

2025

Hardwick Town Report



"W. Church Street Bridge"
Acrylic Painting by Brent McCoy, 2025

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If you are interested in a copy of the Town audit, you can call the Town Manager's office at (802) 472-6120 to have a copy mailed, or you can come to the Town offices at the Memorial Building on Church Street. You can also gain access to the Town Report or Audit reports online by going to the Town's website at www.hardwickvt.gov. If you would like a copy of the Hardwick Electric Department audit report, please contact Hardwick Electric at (802) 472-5201.

Dedication



Arthur "Art" Chase

Art Chase gave many years of dedicated service to the Town of Hardwick in numerous roles. As an original founder of the Hardwick Rescue Squad, he remained a member for 55 years. He also served in the Hardwick Fire Department, the Hardwick Police Department, and as Town Constable. For more than 37 years, Art worked at Hazen Union School, leaving a lasting impact on generations of students and colleagues. Art was a graduate of Hardwick Academy's Class of 1961. Art built his life in Hardwick with his wife, Alice, whom he married in 1963, where together they raised their children, Brenda and Denis. Family was Art's greatest priority, closely followed by his love of hunting, something he looked forward to all year.



Erwin Gilcris

Erwin Gilcris was likewise deeply committed to Hardwick and its people. He served in the Hardwick Fire Department for over 28 years, including 10 years as Fire Chief, and also held the role of Town Constable. For 39 years, Erwin was employed at Hardwick Electric Department as a lineman playing a vital role in keeping the community connected—particularly during storms and emergencies. Erwin attended Hardwick Academy, and made his home and life in Hardwick, where in 1981 he married Bobbe, and together they blended their families into one. Erwin was known for his dedication to community, his enjoyment of the outdoors, and the time he spent hunting, fishing, and sharing those pursuits with family.

Art and Erwin were both lifelong Hardwick residents whose commitment to service helped shape the community we know today. The Town of Hardwick lost Art in 2025 and Erwin in 2024. In recognition of their many years of service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the community, the Select Board dedicates this Annual Report to their memory. Their contributions continue to be felt, and the Town remains grateful for the legacy they leave behind.

TOWN OFFICIALS (ELECTED AND APPOINTED)

| | |
|---|---|
| TOWN MODERATOR Term Expires 2026 | Orise Ainsworth |
| SELECT BOARD 1 Year Term Expires 2026 1 Year Term Expires 2026 3 Year Term Expires 2026 3 Year Term Expires 2027 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Eric Remick Danny Hale Ceilidh Galloway-Kane Shari Cornish Timothy Ricciardello |
| TOWN CLERK & TOWN TREASURER 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Tonia Chase |
| TOWN AGENT 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | David Shepard |
| SURVEYOR OF WOOD, BARK & LUMBER 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | Levi Chase |
| TREE WARDEN 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | Geoffrey Fehrs |
| TOWN GRAND JUROR 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | Raymond Bellavance |
| FIRST CONSTABLE 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | Lawrence Hamel |
| SECOND CONSTABLE 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | Lindsay O'Steen |

CEMETERY TRUSTEES

1 Year Term Expires 2026

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| MAIN STREET CEMETERY | Select Board |
| MAPLE STREET CEMETERY | Select Board |
| FAIRVIEW CEMETERY | Select Board |
| SANBORN CEMETERY | Select Board |
| WEST HILL CEMETERY | Select Board |
| HARDWICK STREET CEMETERY | Select Board |
| HARDWICK CENTER CEMETERY | Select Board |

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| 1 Year Term Expires 2026 | Town Manager |
|--------------------------|--------------|

LIBRARY TRUSTEES

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Ross Connelly |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Daphne Kalmar |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Lauren Honican |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Abrah Griggs |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Vincent Razionale |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Solomon Lew |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Mary Meyer |

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1 Year Term Expires 2026

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chief | Perley Allen |
| 1 st Assistant Chief | Charles Bartlett |
| 2 nd Assistant Chief | Lindsey O'Steen |
| Captain | Mike Gravel |
| 1 st Lieutenant | Davey Chase |
| 2 nd Lieutenant | Ken LaCasse |
| 3 rd Lieutenant | Joe Donna |
| Foreman | Dana Camp |
| Assistant Foreman | Tyler LeBeau |
| Pipeman | Dave Colburn |
| Assistant Pipeman | Beatrix "Sam" Avery |
| Axe Man | Codey Marckres |
| Safety Officer | Dana Camp |
| Training Officers | Perley Allen/ Charles Bartlett |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Lindsey O'Steen |
| Dispatcher | Lamoille County Sheriff |

SCHOOL DIRECTORS - HARDWICK

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Term Expires 2026 | Adam Gann |
| Term Expires 2026 | Meghan Shatney |
| Term Expires 2027 | <i>Vacant</i> |
| Term Expires 2027 | Terri Vest |
| Term Expires 2028 | Kyle Anderson |

HAZEN UNION DIRECTORS – HARDWICK

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Term Expires 2026 | Margaret Bledsoe |
| Term Expires 2026 | Terri Vest |
| Term Expires 2027 | Sabrina Morrison |
| Term Expires 2028 | Patrick Kane |

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| HARDWICK CONSERVATION COMMISSION | |
| 2 Year Term Expires 2027 | Joe Nudell |
| 2 Year Term Expires 2027 | Tyler Buswell |
| 4 Year Term Expires 2027 | Rachel Kane |
| 4 Year Term Expires 2027 | Lesa Cathcart |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Peter Moskovitz |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Kathleen Hemmens |
| 4 Year Term Expires 2028 | Lucy Zendzian |
| 4 Year Term Expires 2028 | Ben Pougner |
| 4 Year Term Expires 2028 | Norma Wiesen |
| EQUITY COMMITTEE | |
| Chair | Ceilidh Galloway-Kane |
| Secretary | Jan Mueller |
| Treasurer | David O'Brien |
| Member | Amy Rosenthal |
| Member | <i>Vacant</i> |
| Member | <i>Vacant</i> |
| RECREATION COMMITTEE | |
| Chair | Mallory Greaves |
| Vice Chair | Emily Varvir |
| Secretary | Sara Behrsing |
| Treasurer | <i>Vacant</i> |
| Member | <i>Vacant</i> |
| Recreation Coordinator | <i>Vacant</i> |
| HARDWICK ELECTRIC COMMISSIONERS | |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Myles Kamisher-Koch |
| 2 Year Term Expires 2026 | Roger Prevot |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Renaud Demers |
| 2 Year Term Expires 2027 | Michael Ambrosino |
| 2 Year Term Expires 2027 | Jake Lester |
| HARDWICK PLANNING COMMISSION | |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Ken Davis |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Kole |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Gillian D'Acierno (Alternate) |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | <i>Vacant</i> (Alternate) |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Jim Lewis |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Bud Stevens |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Michael Haveson |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Dave Gross |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Larry Fliegelman |
| HARDWICK DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD | |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | John Mandeville |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2026 | Kole |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Ruth Gaillard |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Gillian D'Acierno |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2027 | Helm Nottermann |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | Kate Brooke |
| 3 Year Term Expires 2028 | <i>Vacant</i> |
| TOWN ENERGY COMMITTEE | |
| Chair | Bill Chidsey |
| Member | Emily Hershberger |

**WARNING TOWN OF HARDWICK
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MARCH 03, 2026**

The legal voters of the Town of Hardwick, Vermont are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Hardwick Town House in said Town of Hardwick on Tuesday, March 03, 2026 at 10:00 o'clock in the forenoon to act on the following business:

The polls for Australian ballot voting will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. If special accommodations are necessary because of physical disabilities, please contact the Town Clerk's Office (472-5971).

Article 1. To elect a Moderator to govern said Town Meeting and for the year ensuing.

Article 2. Shall the Town accept the Town Report, year ending June 30, 2025?

Article 3. To elect all Town Officers and School District No. 26 Directors as required by the public laws of Vermont and the Town Charter. (Select Board and Union School District No. 26 Directors, to be voted by Australian Ballot).

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| First Constable | 1-year term |
|-----------------|-------------|

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Second Constable | 1-year term |
|------------------|-------------|

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| Town Agent | 1-year term |
|------------|-------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Surveyor of Wood, Bark and Lumber | 1-year term |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Tree Warden | 1-year term |
|-------------|-------------|

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Cemetery Trustees | 1-year term |
| Main Street, Maple Street, Fairview, Sanborn, Hardwick Street, West Hill, Hardwick Center | |

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Fire Dept. Officers (can be voted as one) | 1-year term |
|---|-------------|

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| One Library Trustee | 3-year term |
|---------------------|-------------|

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| One Library Trustee | 1 year remaining on a 3-year term |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Grand Juror | 1-year term |
|-------------|-------------|

Article 4. Shall the Town have its current taxes collected by the Town Treasurer?

Article 5. Shall the Town vote a budget of four million seven hundred forty one thousand six hundred dollars (\$4,741,600) to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Town and authorize the Select Board to set a new tax rate sufficient to provide the same?

Article 6. Shall the Town approve a one percent (1%) local option tax on (i) meals and alcoholic beverages pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138(b)(2) and (ii) rooms pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 138(b)(3) with the Town's share of receipts to be used for municipal, non-education expenditures as identified by the Select Board?

Article 7. Shall the Town contribute \$25,000, to be matched by more than \$700,000 of other public and private funds, toward the acquisition of +/- 329 acres of land on Buffalo Mountain to become a Town Forest to protect recreational access, fish and wildlife habitat, forestry, and Lamoille River water quality, and to provide outdoor educational opportunities for schoolchildren?

Article 8. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) for the support of AWARE?

Article 9. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand six hundred dollars (\$2,600.00) for the support of Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice?

Article 10. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) for the support of Center for an Agricultural Economy?

Article 11. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for the support of Craftsbury Community Care Center?

Article 12. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) for the support of Greensboro Nursing Home?

Article 13. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) for the support of Hardwick Area Food Pantry?

Article 14. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for the support of Hardwick Community Television?

Article 15. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand eight hundred dollars (\$2,800.00) for the support of Hardwick Downtown Partnership, Inc.?

Article 16. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for the support of Hardwick Historical Society?

Article 17. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) for the support of Justice For Dogs?

Article 18. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for the support of Lamoille Family Center?

Article 19. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Arts Council, Inc. (NEKarts)?

Article 20. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging?

Article 21. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand one hundred sixty one dollars (\$3,161.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Human Services?

Article 22. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Learning Services?

Article 23. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed six thousand one hundred eight one dollars and fifty cents (\$6,181.50) for the support of Rural Community Transportation, Inc.?

Article 24. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) for the support of Salvation Farms, Inc.?

Article 25. Shall the Town hold the 2027 Town Meeting at the Hardwick Elementary School or the Hardwick Town House?

Article 26. Shall the Town exempt the property of the Hardwick Area Rescue Squad from taxation for a period of five (5) years in accordance with section 3840 of Title 32, VSA?

