon to hopefully allow work prior to July 1, and monthly construction meetings will occur on the third Thursday of each month.

Ten properties from the 2023 FEMA buyout program have now been demolished.

The concrete cutting required for the new vault door replacement has been completed, and the new door is expected to be installed soon.

Weekly Springfest planning meetings are underway, with Kiwanis taking the lead. Preparations are progressing well.

David reported that the Essential Services planning project on Creamery Road is moving along.

6:06 P.M. – 6:06 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that the Highway Crew has been busy preparing the trucks for Winter, as well as plowing and salting. The Town is doing a better job tracking the amount of salt being used. When time allows, the crew has also been spot grading and performing road maintenance to keep the roads in good condition.

6:06 P.M. – 6:08 P.M. Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Report – Given by Mike Henry

Mike reported that they have has also been getting everything switched over to prepare for Winter, including preparing the snowmobiles.

Probation and Parole has been working well with Hardwick Police Department and has been utilizing the Community Center.

Eric asked for a status update on the repeater, and Mike noted that it was installed last week. David added that NEK Broadband still needs to provide dark fiber from the repeater to the Greensboro Fire Department, after which the repeater can be fully connected. Unfortunately, several key details were not brought to the Town’s attention until recently, causing delays in the process.

There was no Hardwick Electric Department (HED) Report.

6:08 P.M. – 6:14 P.M. Item #1 – Library Director, Diane Grenkow, to give the Select Board an update on library happenings and activity for the last quarter since reopening with the addition

Diane reported that since the Library opened on July 7, they have seen a 55% increase in patrons compared to the same four-month period last year.

The meeting rooms have held 50 Jeudevine programs and 45 other organizational programs. Diane commended her staff for doing great work, especially on core responsibilities and workshops. Please see the attached fliers for more information on the Jeudevine Memorial Library.

6:14 P.M. – 6:16 P.M. Item #2 – Select Board to consider approving an error & omissions request presented by the Assessor – *Action needed*

Matt Krajeski, the Town Assessor, stated that the two parcels that are presented tonight are both owned by the same property owner. He stated that the Current Use Department for the State of Vermont recently submitted a revised current use plan to include the two parcels, which abut each other, as part of a contiguous account. The combination of the two parcels would increase the acreage for the property owner but would keep the grand list value the same for the Town. Matt is asking that the Select Board approve of the merger of the two parcels.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the merger of 05013-00020 and 05013-00011, making 05013-00011 inactive.

6:16 P.M. – 6:17 P.M. Item #3 – Select Board to consider approving a line of credit renewal with Union Bank for Hardwick Electric Department for $300,000 – *Action needed*

David stated that this is the same renewal that occurred last year. Hardwick Electric had the initial line of credit, then a renewal last year, and they are asking for a second renewal this year.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve renewing the line of credit with Union Bank in the amount of $300,000.

6:17 P.M. – 6:19 P.M. Item #4 – Select Board to consider approving a purchase of a 2026 Ski-Doo Skandic for Hardwick Trails from Walt's not to exceed $17,000 - *Action needed*

This is part of the trails committee. The Trails committee approved this purchase, but the amount exceeds the purchase policy that the Town of Hardwick has in place, so it must go in front of the Select Board to officially approve the purchase. The money comes from the Hardwick Trails capital fund, which has been funded entirely through donations.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve 2026 Ski-Doo Skandic for Hardwick Trails from Walts not to exceed $17,000.

6:19 P.M. – 6:43 P.M. Item #5 – Select Board to further discuss items for the Town meeting warning: Bond vote, Town meeting date change and Town Forest acquisition

The Select Board discussed potentially changing the date and time of Town Meeting to improve public participation. They agreed that the conversation should continue at Town Meeting and that a survey should be conducted. Renaud Demers confirmed that the goal is to increase participation, and Eric said yes. Renaud asked how many residents vote, and Tonia responded that typically 300–700 people vote depending on if it's an election year. Renaud then asked how many attend Town Meeting, and Tonia estimated between 100–125 attendees. Renaud noted that, in his opinion, changing the date would not significantly affect the results. Eric asked whether the Town could change the meeting format. Tonia responded that the charter does not specify either way, and Eric added that a floor vote would allow for more discussion. It was clarified that voting must take place on Tuesday regardless. Joe Rivard noted that other towns have made similar changes and suggested that Hardwick reach out to them. Although it may create more work for staff, he said it could be worthwhile if it increases participation. Joe also asked about HCTV and a Zoom option. David noted that Zoom voting would need further review, and the Town plans to look into this.

The discussion shifted to the Essential Services project on Creamery Road and the related bond vote. The existing building is at the end of its useful life. The Town has a conceptual plan that proposes a new shared campus for the Highway, Fire, and Rescue Departments. Rescue would be self-funding, while the Fire Department could receive FEMA and USDA funding. The Highway portion would be funded by Hardwick taxpayers through a bond vote, which could be up to $6.5 million. David stated that the goal is to hold public meetings in early January for public input, present information at Town Meeting, and then hold a special vote. Shari asked about possible grant opportunities and Eric noted that in his conversations he had not identified available funding. David added that some funding might still be possible. Shari expressed concern about rising costs. David added that a decision needs to be made whether to have it on the warning by January 15. Tonia reminded the group to account for time needed by attorneys. Ceilidh cautioned against rushing and asked about steps needed to stabilize the current building for winter. David recommended securing the columns and high beams and bringing in an engineer to draw plans to send out for bid, and it would cost around $100,000 to secure the building.