Article 27. Shall the Town exempt the property of the Caspian Lake Lodge Masonic Temple Association, Inc. from taxation for a period of five (5) years in accordance with section 3840 of Title 32, VSA?

Article 28. Shall the Town exempt the property of the Caledonia Grange from taxation for a period of five (5) years in accordance with section 3840 of Title 32, VSA?


Article 29. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board, for the period of one year, to enter into contracts with new industrial and commercial owners, lessees, bailees, of real property, or with existing or new owners, lessees, bailees or operators who construct, acquire or renovate industrial and/or commercial real property, including additions to existing property for the purpose of fixing and maintaining the municipal rate applicable to such real property or for the purpose of fixing the amount of money which shall be paid as an annual municipal tax upon such real property pursuant to the provision of Title 24, VSA, Section 2741?

Article 30. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board, for the period of one year, to enter into contracts with operators of agricultural real property, or with existing or new owners, lessees, bailees, or operators who construct acquire or renovate, or who intend to construct, acquire or renovate agricultural real property for the purpose of fixing and maintaining the valuation of such real property in the Grand List for the purpose of fixing and maintaining the municipal rate applicable to such real property or for the purpose of fixing the amount in money which shall be paid as an annual municipal tax upon such real property pursuant to provisions of Title 24, VSA, Section 2741?

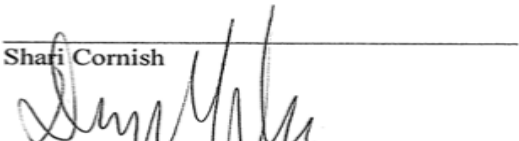
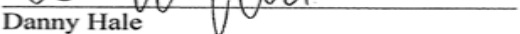
Article 31. To transact any other nonbinding business proper to be brought before said meeting.

The legal voters of the Town of Hardwick are further notified that voter qualifications, registration, and absentee voting relative to said Annual Town Meeting shall be as provided in Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Dated at Hardwick, Vermont this 16th day of January, A.D. 2026.

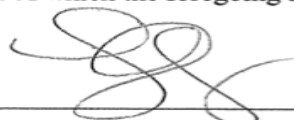

Eric Remick, Chair


Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Vice Chair


Shari Cornish

Danny Hale


Timothy Ricciardello

Hardwick Town Clerk's Office. Received for record this 16th day of January, A.D. 2026 at 8 O'clock 30 minutes a.m., the instrument of which the foregoing is a true copy.

Attest: Tonia L. Chase, Town Clerk: 

**FY2027 Estimated Tax Rate based on Proposed FY2027 Budget
and Impact on a \$100,000 home**

FY2027 Estimated Tax Rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| FY 2027 Proposed Property Taxes | \$3,582,961 |
| Estimated Grand List July 1, 2026 | \$338,993,600.00 |
| FY 2027 Estimated Tax rate | \$0.01057 |
| Value per \$100 | \$1.057 |
| FY2026 Municipal Tax rate | \$0.01006 |
| Value per \$100 | \$1.006 |

Impact on a \$100,000 home

| | |
|--|------------|
| Estimated FY2027 municipal tax liability on a \$100,000 home | \$1,056.94 |
| FY2026 tax liability on a \$100,000 home | \$1,006.30 |
| Increase (decrease) in FY2027 before appropriations | \$50.64 |

Estimated increase in Tax Rate reflected in actual dollars/100 **\$0.0506**

Percent Increase in Property Tax rate from FY2026 to FY2027 **5.03%**

Impact of Appropriations on a \$100,000 home

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Estimated value of Appropriations | \$54,742.50 |
| Proposed Property Taxes with Appropriations | \$3,637,703.67 |
| FY2027 Estimated Tax rate | \$0.0107 |
| Value per \$100 | \$1.073 |
| Estimated FY2027 municipal tax liability on a \$100,000 home | \$1,073.09 |
| Increase (decrease) in FY2027 on a \$100,000 home | \$66.79 |

Estimated increase in Tax Rate reflected in actual dollars/100 **\$0.0668**

Percent Increase in Property Tax rate from FY2026 to FY2027 **6.64%**

Impact of Appropriations on Tax Rate

| | | |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Article 8. | AWARE | \$3,500.00 |
| Article 9. | Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice | \$2,600.00 |
| Article 10. | Center for an Agricultural Economy | \$4,000.00 |
| Article 11. | Craftsbury Community Care Center | \$2,500.00 |
| Article 12. | Greensboro Nursing Home | \$5,000.00 |
| Article 13. | Hardwick Area Food Pantry | \$5,000.00 |
| Article 14. | Hardwick Community Television | \$3,000.00 |
| Article 15. | Hardwick Downtown Partnership, Inc. | \$2,800.00 |
| Article 16. | Hardwick Historical Society | \$3,000.00 |
| Article 17. | Justice For Dogs | \$1,000.00 |
| Article 18. | Lamoille Family Center | \$2,500.00 |
| Article 19. | Northeast Kingdom Arts Council, Inc. (NEKarts) | \$3,500.00 |
| Article 20. | Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging | \$4,500.00 |
| Article 21. | Northeast Kingdom Human Services | \$3,161.00 |
| Article 22. | Northeast Kingdom Learning Services | \$1,000.00 |
| Article 23. | Rural Community Transportation, Inc. | \$6,181.50 |
| Article 24. | Salvation Farms, Inc. | \$1,500.00 |

The total requested appropriations amount to \$54,742.50. If all requested appropriations are approved, the estimated tax rate impact would be approximately \$0.0161. This equates to an increase of \$16.10 on the 2026–2027 tax bill for every \$100,000 of Grand List value.

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Projected Revenues

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF.</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| School Tax Admin Fee | \$7,576 | \$7,078 | \$8,955 | \$1,877 | 26.51% |
| PILOT | \$153,391 | \$147,898 | \$168,391 | \$20,493 | 13.86% |
| Current Use Hold Harm | \$187,682 | \$181,780 | \$207,155 | \$25,375 | 13.96% |
| Delinquent Charges | \$42,087 | \$22,500 | \$32,000 | \$9,500 | 42.22% |
| Tax Sale Interest | \$65 | \$100 | \$50 | (\$50) | -50.00% |
| Zoning Permits | \$3,300 | \$4,000 | \$3,500 | (\$500) | -12.50% |
| Licenses and Fees | \$3,664 | \$3,500 | \$3,600 | \$100 | 2.86% |
| Recording Fees | \$18,799 | \$19,000 | \$19,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Dog Licenses | \$1,796 | \$1,500 | \$1,750 | \$250 | 16.67% |
| DMV Fees | \$165 | \$250 | \$175 | (\$75) | -30.00% |
| Local Option Tax | \$0 | \$0 | \$50,000 | \$50,000 | 100.00% |
| State Highway Aid | \$162,598 | \$167,476 | \$172,500 | \$5,024 | 3.00% |
| Grant-in-Aid Revenue | \$18,785 | \$20,000 | \$20,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| West Woodbury Revenue | \$8,000 | \$8,000 | \$9,500 | \$1,500 | 18.75% |
| Gravel Pit Revenue | \$9,100 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Copying Fees | \$11,246 | \$12,000 | \$12,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Hardwick PD Ticket Rev | \$15,385 | \$17,000 | \$17,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| PD SIU Revenue | \$15,000 | \$3,500 | \$15,000 | \$11,500 | 328.57% |
| Outside Services-PD | \$480 | \$1,000 | \$500 | (\$500) | -50.00% |
| Sale of Equipment/Vehicles | \$175 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Interest on Investments | \$61,297 | \$35,000 | \$55,000 | \$20,000 | 57.14% |
| Miscellaneous Revenue | \$25,959 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Sale of Real Estate | \$75,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Insurance Payout | \$4,786 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Water Transfer | \$157,280 | \$186,678 | \$170,981 | (\$15,697) | -8.41% |
| Sewer Transfer | \$143,605 | \$172,236 | \$170,981 | (\$1,255) | -0.73% |
| Room Rent | \$25 | \$50 | \$50 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| PD Vest Grant | \$628 | \$650 | \$650 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| PD Vast Patrol | \$3,658 | \$4,000 | \$3,500 | (\$500) | -12.50% |
| State Highway Safety Grants | \$9,139 | \$15,000 | \$15,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| FEMA Flood 2023 & 2024 | \$458,399 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| USDA Grant - Ped. Bridge | \$100,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Misc. Grants | \$21,997 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Green Up Day Grant | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Total Revenues | \$1,721,465 | \$1,031,595 | \$1,158,638 | \$127,044 | 12.32% |
| Total Budget | \$4,697,313 | \$4,417,752 | \$4,741,600 | \$323,848 | 7.33% |
| Property Taxes | \$2,975,848 | \$3,386,157 | \$3,582,961 | \$196,804 | 5.81% |

Budget Summary

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Highway Department | \$ 1,570,301 | \$ 1,112,852 | \$ 1,157,652 | \$ 44,801 | 4.03% |
| Police Department | \$ 891,451 | \$ 1,014,585 | \$ 1,063,574 | \$ 48,988 | 4.83% |
| Administration/Office | \$ 807,535 | \$ 906,980 | \$ 860,040 | \$ (46,940) | -5.18% |
| Payroll (Elected & Appointed) | \$ 12,555 | \$ 16,778 | \$ 15,118 | \$ (1,660) | -9.89% |
| Fire Department | \$ 88,488 | \$ 46,702 | \$ 56,787 | \$ 10,085 | 21.60% |
| Line Items | \$ 1,331,166 | \$ 1,229,241 | \$ 1,493,815 | \$ 264,574 | 21.52% |
| Buildings | \$ 93,854 | \$ 90,615 | \$ 94,613 | \$ 3,998 | 4.41% |
| Total Budget | \$ 4,795,351 | \$ 4,417,752 | \$ 4,741,600 | \$ 323,847 | 7.33% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Highway Department

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF.</u> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Public Works Payroll (6 FT) | \$387,085 | \$394,992 | \$412,604 | \$17,612 | 4.46% |
| Overtime | \$45,751 | \$30,000 | \$40,000 | \$10,000 | 33.33% |
| Sewer Operator | \$400 | \$750 | \$500 | (\$250) | -33.33% |
| Social Security Expense | \$33,362 | \$31,619 | \$33,674 | \$2,054 | 6.50% |
| Workers' Compensation | \$22,702 | \$23,809 | \$24,518 | \$709 | 2.98% |
| Unemployment Insurance | \$399 | \$416 | \$387 | (\$29) | -7.00% |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$11,430 | \$13,727 | \$12,802 | (\$925) | -6.74% |
| Health Insurance | \$121,461 | \$154,770 | \$145,090 | (\$9,680) | -6.25% |
| Dental/Vision/Life/Disability | \$6,087 | \$8,157 | \$8,032 | (\$125) | -1.53% |
| Retirement Expense | \$31,482 | \$30,812 | \$33,945 | \$3,133 | 10.17% |
| Operating Expense/Supplies | \$18,790 | \$18,000 | \$19,000 | \$1,000 | 5.56% |
| Permits/Fees | \$3,652 | \$4,000 | \$3,800 | (\$200) | -5.00% |
| Telephone/Internet | \$1,349 | \$1,500 | \$1,500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Culverts | \$1,821 | \$7,500 | \$5,000 | (\$2,500) | -33.33% |
| Grant-in-Aid Expense | \$9,294 | \$6,200 | \$9,000 | \$2,800 | 45.16% |
| Uniforms | \$8,525 | \$8,000 | \$9,700 | \$1,700 | 21.25% |
| Line Painting/Crosswalks | \$1,745 | \$1,000 | \$1,500 | \$500 | 50.00% |
| Road Signs | \$5,262 | \$1,500 | \$2,500 | \$1,000 | 66.67% |
| Streetscape Maintenance | \$746 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Storm Drains | \$7,365 | \$2,500 | \$3,000 | \$500 | 20.00% |
| Safety/Training | \$210 | \$1,000 | \$500 | (\$500) | -50.00% |
| Equipment Expense | \$92,965 | \$80,000 | \$80,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Gasoline Fuel | \$3,116 | \$4,500 | \$4,000 | (\$500) | -11.11% |
| Diesel Fuel | \$58,981 | \$65,000 | \$65,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| July 2023 Flood | \$38,938 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| July 2024 Flood | \$375,003 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Gravel Pit Operation | \$99,622 | \$70,000 | \$80,000 | \$10,000 | 14.29% |
| Ditch Stone | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Hydroseeding | \$0 | \$1,500 | \$1,000 | (\$500) | -33.33% |
| Mud Season Material | \$7,335 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Chloride | \$15,552 | \$12,000 | \$12,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| E. Hardwick Sidewalks | \$599 | \$599 | \$599 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Roadside Mowing | \$8,770 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Paving/Patching | \$5,470 | \$5,000 | \$5,500 | \$500 | 10.00% |
| Brush Cutting | \$9,600 | \$8,000 | \$6,000 | (\$2,000) | -25.00% |
| Downtown Maintenance | \$2,535 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Street Sweeping | \$5,250 | \$5,000 | \$5,500 | \$500 | 10.00% |
| Winter Sand | \$14,400 | \$15,000 | \$15,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Salt | \$113,247 | \$90,000 | \$100,000 | \$10,000 | 11.11% |
| Totals | \$1,570,301 | \$1,112,852 | \$1,157,652 | \$44,801 | 4.03% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Administration & Office Expenses

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF</u> |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Town Manager's Office Staff Payroll (4 FT/1 PT) | \$329,024 | \$428,431 | \$374,521 | (\$53,909) | -12.58% |
| Town Clerk's Office Payroll (2 FT) | \$111,119 | \$117,201 | \$122,190 | \$4,990 | 4.26% |
| Social Security/Child Care Tax | \$33,600 | \$40,595 | \$36,955 | (\$3,640) | -8.97% |
| Workers' Compensation | \$2,184 | \$2,535 | \$2,359 | (\$176) | -6.95% |
| Unemployment Insurance | \$436 | \$550 | \$414 | (\$136) | -24.69% |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$2,554 | \$2,991 | \$2,758 | (\$233) | -7.79% |
| Health Insurance | \$170,035 | \$197,226 | \$190,207 | (\$7,019) | -3.56% |
| Dental/Vision/Life/Disability | \$7,823 | \$8,135 | \$8,482 | \$346 | 4.25% |
| Retirement Expense | \$29,606 | \$37,316 | \$37,253 | (\$62) | -0.17% |
| Town Manager Supplies | \$6,509 | \$5,500 | \$6,500 | \$1,000 | 18.18% |
| Town Clerk Supplies | \$4,215 | \$4,000 | \$4,500 | \$500 | 12.50% |
| Town Report Expense | \$3,282 | \$3,800 | \$4,500 | \$700 | 18.42% |
| Conferences/Dues/Mileage | \$1,122 | \$1,000 | \$1,200 | \$200 | 20.00% |
| Tax Billing/Collection Exp. | \$1,076 | \$1,400 | \$1,200 | (\$200) | -14.29% |
| Telephone | \$3,589 | \$4,000 | \$4,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Advertising | \$2,992 | \$2,200 | \$2,500 | \$300 | 13.64% |
| Copier | \$0 | \$100 | \$4,500 | \$4,400 | 4400.00% |
| Election Expense | \$2,000 | \$500 | \$1,500 | \$1,000 | 200.00% |
| IT Services & Mgmt./Software | \$19,486 | \$39,000 | \$40,000 | \$1,000 | 2.56% |
| Budget Act Adjustment Expense | \$43,492 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Misc Grant Expense | \$11,575 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| July 2023 Flood | \$644 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| July 2024 Flood | \$12,424 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment Purchases | \$2,137 | \$3,000 | \$4,000 | \$1,000 | 33.33% |
| Assessor Supplies | \$2,288 | \$2,500 | \$5,500 | \$3,000 | 120.00% |
| Education/Training | \$656 | \$1,500 | \$1,200 | (\$300) | -20.00% |
| Zoning Supplies | \$3,669 | \$3,500 | \$3,800 | \$300 | 8.57% |
| Totals | \$807,535 | \$906,980 | \$860,040 | (\$46,940) | -5.18% |

Other Payroll

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Public Official's Liability | \$2,624 | \$2,918 | \$2,918 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Election Officials | \$50 | \$200 | \$200 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Planning/DRB Board | \$2,375 | \$2,800 | \$2,500 | (\$300) | -10.71% |
| Board of Civil Authority | \$36 | \$60 | \$700 | \$640 | 1066.67% |
| Moderator | \$0 | \$50 | \$50 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Select Board | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Energy Coordinator | \$50 | \$50 | \$50 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Solid Waste Rep | \$113 | \$150 | \$150 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| TEC - Conference Fees | \$0 | \$100 | \$100 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Town Service Officer | \$100 | \$150 | \$150 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Part Time Labor | \$0 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Health Officer | \$600 | \$600 | \$600 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Town Website Coordinator | \$600 | \$900 | \$1,000 | \$100 | 11.11% |
| Social Security Expense | \$1,007 | \$3,300 | \$1,200 | (\$2,100) | -63.64% |
| Totals | \$12,555 | \$16,778 | \$15,118 | (\$1,660) | -9.89% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Police Department

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF</u> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Police Payroll (6 including Chief) | \$451,380 | \$538,971 | \$538,246 | (\$725) | -0.13% |
| Overtime | \$71,332 | \$58,716 | \$70,000 | \$11,284 | 19.22% |
| Part-Time Officers (1-2) | \$48,945 | \$40,000 | \$45,000 | \$5,000 | 12.50% |
| Social Security Expense | \$45,904 | \$47,444 | \$48,602 | \$1,158 | 2.44% |
| Workers' Compensation | \$34,694 | \$36,405 | \$37,470 | \$1,065 | 2.92% |
| Unemployment Insurance | \$810 | \$982 | \$769 | (\$213) | -21.69% |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$20,561 | \$27,419 | \$22,206 | (\$5,213) | -19.01% |
| July 2024 Flood | \$2,959 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Health Insurance | \$59,273 | \$88,689 | \$106,451 | \$17,762 | 20.03% |
| Dental/Vision/Life/Disability | \$5,915 | \$8,004 | \$8,004 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Retirement Expense | \$55,496 | \$69,332 | \$72,077 | \$2,745 | 3.96% |
| Supplies | \$5,654 | \$7,500 | \$7,500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Training | \$6,729 | \$4,500 | \$6,000 | \$1,500 | 33.33% |
| Memberships | \$175 | \$150 | \$200 | \$50 | 33.33% |
| Legal Expenses | \$0 | \$1,500 | \$1,000 | (\$500) | -33.33% |
| IT Services/Email/Internet | \$3,013 | \$3,000 | \$6,000 | \$3,000 | 100.00% |
| Dispatch Services | \$31,238 | \$32,423 | \$33,449 | \$1,026 | 3.16% |
| Telephone | \$3,909 | \$4,000 | \$4,200 | \$200 | 5.00% |
| Vehicle Maintenance | \$13,312 | \$7,500 | \$8,500 | \$1,000 | 13.33% |
| Advertising | \$988 | \$500 | \$800 | \$300 | 60.00% |
| Radio Service | \$480 | \$800 | \$500 | (\$300) | -37.50% |
| Investigation Expense | \$600 | \$2,000 | \$1,000 | (\$1,000) | -50.00% |
| Uniforms (Cleaning) | \$56 | \$1,000 | \$500 | (\$500) | -50.00% |
| Uniform Purchases | \$3,168 | \$3,000 | \$3,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Gasoline | \$8,835 | \$11,000 | \$10,000 | (\$1,000) | -9.09% |
| Tires | \$1,965 | \$1,500 | \$1,600 | \$100 | 6.67% |
| Education | \$0 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment | \$6,041 | \$4,000 | \$9,000 | \$5,000 | 125.00% |
| Total PD Operating Exp. | \$883,433 | \$1,000,835 | \$1,042,574 | \$41,738 | 4.17% |
| SIU Expense | \$13 | \$1,750 | \$7,500 | \$5,750 | 328.57% |
| Enforcement/Safety/Misc. Grants | \$1,915 | \$7,500 | \$7,500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment Grants | \$6,090 | \$3,000 | \$5,000 | \$2,000 | 66.67% |
| Vest Grant | \$0 | \$1,500 | \$1,000 | (\$500) | -33.33% |
| Total Special PD Expenses | \$8,018 | \$13,750 | \$21,000 | \$7,250 | 52.73% |
| Total PD Expenses | \$891,451 | \$1,014,585 | \$1,063,574 | \$48,988 | 4.83% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Buildings

| <u>ACTUAL</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> | <u>\$</u> | <u>%</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> |

Memorial Building

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Custodial Services Expense | \$11,461 | \$11,060 | \$11,747 | \$ 687 | 6.21% |
| Custodial S.S. Expense | \$775 | \$823 | \$874 | \$ 51 | 6.20% |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$3,209 | \$3,580 | \$3,466 | \$ (114) | -3.19% |
| Operating Exp/Supplies | \$4,533 | \$4,400 | \$4,500 | \$ 100 | 2.27% |
| Building Maint./Repair | \$1,241 | \$4,300 | \$4,000 | \$ (300) | -6.98% |
| Utilities | \$4,988 | \$5,598 | \$5,637 | \$ 39 | 0.00% |
| Fuel Oil | \$9,126 | \$10,000 | \$9,500 | \$ (500) | -5.00% |
| Elevator/Fire Alarm | \$2,069 | \$2,500 | \$3,500 | \$ 1,000 | 40.00% |
| Generator | \$0 | \$100 | \$100 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Totals | \$37,401 | \$42,361 | \$43,324 | \$ 963 | 2.27% |