Next, the Select Board discussed whether the Town Forest should be placed on the Town Meeting Warning. Tim supported moving forward, while Shari emphasized the need for public engagement. David asked whether the Town could finalize the question by January 15, noting that many details remain unresolved. Jack T. from the Northern Land Trust explained that they are partners in moving the project forward and can provide updates to the Town at any time. They have applied for several grants, including a $550,000 request to VHCB, with results expected in early January. The appraisal has not yet been received but is expected in December. Jack expressed optimism that more information would be available by the January deadline. Ceilidh noted that without the appraisal and additional information, the Select Board could not make a decision and suggested postponing the matter. David asked what question the Town would ultimately bring to voters—whether it concerned purchasing the land or approving financial contributions. Tim clarified that the intent is for the Town to receive the land, not purchase it, but David noted that financial commitments are still part of the conversation. Eric suggested revisiting the matter on December 18. Rachel stated that a public presentation in January or early February would include the appraisal and grant information and would be held before Town Meeting. She added that they have received several letters of support that can be shared at any time. The Board agreed to receive an update on December 18, finalize the question, and officially decide by January 8.

6:43 P.M. – 6:43 P.M. Item #6 – Select Board to consider renewing a Cannabis Tier 3 Cultivation license renewal for The Clean Cannabis Company – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve renewing the Cannabis Tier 3 Cultivation License for the Clean Cannabis Company.

6:43 P.M. – 6:50 P.M. Item #7 – Select Board to consider adopting a resolution to request Tier 1B status for the purposes of Act 250 jurisdiction– *Action needed*

Eric asked if the Town applying for Tier 1B would prepare us for Tier 1A, and David confirmed. Eric also asked if developments were built in T1A areas, could it trigger Act 250. David confirmed but stated that some of these places already have Act 250 permits. Approving Tier 1B could just simplify the permitting. See attached information for more details.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to adopt the resolution to request Tier 1B status for the purpose of Act250 jurisdiction. Eric abstained.

6:50 P.M. – 6:53 P.M. Item #8 – Select Board to consider approving a 3-yr contract renewal with New England Municipal Consultants for assessing services and authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract – *Action needed*

David noted that the Town will receive the same services; however, they are going to be cutting back on office hours and doing more remote work. Eric stated that this is a three-year contract retroactive back to July 2025.

Year one (July 2025 to June 2026) $43,200 annually
Year two (July 2026 to June 2027) $45,600 annually
Year three (July 2027 to June 2028) $48,000 annually

Ceilidh asked if we sent out request for proposals for assessors. David stated that we tried to do it a couple of years back and only received two bids, and the other company was significantly more. Eric asked Ceilidh if she would like to see it go out to bid. David stated that this would fall under a specialized service under the Town's procurement policy. Ceilidh was just wondering about the logistics.

Upon motion by Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve a 3-year contract with New England Municipal Consultants for assessing services, and to authorize Town Manager to sign the contract.

6:53 P.M. – 7:35 P.M. Item #9 – Select Board to discuss drafts of the FY27 budget for the following:
Revenues, Admin & Office, Library, Police Department, Line Items, Trails & Recreation

The Business Manager went through each of the above draft budgets, which were put up on the screen for viewing. Topics of discussion included:

~Removing the Recreation Coordinator salary and putting funds aside for volunteer stipends
~ Insurance and electricity increase for the Library
~Repeater costs
~ Highway Bond payment is interest only, but Casey was doing that on $4Million, not $6.5Million. The board talked about a vote in April. Casey will look further into when the deadlines are for the bond pools.
~ Early Warning Sign
~ No Director of Public Works - using project specific consultants instead by increasing the professional/consultant services expense line
~ New cloud-based system for the Assessor
~Springfest

Casey mentioned that she has now gone through all the budget drafts. Currently there is a 5.90% or a $260,598 increase. The Town will spend the next two meetings in December really working through the budget.

Ceilidh asked about the following items and how they would affect the budget. More discussion to come.
~ The sugar woods at the gravel pit
~ Local Option Tax
~ The Town Forest

Select Board Reports:
Tim asked about the Skate Ramp located at the Fire Station. David stated that the Civic Standard should have it taken away and stored off site this coming weekend. David and Amanda are both working on this situation.

New Business:
Shari asked about going over the Town appointments.

Shari also reported that the Downtown Partnership (HDP) has been busy hanging holiday lights. Gene Atwood is trying to figure out the electrical issue near the North Main Street Bridge to get the outlets working so that HDP can hang lights there too.

Ceilidh asked about the closure of Sumner Street. David mentioned that it was a topic of discussion at a most recent Mill Street/ Main Street VHB meeting; however, he doesn't see it happening.

Old Business: None

7:44 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