Public Safety Building

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| VLCT/PACIF | \$3,054 | \$3,440 | \$3,360 | \$ (80) | -2.33% |
| Operating Expenses | \$333 | \$750 | \$500 | \$ (250) | -33.33% |
| Building Maint./Repair | \$10,424 | \$1,500 | \$2,000 | \$ 500 | 33.33% |
| Utilities | \$3,237 | \$3,178 | \$3,658 | \$ 480 | 15.09% |
| Fuel Oil | \$4,958 | \$6,000 | \$5,500 | \$ (500) | -8.33% |
| Custodial Services Expense | \$7,372 | \$4,500 | \$4,500 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Custodial Serv. S.S. Expense | \$562 | \$335 | \$335 | \$ (0) | -0.06% |
| Totals | \$29,940 | \$19,703 | \$19,852 | \$ 149 | 0.76% |

Fire Station

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| VLCT/PACIF | \$3,383 | \$3,758 | \$3,758 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Utilities | \$2,708 | \$2,961 | \$3,060 | \$ 99 | 3.33% |
| Fuel Oil | \$6,556 | \$7,000 | \$7,000 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Building Maint./Repair | \$787 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Totals | \$13,433 | \$14,719 | \$14,818 | \$ 99 | 0.67% |

Highway Garage

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Heating Fuel | \$4,848 | \$1,985 | \$5,000 | \$ 3,015 | 151.89% |
| Building Maint./Repair | \$713 | \$3,000 | \$3,000 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Utilities - Garage | \$3,569 | \$4,144 | \$4,033 | \$ (111) | -2.67% |
| Totals | \$9,130 | \$9,129 | \$12,033 | \$ 2,904 | 31.81% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Buildings continued...

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF.</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Town House | | | | | |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$1,863 | \$2,288 | \$2,087 | -\$201 | -8.80% |
| Building Maint./Repair | \$554 | \$1,000 | \$750 | -\$250 | -25.00% |
| Utilities | \$422 | \$425 | \$450 | \$25 | 5.88% |
| Totals | \$2,839 | \$3,713 | \$3,287 | -\$426 | -11.48% |
| Historical Depot | | | | | |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$173 | \$190 | \$200 | \$10 | 5.26% |
| Building Maint./Repair | \$0 | \$300 | \$300 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Totals | \$173 | \$490 | \$500 | \$10 | 2.04% |
| Yellow Barn | | | | | |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$90 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Maintenance | \$847 | \$500 | \$800 | \$300 | 60.00% |
| Totals | \$936 | \$500 | \$800 | \$300 | 60.00% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Fire Department

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF.</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Labor | \$6,738 | \$7,000 | \$10,000 | \$3,000 | 42.86% |
| Social Security | \$578 | \$500 | \$744 | \$244 | 48.80% |
| Workers' Compensation | \$1,219 | \$1,256 | \$1,319 | \$63 | 5.00% |
| Liability Insurance | \$4,469 | \$4,888 | \$4,693 | (\$195) | -4.00% |
| Operating Exp./Supplies | \$1,566 | \$3,000 | \$2,000 | (\$1,000) | -33.33% |
| Dispatch Service | \$13,388 | \$14,158 | \$14,332 | \$174 | 1.23% |
| Phone/Internet | \$1,169 | \$1,300 | \$1,300 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Gasoline | \$0 | \$50 | \$50 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Diesel Fuel | \$1,225 | \$1,250 | \$1,350 | \$100 | 8.00% |
| July 2023 Flood | \$43,036 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment Purchases | \$4,799 | \$7,000 | \$7,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment Maintenance/Repair | \$10,034 | \$6,000 | \$13,000 | \$7,000 | 116.67% |
| Training | \$268 | \$300 | \$1,000 | \$700 | 233.33% |
| Totals | \$88,488 | \$46,702 | \$56,787 | \$10,085 | 21.60% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Line Items

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>\$</u> <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>%</u> <u>DIFF.</u> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Auditing | \$27,870 | \$29,000 | \$29,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Animal Control | \$2,594 | \$3,000 | \$3,500 | \$500 | 16.67% |
| Professional/Project Services | \$17,425 | \$15,000 | \$40,000 | \$25,000 | 166.67% |
| Assessor Services | \$43,200 | \$45,000 | \$45,600 | \$600 | 1.33% |
| NVDA | \$2,482 | \$2,774 | \$2,774 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| VLCT | \$5,101 | \$5,214 | \$5,366 | \$152 | 2.92% |
| Jeudevine Memorial Library | \$161,449 | \$181,010 | \$193,954 | \$12,944 | 7.15% |
| Memorial Day | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Caspian Lake | \$4,500 | \$4,750 | \$4,900 | \$150 | 3.16% |
| Cemeteries | \$24,566 | \$28,000 | \$30,000 | \$2,000 | 7.14% |
| Springfest | \$0 | \$0 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | 100.00% |
| Capital Equipment Fund | \$307,347 | \$175,000 | \$185,000 | \$10,000 | 5.71% |
| Capital Fire Equipment Fund | \$40,000 | \$50,000 | \$50,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Capital Road Fund | \$160,000 | \$160,000 | \$100,000 | (\$60,000) | -37.50% |
| Capital General Fund | \$100,000 | \$100,000 | \$207,000 | \$107,000 | 107.00% |
| Loader & Grader Payment | \$57,011 | \$57,012 | \$57,012 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Mackville Rd. Bond Payment | \$21,167 | \$20,519 | \$20,519 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Gravel Pit Bond Payment | \$43,637 | \$43,160 | \$42,204 | (\$956) | -2.22% |
| Library Bond Payment | \$34,997 | \$47,500 | \$46,424 | (\$1,076) | -2.27% |
| 2014 Fire Truck Bond Payment | \$30,386 | \$30,454 | \$30,454 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| 2021 Fire Truck Bond Payment | \$22,555 | \$21,079 | \$20,976 | (\$103) | -0.49% |
| Highway Garage Bond Payment | \$0 | \$0 | \$150,000 | \$150,000 | 100.00% |
| Tax Mapping | \$5,100 | \$4,000 | \$5,100 | \$1,100 | 27.50% |
| Solid Waste District | \$2,972 | \$2,920 | \$3,838 | \$918 | 31.44% |
| Streetlights | \$24,666 | \$24,562 | \$26,639 | \$2,077 | 8.46% |
| Memorial Park Electricity | \$110 | \$150 | \$150 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Employment Practices Ins. | \$5,586 | \$5,832 | \$5,809 | (\$23) | -0.39% |
| Community Crime Ins. | \$776 | \$836 | \$815 | (\$21) | -2.49% |
| Town Service Officer Expenses | \$0 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Hazard Mitigation | \$0 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Cyber Security | \$0 | \$1,500 | \$0 | (\$1,500) | -100.00% |
| Tax Sale Expense | \$0 | \$2,000 | \$1,000 | (\$1,000) | -50.00% |
| Tax Abatement Expense | \$7,182 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Insurance Deductibles | \$3,855 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Pedestrian Bridge Planning | \$11,150 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Conservation Commission | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equity Committee | \$1,393 | \$1,500 | \$500 | (\$1,000) | -66.67% |
| Recreation Dept. | \$19,351 | \$20,412 | \$16,180 | (\$4,232) | -20.73% |
| Hardwick Trails | \$10,958 | \$11,577 | \$11,833 | \$256 | 2.21% |
| County & Gravel Pit Taxes | \$34,960 | \$36,008 | \$36,358 | \$351 | 0.97% |
| Rescue Squad | \$95,820 | \$96,472 | \$107,910 | \$11,438 | 11.86% |
| Totals | \$1,331,166 | \$1,229,241 | \$1,493,815 | \$264,574 | 21.52% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Library Budget

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> | <u>\$</u> | <u>%</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> |
| Library Payroll (1 FT & 2 PT) | \$93,416 | \$108,169 | \$112,768 | \$4,600 | 4.25% |
| Social Security/FICA Expense | \$7,140 | \$8,048 | \$8,390 | \$342 | 4.25% |
| Worker's Comp | \$1,004 | \$725 | \$1,100 | \$375 | 51.79% |
| Unemployment | \$300 | \$319 | \$319 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| VLCT/PACIF | \$450 | \$702 | \$550 | (\$152) | -21.69% |
| Health Insurance - Librarian only | \$19,562 | \$22,804 | \$23,486 | \$682 | 2.99% |
| Dental/Vision/Life/Disability | \$992 | \$1,547 | \$1,065 | (\$481) | -31.12% |
| Retirement (2) | \$3,647 | \$6,059 | \$6,534 | \$475 | 7.84% |
| Books- Adult | \$3,355 | \$3,750 | \$3,950 | \$200 | 5.33% |
| Books - Juvenile | \$2,496 | \$2,200 | \$2,200 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Books - Young Adult | \$698 | \$700 | \$700 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Magazines- Adult | \$424 | \$400 | \$400 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Audio books/ DVDs - Adult | \$214 | \$400 | \$200 | (\$200) | -50.00% |
| Audio books/ DVDs - Juvenile | \$344 | \$200 | \$100 | (\$100) | -50.00% |
| Computer Software/Technology | \$316 | \$400 | \$300 | (\$100) | -25.00% |
| Computer Databases | \$1,993 | \$1,800 | \$2,100 | \$300 | 16.67% |
| Courier Expense | \$688 | \$600 | \$700 | \$100 | 16.67% |
| Internet Expense | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment | \$135 | \$200 | \$150 | (\$50) | -25.00% |
| Telephone/Elevator Alarm & Monitor | \$1,636 | \$1,700 | \$2,500 | \$800 | 47.06% |
| Supplies - General | \$2,384 | \$2,500 | \$2,500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Youth Supplies | \$654 | \$700 | \$700 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Postage | \$552 | \$725 | \$450 | (\$275) | -37.93% |
| Professional Services | \$700 | \$200 | \$400 | \$200 | 100.00% |
| Conferences / Memberships | \$425 | \$400 | \$400 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Mileage | \$138 | \$200 | \$150 | (\$50) | -25.00% |
| Advertising | \$195 | \$150 | \$50 | (\$100) | -66.67% |
| Restricted Donation Expense | \$117 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Jeudevine Friends Expense | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Internet Transition Grant Expense | \$3,268 | \$3,000 | \$3,000 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Interlibrary Grant Expense | \$684 | \$650 | \$650 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Misc. Grant Expense | \$10,137 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Total Operating Budget | \$158,065 | \$169,748 | \$176,312 | \$6,565 | 3.87% |
| Custodial Services Expense | \$5,121 | \$9,273 | \$9,114 | (\$159) | -1.71% |
| Custodial Services S.S. Expense | \$503 | \$690 | \$678 | (\$12) | -1.71% |
| Building Insurance | \$1,374 | \$2,500 | \$10,000 | \$7,500 | 300.00% |
| Electricity | \$5,170 | \$2,800 | \$7,500 | \$4,700 | 167.86% |
| Fuel Oil | \$3,526 | \$6,000 | \$3,000 | (\$3,000) | -50.00% |
| Water/Sewer | \$1,198 | \$750 | \$900 | \$150 | 20.00% |
| Maintenance Expense | \$1,876 | \$2,500 | \$2,000 | (\$500) | -20.00% |
| Total Library Building Budget | \$18,769 | \$24,513 | \$33,192 | \$8,679 | 35.41% |
| Friends of Jeudevine Donations | \$ - | | | | |
| Restricted Donations | \$ (911.06) | | | | |
| Interest on Investments | \$ (1,124.00) | \$ (500.00) | \$ (800.00) | | |
| Grant Income | \$ (14,225.08) | \$ (5,000.00) | \$ (5,000.00) | | |
| Courier Revenue | \$ (281.28) | \$ (250.00) | \$ (250.00) | | |
| Fund Balance Contribution | | \$ (3,000.00) | \$ (4,000.00) | | |
| Misc. Income | \$ (3,522.21) | \$ (4,500.00) | \$ (5,500.00) | | |
| Town Appropriation | \$161,449 | \$181,010 | \$193,954 | \$12,944 | 7.15% |
| Fund Balance as of 06.30.2025 | 9,495 | | | | |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Recreation Budget

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> | <u>\$</u> | <u>%</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> |
| Recreation Coordinator | \$2,960 | \$5,000 | \$0 | (\$5,000) | -100.00% |
| Recreation Committee Stipends | \$0 | \$0 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | 100.00% |
| Social Security/FICA | \$240 | \$372 | \$0 | (\$372) | -100.00% |
| VLCT Workers Comp/Insurance | \$116 | \$120 | \$0 | (\$120) | -100.00% |
| VLCT Unemployment Insurance | \$30 | \$40 | \$0 | (\$40) | -100.00% |
| VLCT PACIF/Liability Insurance | \$71 | \$80 | \$80 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Community Programming | \$15,899 | \$14,500 | \$5,500 | (\$9,000) | -62.07% |
| Green- Up Day | \$0 | \$0 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | 100.00% |
| Teach America to Swim | \$0 | \$0 | \$7,000 | \$7,000 | 100.00% |
| Supplies and Advertising | \$0 | \$300 | \$500 | \$200 | 66.67% |
| Maintenance | \$35 | \$0 | \$100 | \$100 | 100.00% |
| Total Expenses | \$19,351 | \$20,412 | \$16,180 | -\$4,232 | -20.73% |

2026-2027 HARDWICK TOWN BUDGET

Trails Budget

| | <u>ACTUAL</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> | <u>PROPOSED</u> | <u>\$</u> | <u>%</u> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <u>2024-2025</u> | <u>2025-2026</u> | <u>2026-2027</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> | <u>DIFF.</u> |
| Trails Salaries | \$3,622 | \$3,750 | \$3,920 | \$170 | 4.53% |
| Social Security/Child Care Tax | \$292 | \$279 | \$292 | \$13 | 4.53% |
| Trail Repair & New Construction | \$41 | \$800 | \$800 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Equipment Repair and Maintenance | \$1,868 | \$900 | \$1,200 | \$300 | 33.33% |
| Gas, Oil and Diesel | \$457 | \$500 | \$500 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| Publicity/Advertising/Signage & Maps | \$215 | \$600 | \$400 | (\$200) | -33.33% |
| Program and Activities | \$2,692 | \$2,800 | \$2,800 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| VLCT Workers Comp/Insurance | \$140 | \$150 | \$160 | \$10 | 6.67% |
| VLCT Unemployment Insurance | \$30 | \$50 | \$50 | \$0 | 0.00% |
| VLCT PACIF/Liability Insurance | \$1,599 | \$1,748 | \$1,711 | (\$37) | -2.12% |
| TOTALS | \$10,958 | \$11,577 | \$11,833 | \$256 | 2.21% |

**TOWN OF HARDWICK
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT PURCHASE SCHEDULE**

| YEAR | Dump Truck 1 | Dump Truck 2 | Dump Truck 3 | Dump Truck 4 | F-550 Truck 5 | F250 Truck 6 | F150 Truck 7 | Lawn Mower | Excavator | Toolcat | Police Cruiser | SPEND TOTAL | FUNDS SET ASIDE | ACCOUNT BALANCE |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Bal 6/30/25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | \$ 247,682 |
| 2026 | | | | \$280,000 | | | | | | | \$55,000 | \$335,000 | \$175,000 | \$87,682 |
| 2027 | | \$150,000 | | | | | | | | | \$65,000 | \$215,000 | \$185,000 | \$57,682 |
| 2028 | | | | | | | | \$20,000 | | \$65,000 | \$65,000 | \$150,000 | \$200,000 | \$107,682 |
| 2029 | | | | | | \$70,000 | | | | | \$66,000 | \$136,000 | \$215,000 | \$186,682 |
| 2030 | | | | | \$130,000 | | \$55,000 | | | | | \$185,000 | \$230,000 | \$231,682 |
| 2031 | | | \$290,000 | | | | | | | | \$66,000 | \$356,000 | \$245,000 | \$120,682 |
| 2032 | \$290,000 | | | | | | | | | | \$68,000 | \$358,000 | \$260,000 | \$22,682 |
| 2033 | | | | | | | | | | | \$68,000 | \$68,000 | \$265,000 | \$219,682 |
| 2034 | | | | | | | | | | \$75,000 | \$70,000 | \$145,000 | \$270,000 | \$344,682 |
| 2035 | | | | | | | | \$20,000 | | | | \$20,000 | \$275,000 | \$599,682 |
| 2036 | | | \$0 | \$300,000 | | | | | | | \$70,000 | \$370,000 | \$280,000 | \$509,682 |
| 2037 | | \$170,000 | | | \$140,000 | | | | | | \$72,000 | \$382,000 | \$285,000 | \$412,682 |
| 2038 | | | | | | | | | \$200,000 | | \$72,000 | \$272,000 | \$290,000 | \$430,682 |
| 2039 | | | | | | \$80,000 | | | | | \$74,000 | \$154,000 | \$295,000 | \$571,682 |
| 2040 | | | | | | | \$60,000 | | | \$80,000 | | \$140,000 | \$300,000 | \$731,682 |
| 2041 | | | \$300,000 | | | | | | | | \$74,000 | \$374,000 | \$305,000 | \$662,682 |
| 2042 | \$300,000 | | | | | | | \$20,000 | | | \$76,000 | \$396,000 | \$310,000 | \$576,682 |
| 2043 | | | | | | | | | | | \$76,000 | \$76,000 | \$315,000 | \$815,682 |
| 2044 | | | | | \$150,000 | | | | | | \$78,000 | \$228,000 | \$320,000 | \$907,682 |
| 2045 | | | | | | | | | | | | \$0 | \$325,000 | \$1,232,682 |
| 2046 | | | | | | | | | | \$85,000 | \$78,000 | \$163,000 | \$330,000 | \$1,399,682 |

- 1) Increases in costs are based on a "best guess" scenario with input from dealers
- 2) Loader & Grader purchased in Summer 2023. Replace in FY 2038. Borrow.
- 3) Police Cruisers traded or replaced about every 5 years

- 5) Truck 5 is traded about every 7 years
- 6) Truck 6 and 7 are traded about every 10 years
- 7) Excavator purchased 2023. Replace in FY2038.

TOWN OF HARDWICK
CAPITAL FIRE EQUIPMENT PURCHASE SCHEDULE

| YEAR | Ladder L1 | Pumper E1 | Fire E2 | Tanker W1 | SPEND TOTAL | FUNDS SET ASIDE | ACCOUNT BALANCE |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Bal 6/30/25 | | | | | | | \$110,423 |
| 2026 | | | | | \$0 | \$50,000 | \$160,423 |
| 2027 | | | | | \$0 | \$50,000 | \$210,423 |
| 2028 | | | | | \$0 | \$60,000 | \$270,423 |
| 2029 | | | | | \$0 | \$70,000 | \$340,423 |
| 2030 | | | | | \$0 | \$80,000 | \$420,423 |
| 2031 | | | | | \$0 | \$90,000 | \$510,423 |
| 2032 | | | | \$400,000 | \$400,000 | \$100,000 | \$210,423 |
| 2033 | | | | | \$0 | \$110,000 | \$320,423 |
| 2034 | | | | | \$0 | \$120,000 | \$440,423 |
| 2035 | | | | | \$0 | \$130,000 | \$570,423 |
| 2036 | | \$0 | | | \$0 | \$140,000 | \$710,423 |
| 2037 | | | | | \$0 | \$150,000 | \$860,423 |
| 2038 | | | | | \$0 | \$155,000 | \$1,015,423 |
| 2039 | | \$1,000,000 | | | \$1,000,000 | \$160,000 | \$175,423 |
| 2040 | | | | | \$0 | \$165,000 | \$340,423 |
| 2041 | | | | | \$0 | \$170,000 | \$510,423 |
| 2042 | | | | | \$0 | \$175,000 | \$685,423 |
| 2043 | | | | | \$0 | \$180,000 | \$865,423 |
| 2044 | | | | | \$0 | \$185,000 | \$1,050,423 |
| 2045 | \$ 700,000 | | | | \$700,000 | \$190,000 | \$540,423 |
| 2046 | | | \$ 600,000 | | \$600,000 | \$195,000 | \$135,423 |

- 1) Ladder Truck L1 is replaced every 25 years. Replace in 2045.
- 2) Pumper E1 is replaced every 25 years. Replace in 2039.
- 3) Pumper E2 is replaced every 25 years. Replace in 2046.
- 4) Tanker W1 is replaced every 25 years. Replace in 2032.
- 5) These are best guess estimates for used equipment.

TOWN OF HARDWICK
CAPITAL ROAD SCHEDULE

| | Center | Hardwick | Paving | Spend | Funds | Account |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| Year | Road | Street | (see below) | Total | Set Aside | Balance |
| Bal 6/30/25 | | | | | | \$454,391 |
| 2026 | -\$490,000 | | \$0 | -\$490,000 | \$160,000 | \$124,391 |
| 2027 | | | -\$110,000 | -\$110,000 | \$100,000 | \$114,391 |
| 2028 | | | -\$100,000 | -\$100,000 | \$110,000 | \$124,391 |
| 2029 | | | -\$80,000 | -\$80,000 | \$110,000 | \$154,391 |
| 2030 | | | -\$80,000 | -\$80,000 | \$115,000 | \$189,391 |
| 2031 | | | -\$70,000 | -\$70,000 | \$115,000 | \$234,391 |
| 2032 | | -\$325,000 | | -\$325,000 | \$115,000 | \$24,391 |
| 2033 | | | -\$60,000 | -\$60,000 | \$120,000 | \$84,391 |
| 2033 | | 0 | -\$60,000 | -\$60,000 | \$120,000 | \$144,391 |
| 2034 | | | -\$60,000 | -\$60,000 | \$120,000 | \$204,391 |
| 2035 | | | -\$60,000 | -\$60,000 | \$125,000 | \$269,391 |
| 2036 | | | -\$60,000 | -\$60,000 | \$125,000 | \$334,391 |
| 2037 | | | -\$70,000 | -\$70,000 | \$125,000 | \$389,391 |
| 2038 | | | -\$70,000 | -\$70,000 | \$130,000 | \$449,391 |
| 2039 | | | -\$70,000 | -\$70,000 | \$130,000 | \$509,391 |
| 2040 | | | -\$70,000 | -\$70,000 | \$130,000 | \$569,391 |
| 2041 | | | -\$70,000 | -\$70,000 | \$135,000 | \$634,391 |
| 2042 | -\$500,000 | | | -\$500,000 | \$135,000 | \$269,391 |

Paving Projects:

FY 2027: Marshall St., Perry Ln, Buffalo St., W. Church St.
FY 2028: West Hill Rd.(partial) Wakefield St., High St.
FY 2029: To Be Determined
FY 2030: To Be Determined
FY 2031: To Be Determined

**Prices based on current market prices; increases are expected, schedule may vary depending on price*

**Conditions of roads may change, resulting in a change to the paving schedule*

Town of Hardwick Capital Improvements Three-Year Plan

| | Balance 6/30/2025 | <i>FY 2026 Last Year</i> | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 | Future Balance |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Buildings | | | | | | |
| Memorial Building | \$33,897 | \$12,000 | \$12,000 | \$12,000 | \$12,000 | \$81,897 |
| Public Safety Building | \$12,523 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$32,523 |
| Highway Garage | \$79,672 | \$30,000 | \$35,000 | \$40,000 | \$45,000 | \$229,672 |
| Fire Department | \$20,168 | \$2,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$22,168 |
| Library | \$26,131 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$26,131 |
| Town House | \$21,129 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$41,129 |
| Carey Rd. Property | \$1,376 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$1,376 |
| Historical Depot | \$12,730 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$1,000 | \$16,730 |
| Subtotal | \$207,626 | \$55,000 | \$58,000 | \$63,000 | \$68,000 | \$451,626 |
| Public Works | | | | | | |
| Gravel Pit Reclaim | \$14,306 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$14,306 |
| Sidewalk Expense | \$58,672 | \$10,000 | \$12,000 | \$14,000 | \$16,000 | \$110,672 |
| Guardrails | \$21,992 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | \$41,992 |
| Road Signs/Crosswalks | \$5,460 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$13,460 |
| Bridge #4 East Hardwick | \$151,034 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$191,034 |
| Bridge Fund + FEMA Local Share | \$35,147 | \$10,000 | \$110,000 | \$110,000 | \$110,000 | \$375,147 |
| Subtotal | \$286,611 | \$37,000 | \$139,000 | \$141,000 | \$143,000 | \$746,611 |
| General Government | | | | | | |
| Trails Capital Account | \$22,691 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$22,691 |
| Recreation Capital Fund | \$6,512 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$6,512 |
| Fire Department Equipment/Clothing | \$15,280 | \$8,000 | \$8,000 | \$8,000 | \$8,000 | \$47,280 |
| Vault Expenses | \$16,545 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$16,545 |
| Cemetery Upgrades | \$22,500 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$22,500 |
| Police Equipment | \$6,061 | \$0 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | \$12,061 |
| Accrued Interest | \$31,619 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$31,619 |
| Subtotal | \$121,208 | \$8,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$159,208 |
| CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND | \$615,445 | \$100,000 | \$207,000 | \$214,000 | \$221,000 | \$1,357,445 |

General Fund Balance

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Fund Balance as of June 30, 2024: | \$ 739,457 |
| Fund Balance Used: | \$ 145,050 |
| Fund Balance as of June 30, 2025: | \$ 594,407 |

In FY 2025, the Town was fortunate to have a fund balance to assist us with covering a few hundred thousand dollars in flood damage without borrowing money. At the close of FY 2025, the Town had used \$145,050 of the fund balance. The Town committed to use \$50,000 of the fund balance in FY2025 to offset the tax rate. The fund balance is currently \$594,407 or about 12% of the proposed FY 2027 Town budget. It is generally accepted that the fund balance should be 15% of the municipal budget. The Town fund balance policy also says the *goal* is 15%. The fund balance serves as a reserve to help the Town through significant budget shortfalls or through natural or human triggered disasters. It helped us significantly with the July 2023 and 2024 floods.

Grant Revenue Report

The Town of Hardwick has been the recipient of many grants that support both regular operations and special programs/projects. Grants are an attractive form of funding for projects and various departments. During the fiscal year, we had more than 40 active grants at any given time. Below is a summary of the grant revenue by department that we received in Fiscal Year 2025:

| <u>Purpose</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|--|---------------|
| Yellow Barn Project | \$ 509,579 |
| Flood Buyouts/Resiliency Projects | \$ 265,350 |
| Flood Recovery: FEMA Reimbursements for damage | \$ 458,399 |
| Police Department | \$ 9,766 |
| Highway Department : Grant in Aid & Sidewalk grant | \$ 24,976 |
| Town Clerk: Election Grant | \$ 5,000 |
| Library: Operations | \$ 14,225 |
| Library: Building Grants/Friends of Jeudevine Grant | \$ 1,583,431 |
| Green Up Day- CVSWMD | \$ 400 |
| Sewer: <i>Debt forgiveness</i> for Upgrade Project & Feasibility Study | \$ 126,710 |
| Water: <i>Debt forgiveness</i> for Water Service Inventory Project | \$ 49,246 |
| Better Connections Grant for East Hardwick | \$ 47,658 |
| Vermont Community Foundation: Community Center improvements | \$ 25,000 |
| Vermont Community Foundation: LVRT | \$ 2,000 |
| USDA RBDG Grant for Pedestrian Bridge | \$ 200,000 |
| Municipal Planning Grant - Bylaw modernization | \$ 5,911 |
| Vermont Community Foundation: Equity Committee | \$ 3,300 |
| | \$ 3,330,952 |

AWARE

AWARE was established in 1984 in Hardwick in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, located at the cross-roads of four counties (Caledonia, Lamoille, Orleans, Washington). AWARE's mission strives to prevent and heal the trauma of domestic and sexual violence in the greater Hardwick area in such a way that all people are empowered to act towards themselves and others with awareness, empathy, respect and personal responsibility.

AWARE focuses on two priorities: crisis intervention and prevention education. Advocates are first responders in crisis situations involving domestic and sexual violence, operating a 24 hour hotline where callers can speak to an advocate who can inform them of their legal rights and options, be connected to other community resources, and provide immediate necessary assistance which may include access to financial assistance and safe haven. Victims experiencing abuse who call our hotline, or are referred by police, family, or friends, need immediate and concentrated assistance, support, and information. AWARE advocates can provide services and support from the initial emergency to long-term planning and support. AWARE also provides in-depth legal advocacy services and support and information to families of victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. AWARE's crisis and prevention programs focus on increasing participants' knowledge about community resources and to provide them with information. Programs are designed to intervene effectively in crisis situations and to educate all segments of the community to participate in prevention of domestic and sexual violence.

During the past year, AWARE served 230 women, men, and children who were directly affected by violence. Additionally, they helped 90 children who were exposed to violence, and AWARE responded to 1,129 hotline and in-person requests for assistance. The organization educated over 2,600 individuals through community events and outreach programs focused on domestic and sexual violence.

Those served by AWARE received a variety of services, including crisis intervention, legal support and advocacy, information and referrals, safety planning, emergency provisions, housing assistance, transportation, and education about domestic and sexual violence.

*AWARE
Domestic and Sexual Violence Services
P.O. Box 307
Hardwick, VT 05843
(802) 472-6463
AWAREVT.org*

Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice

Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice (CHHC) is Northern Counties Health Care's (NCHC) certified Medicare and Medicaid comprehensive Home Care and Hospice division.

Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice has proudly served the residents of Caledonia and Southern Essex counties since 1968. Our mission is to provide high quality, accessible, patient-centered health care, and our vision is to be a key partner in building healthy families and thriving communities.

In the last year, Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice was honored to provide 3146 visits to 146 residents of Hardwick, VT. While working with residents, we provided physical, occupational, and speech therapies. We provided physicians, skilled nursing, physical and occupational therapy, medical social work, home health aide, and homemaker visits. We work together with primary care physicians so that care is specific and structured to treatment goals.

2026 Town Appropriation Visit Statistics Hardwick, VT

- # of residents served: **146**
- Home Care (Therapy, Nursing, MSW): **2307 visits**
- Long Term Care (Case Management, Personal Care, Respite): **312 visits**
- Hospice (Nursing, Therapy, Personal Care, Respite): **400 visits**
- Maternal Child Health: **127 visits**

Total Visits in Hardwick, VT = 3146 visits

To learn more about our programs and services please visit www.nchcvt.org or call (802) 748-8116. Thank you!

Center for an Agricultural Economy

The Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) is a nonprofit based in Hardwick and works with numerous farms, businesses and schools in Hardwick. CAE also owns and operates the Vermont Food Venture Center and leases half the new Food Hub building by the Yellow Barn. In that building, CAE has a community kitchen, offices, and operates a local food distribution service branded as Farm Connex delivery services. We have freezer and cooler space for clients, farmers, and community programs. CAE is also the owner of the 15-acre Atkins Field community greenspace on Granite Street in Hardwick. While our organization serves farmers and small food businesses all over the state through its work to create and bolster local food systems, CAE's community programs are centered here in Hardwick. The heart of these programs is at Atkins Field. The public greenspace hosts numerous events, workshops, and opportunities to engage and connect to the community and nature. Since CAE took ownership of the space in 2008, its use by the community as a place to meet, celebrate, engage, and learn has grown exponentially with the COVID-19 pandemic only solidifying its status as a critical community resource.

We deeply value our partnerships with the Town of Hardwick, the Hardwick Area Food Pantry, and the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union. Together, we can accomplish much more for our community than any of us can do alone. We are asking for a town appropriation of \$4,000 to support the costs of keeping the site publicly accessible. This will cover less than half the annual cost of upkeep and improvements of this property that CAE has been investing in since 2008. As a nonprofit organization, CAE is reliant on individual contributions for about a third of our operating budget, which primarily supports the cost of our program activities. In contrast, our request to the Town is specifically to help with the site maintenance associated with public access, which includes mowing, wi-fi, electricity, and porta potty rental costs. Thank you for your consideration.

*Jon Ramsay
Executive Director*

Craftsbury Community Care Center

The Craftsbury Community Care Center is a non-profit, non-denominational, tax-exempt organization which provides a safe, caring, home-like and affordable residence for elders who can no longer live independently. It encourages independence, activities, and involvement with family, friends, and the larger community. Over 30 years many Hardwick residents have called the Care Center their home, including several current residents.

In 2025 we continued rebuilding our Board as new members began learning the operational aspects of the Care Center as well as offering up their areas of expertise. We are fortunate to have 3 members of the Hardwick community contributing to our mission through board participation.

The Center offers both employment and volunteer opportunities for residents in Hardwick. The Center's involvement in the Hardwick community also includes active and regular patronage of community businesses as well as collaboration with Hazen Union and the Kingdom Country Farmers 4-H Club for events. As residents watch and participate in events with youth, their smiles, laughter and excitement warm the hearts of all involved. Residents have enjoyed a variety of enriching activities this year including morning exercise class, tai chi, tea & trivia, a trip to Summersweet Garden Nursery, an outing at Caspian Lake, monthly interactions with Sapling's children's program, performance by Circus Smirkus, a Shake your Soul Dance Class, musical events, cognitive sustaining word games, meditation, library collaborations, and monthly Reiki sessions to name a few.

One third of our twenty-four private rooms are reserved for elders of low and moderate income. In order to remain affordable for all, the Center relies on donations from community members and towns in the Northeast Kingdom whose residents we serve.

Your support and generosity assist in meeting our commitment to providing an affordable, well-maintained residence that provides enrichment to those that reside here. The Craftsbury Community Care Center is the only residential care center in our immediate area and provides an invaluable and necessary service in our NEK community. Our inclusion in the Town appropriation will be gratefully welcomed by the Board, Staff, and Residents of the Center. Thank you.

*Geoffrey Bok, President of Board of Directors
Kim Roberge, Executive Director*

Greensboro Nursing Home

The Greensboro Nursing Home is a 30 bed skilled nursing rehabilitation and long-term care facility. As a not-for-profit organization, our only priority is to provide high quality care to our residents in a caring, homelike environment. The three towns which are the source of the greatest number of admissions to GNH are Greensboro, Hardwick, and Craftsbury, although we accept smaller numbers of admissions from towns across the Northeast Kingdom and the rest of Vermont. We are one of the largest employers in the area and are very proud of our dedicated staff who work hard to take care of the elderly and disabled in our community.

2025 has been a challenging year for the Greensboro Nursing Home and for nursing homes across Vermont and the country. In the past fiscal year our operating expenses were \$4,483,639 and we ended the fiscal year \$145,806, in the red. Shortages of nurses and nurses' aides forced many institutions, including GNH, to rely on very expensive travel contract nurses and nurses' aides. In addition, Medicaid, even before any projected federal funding cuts, has reduced reimbursement rates across the state, ours by almost 20%, a significant impact, as most of our residents are on Medicaid for long term care. Our new Executive Director/LNH Administrator, Amy Braun began working hard to replace travel agency nurses with full time, local staff, and in doing so decreased our contract nurse expenses by 90% over the past six months. She is working with the State of Vermont to try to mitigate the reductions in Medicaid reimbursement and to obtain additional financial relief. As a result of her efforts, we have been able to maintain the low resident-to-caregiver ratio that supports a high quality of life for the residents and expect to reverse the deficit in the current fiscal year.

The summer floods of 2023 and 2024 did notable damage to the grounds, flooded the basement, and revealed issues with drainage around the building. We resurfaced the driveway and parking lot and installed French drains on the east side of the building to prevent future basement flooding. We continue to replace worn exterior siding and to renovate individual resident rooms to give them a more home-like feel. We plan to replace the old walk-in refrigerator on which our kitchen and meal service depend. Our kitchen staff continue to produce approximately 12,000 nutritious meals annually to support the Meals on Wheels program in Greensboro and Hardwick.

The Board of Trustees of Greensboro Nursing Home is deeply grateful to the strong community support we have received from many donors. We have received critical support from the Town of Greensboro, the Greensboro Association, the Wisdom Connection, the Pleasants Fund, and the Towns of Hardwick and Craftsbury. We are also very grateful for the generous support we receive from many community organizations and businesses.

Greensboro Nursing Home exists to serve the community; if you have questions about the nursing home, about resources for elder care or rehabilitation in the area, if you would like to join the great team at Greensboro Nursing Home, or if you would consider volunteering to serve on the Board of Trustees, please be in touch.

*Bill Rogers
Board President*

Hardwick Area Food Pantry

In 2025 the Hardwick Area Food Pantry (HAFP) continued to serve members in our community from our three of our hub sites in Hardwick, Craftsbury, and Albany, as well as our delivery program. Participation and our reach has increased this year as many people in our community feel the stress of rising costs.

Anyone is welcome to visit the pantry, and you can find our hours on our website or by calling 802-472-5940. Food boxes are available for delivery to families who face transportation and other challenges that prohibit them from getting to the pantry during open hours.

HAFP prides itself in being able to purchase food from local farmers and we thank the many local producers who donate veggies, eggs, dairy products and more throughout the year. In the coming year we will continue to prioritize serving our communities through consistent and diverse food choices. We are also deeply grateful for our staff, as well as our volunteers, donors, and towns who are committed to providing healthy food to our neighbors in need and expanding food access and choice in the region.

Hardwick Community Television (HCTV) Comcast Channel 1080

Hardwick Community Television is committed to fulfilling the vision of a local nonprofit TV station, covering local government, sports, and community events in the greater Hardwick area.

In 2025, HCTV maintained full accessibility to locally made programs. This includes Hazen Varsity Basketball, Baseball and Soccer games, Hardwick Select Board, Woodbury Select Board, Hardwick Electric Board, the Memorial Day Parade, Jeudevine Library Events and more. Each program is archived on Vimeo, YouTube and our website at www.hctv.us. Programs are run 24/7 on Comcast channel 1080. Our livestreams can be viewed on YouTube, and on channel 1080. We work hard to make these local programs accessible by sharing links to them on our Facebook page, and on the front page of our website.

While HCTV runs programs 24/7, many of these programs are produced by other Vermont media stations. Our goal for 2026 is to run mostly programs that are produced by us to promote our community! However, we operate on an annual budget of under \$40,000 and already produce over 130 programs annually. With a very small budget, and crew, we need more involvement from the community to make that happen. We believe that we are a great asset for this amazing community and want to be utilized.

HCTV is working towards a future where local organizations, business owners, community leaders, students, teachers, and YOU can work together to spread media, entertainment, and news through our platforms. Our crew is capable of training in media production, editing, and camera work, and we are eager to share our knowledge and equipment to make this future happen!

The HCTV Board of Directors and crew thank you, the citizens of Hardwick, for your support. Your feedback is always welcome. If you would like to volunteer your time, and learn a valuable new skill, email us at info@hctv.us.

*Lance MacKenzie
Executive Director*

Hardwick Historical Society (HHS)

Special Projects: What good are old pictures? Our old pictures of Wolcott Street proved that the Fire Station has suffered repeated floods. Proving that 1) saved the town \$10,000 - \$12,000 in engineering research to determine whether the area flooded and 2) confirmed the town's eligibility for three to six million dollars in federal support to move the fire station to a site that doesn't flood. Our old pictures of Brush Street show that the reinforced wall by the river withstood the 1927 flood and does not need replacing. That means reinforcing that area of riverbank will cost the town \$10,000 to \$15,000 less than expected because of work that does not need doing. Don't throw away old pictures; give them to the HHS.

Collections: HCTV hosts the French Heritage videos on its Vimeo account <<https://hctv.us/hardwick-french-heritage-gatherings/>>, and Bob Goudreau is heading up a project to have the French speech translated so we can add them as subtitles. It's good winter work. Otherwise, volunteers continue to process the collections at the Depot.

Please, before you clean out your attic/basement/closets/garage of all that old stuff, give me an opportunity to look for historical treasures in it. (edow1@protonmail.com or 802-472-6424)

Personnel: Volunteers logged 966 hours of free labor *at the Depot*. PLUS uncounted hours at home or at outside venues. At minimum wage, \$14.01 per hour, the volunteers at the Depot add about \$13,534 to our budget. Thank you: Suzanne Bader, Harry Besett, Mary Braun, Brendan Buckley, Mike Clark, Ross Connelly, Diane Demers, Maureen Demers, Elizabeth Dow, Skip Duncan, Elaine Gendron, Ursa Goldenrose, Ted Graham, Pat Hussey, Kris Lance, Mike Lance, Jeff LeCours, Jodi Lew-Smith, Joscelyne Lussier, Tracy Martin, Gary Michaels, Judy Nudd, Dave O'Brien, Gail O'Brien, Sarah Remick, Mark Sassi, Kathleen Sampson, Norma Spaulding, Emily Willems.

Publications: Every member gets *The Hardwick Historical Society Journal*, published quarterly since 2008. ***We warmly invite articles and manuscripts from people who have stories to tell about life in Hardwick.***

Exhibits: The changing exhibits this year featured pictures and artifacts showing how the people of Hardwick endured winter (coping with ice, snow, and cold) and enjoyed winter (playing in the ice and snow) over the past 150 years.

Visitors: During our open hours this year, 363 people stopped to look around. Consider coming to see us next summer, and if you have research we can help you with, contact us at info@hardwickvthistory.org and we will set up an appointment.

*Elizabeth H. Dow
President*

Justice For Dogs

Justice For Dogs (and cats too), a local animal rescue continues with its mission of helping only local animals including Hardwick animals and their residents. Our rescued animals are never brought in for adoption from out of state. Our mission is to rescue only local dogs and cats whether the animals are being surrendered, rescued from abusive situations, found lost with no owner identified, abandoned animals, or of a result that the animal's owner died. Justice For Dogs operates with all volunteers with no paid staff at all. Since there are many animals in need of rescue, JFD has a lot of expenses in caring for them. Veterinarian costs include all vaccines, spaying and neutering, deworm and flea medication and any other medical needs that must be addressed prior to adoption. If just one cat comes in from Hardwick, the current rate to provide veterinarian services for that one cat ranges from \$160 to \$200. If a Hardwick dog comes into Justice For Dogs care, it will cost between \$512 and \$689 for veterinarian services prior to being adopted. In Hardwick this year Justice For Dogs assisted with seven dogs. As always, Justice For Dogs continues to assist folks when they call Justice seeking information regarding animals. Some services that are provided include but not limited to are as follows: individual animal owners assistance provided on a case by case situation when needed for their pets, pet food provided to the food shelf, networking cruelty cases, rescuing abused animals and those needing new homes, adoption and vetting of the local animals that come into Justice's care. Justice For Dogs sincerely wishes to thank Hardwick taxpayers, community businesses, and dedicated volunteers, who work tirelessly for the animals. We thank the Hardwick taxpayers for your support through the town's appropriation, which helps us tremendously with the work that we do. Justice For Dogs always welcomes new volunteers to work with us in a variety of ways. We can be reached at (802) 472-3894 or check us out on www.facebook.com/justicefordogs. Our email address is justicefordogs@aol.com

Lamoille Family Center

promotes the well-being of Lamoille Valley children, youth and families and supports them in meeting life's challenges through education, direct services, and advocacy.

Since 1976, thousands of people across Lamoille Valley have turned to Lamoille Family Center for support. Our programs include home visiting, parent education, playgroups, childcare financial assistance and support, prevention programming, youth services and emergency assistance.

Many of the families we serve face challenges such as poverty, isolation, substance misuse and trauma. Our dedicated staff work alongside them to create stable, nurturing environments where children can thrive.

Examples of our work with Hardwick residents in FY'25 include:

- ~170+ home visits to 17 Hardwick kids (402 total children served) through Children's Integrated Services
- ~32 kids and 20 adults from Hardwick received Emergency Assistance (988 children and 661 adults total)
- ~3 Hardwick babies (324 total) supported through DULCE, connecting families to resources
- ~5 Hardwick babies and their families welcomed home with nurse visits (119 babies welcomed total)
- ~108 of the 1,326 children who received childcare subsidies reside in Hardwick

~Participation in Hardwick Equity Project
~\$500 given to the Hardwick Holiday Project
~Schools, coaches, and childcare providers received substance misuse prevention and wellness support through Healthy Lamoille Valley, a coalition and program of Lamoille Family Center

Countless children are stronger, safer and more resilient thanks to these services and your support. You make this possible. Volunteer time, donated goods and financial gifts keep our work going.

Learn more or get involved: www.lamoillefamilycenter.org Thank you for being part of this community of care.

Carol Lang-Godin, Executive Director
clang-godin@lamoillefamilycenter.org
480 Cady's Falls Road Morrisville, VT 05661
(802) 888-5229 ext. 124

Northeast Kingdom Arts Council Inc. (NEKarts): The Hardwick Town House

Northeast Kingdom Arts Council (NEKarts) has operated since 2001 primarily through successful grant writing and individual donations which have allowed us to make significant renovations to the Town House while expanding the number and variety of programming. The Town House is owned by the Town of Hardwick and is leased to NEKarts with the agreement that NEKarts will actively pursue both public and private funding necessary to further rehabilitate and program this historic town asset. This appropriation of \$3,500 will be used as matching funds to secure additional grants that require evidence of the community's support of the NEKarts Council's mission.

2025 has been a year of amazing progress at the Hardwick Town House. Our **Safety and Accessibility Project** is near completion. The expansion on the northeast corner of the Hardwick Town House holds a **stairwell to the balcony** and an **elevator to the stage** for increased accessibility and safety.

We are filled with gratitude for the support from our community, donors, grantors and the Town of Hardwick for making this possible. Thank you!

For the last decade, the Town House board has been focused on the preservation and modernization of the building. Now we will turn our attention more fully to what happens inside of it. Programming and production take time, funding, and energy. There are many ways that Hardwickians can help to further our positive impacts for the Town House and the Northeast Kingdom at large; we invite you to...

~**Become a board member.** We are a small, dynamic, dedicated group of community members. We meet once per month, make each other laugh, and volunteer our time to manage a space that has stolen all our hearts. Let it steal yours.

~**Use the space.** Got an idea for an event between March and October? Options are many: recitals, dance parties, exercise classes, movies, live theater, trainings, workshops, concerts, conferences, weddings, rehearsals. There simply isn't another place like the Town House. With a little imagination and time, you could join the growing list of staple events that make our community so special.

~**Spread the word.** If you know someone in need of a venue, send them our way - Booking@hardwicktownhouse.org. We also have an Instagram account: [@hardwicktownhouse](https://www.instagram.com/hardwicktownhouse), where you can follow us to see what's happening.

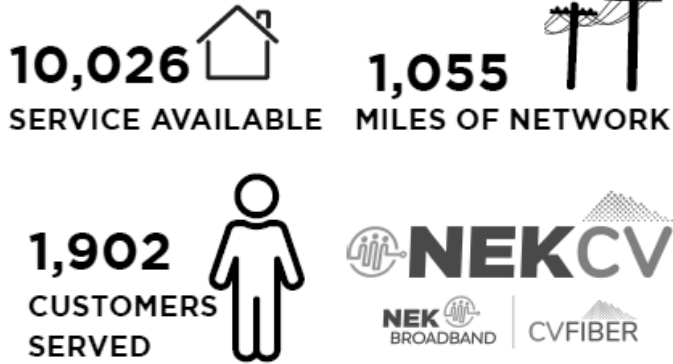
~**Donate.** Contributions from a broad base of supporters is our biggest source of funding. Every bit helps, so please give what you can, when you can. Due to the continued escalation of construction costs, we have used some of our operating budget to complete our accessibility addition. Financial contributions to NEKarts, the 501(c)3 non-profit that stewards the Town House, either by check to Hardwick Town House, PO Box 476, Hardwick, VT 05843 or online at www.HardwickTownHouse.org. Any donation makes an immediate, positive impact on the Town House and the Northeast Kingdom at large. We thank you for helping us to further our mission!

NEK Broadband Communications Union District

CONSTRUCTION AND SERVICE

Projected Growth by Year

| 2025 | | 2026 projected | |
|------------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| Towns served | 40 | Towns served | 55 |
| Miles built | 510 | Miles built | 555 |
| Addresses passed | 10,026 | Addresses passed | 15,000 |



This year, we have been implementing our mission to ensure that unserved and underserved community members in the 72 towns that make up our communications union district have access to reliable, fast, and affordable fiber internet, and expanding our locally sourced workforce. We also continued to fully integrate NEK Broadband and CVFiber into a single merged

We did this through numerous efforts, including focusing on our internal processes, upgrading our financial and build software, and expanding our locally sourced workforce. We also continued to fully integrate NEK Broadband and CVFiber into a single merged entity.

In 2025, we doubled the number of our staff for the 4th year in a row, and now we have 26 staff members. There were also 3 broadband training classes, and out of the 28 graduates, NEKCV employs eight class graduates.

To order our service, get updates, or sign up for our newsletter, fill out the form at get.nekbroadband.org or cvfiber.net

Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging

The Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging is honored to support older Vermonters in Hardwick and throughout the Northeast Kingdom as they age with dignity, independence, and connection. Thanks to the commitment of our communities, we were able to make a meaningful impact throughout Fiscal Year 2025.

Over the past year, we were privileged to support 4,810 unique older Vermonters across the Northeast Kingdom, including 211 of your neighbors right here in Hardwick. Together, we achieved the following:

~Delivered 151,099 Home-Delivered Meals to older adults who rely on daily nourishment and safety checks

~Answered 4,136 calls through our statewide Helpline (800-642-5119), connecting people with fuel assistance, Medicare support, housing resources, crisis intervention, and more

~Provided personalized guidance and advocacy through 577 case-managed individuals, helping older adults remain safely in their homes with the dignity they deserve

Winter in the Northeast Kingdom is beautiful—and brutal. Many older adults face the heartbreaking choice between heat and food, a decision no one should ever have to make. Our Fuel Assistance support prevents medical emergencies, protects older Vermonters from dangerous cold, and ensures dignity through the harshest months of the year.

Community matters. Compassion matters. And every story matters. When we stand together, no one struggles alone.

Thank you for supporting your neighbors and strengthening the spirit of Vermont community life. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact: Melinda Martin, Director of Communications & Development at mmartin@nekcouncil.org • (802) 748-5182

Northeast Kingdom Development Corporation

The Northeast Kingdom Development Corporation (NEKDC) is a six-member private 501(c)(3) that works on significant economic development projects in the Northeast Kingdom. Our goal is to improve the quality of life in the NEK by creating jobs that pay well and strengthen communities through developments and redevelopments. We are currently responsible for two major projects, one of which is the Hardwick Yellow Barn Business Accelerator. Construction was completed late in 2024, and the building is now fully tenanted and operational. We have closed out on most of our grant funding sources, and we expect to be fully closed out later this year. We are currently documenting job creation (a requirement of one of our grants). At closeout, we anticipate creating at least 25 full-time equivalent jobs.

The Town of Hardwick owns the Yellow Barn, and the NEKDC has a long-term lease on the property. We are responsible for the management and oversight of the Yellow Barn, and we are managing three subleases to our tenants:

Food Hub/Center for an Agricultural Economy: The Food Hub provides a new and appropriately sized space for Farm Connex, which currently aggregates and distributes more than \$13 million in local food through its innovative direct shipping service. With multiple loading docks and more workspace, Farm Connex will now be able to hold inventory for more producers, reduce redundancies, and expand operations.

Jasper Hill Farm: When the pandemic threw this local cheese producer a curveball, they nimbly responded by expanding their direct-to-consumer sales. Jasper Hill is leasing the balance of space in the new building to house its new fulfillment operations center -- a move that will consolidate inventory from multiple locations around the state and reduce carbon footprint by thousands of miles annually. Consolidation of inventory will also allow for an increase in cheese production in the neighboring Vermont Food Venture Center.

Cabot Creamery: This cheese retail destination celebrated its grand opening in September. Cabot has leased entire barn, which is eligible for the National Register. The retail store is just a few feet from the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, and we've already seen many cyclists, tourists, as well as locals, visit the shop to sample Cabot cheese products, as well as many other delicious local specialty foods.

The Hardwick Yellow Barn was an \$11.8 million endeavor, and our partnership with the Town of Hardwick was essential in making it happen. Our general contractor was Wright & Morrissey, and our architecture was Coe + Coe. The NEKDC secured construction financing and formed a subsidiary to receive New Markets Tax Credits for the project, which will minimize long-term debt that we, the NEKDC, will carry on the project. In addition to the financing, there were several grants: Economic Development Administration, Northern Border Regional Commission, Vermont Community Development Program, Vermont Community Recovery and Reinvestment

Program, the Preservation Trust of Vermont, the Dairy Business Innovation Center, and the State of Vermont Brownfield Revitalization Fund, as well as a grant from the Small Business Administration. This extensive funding commitment underscores the project's significance both regionally and statewide. We have had amazing support from our economic development partners.

The Yellow Barn is tax exempt, but we have already begun to make annual PILOT payments to the Town, (PILOT stands for payment in lieu of tax). We anticipate achieving full valuation of the municipal share by Year 7. Please note that the NEKDC does not receive, nor does it seek, an appropriation from the Town. Our ground lease requires us to prepare a letter to the voters of Hardwick annually, in the interest of transparency.

We value our partnership with the Town of Hardwick on this very important project, and we look forward to seeing you at the Yellow Barn soon!

*NEKDC Board of Directors: Aminta Conant, President
Kimberly Butler, Richard Isabelle,
Eric Remick, and David Snedeker*

Northeast Kingdom Human Services

Please consider financially supporting Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.'s (NKHS) *mission to empower individuals, families, and communities by promoting hope, healing, and support* by including us in your 2026 Town Meeting Warning.

This request is the same amount as voted at the 2025 Town Meeting (\$3,161) and 3.33% of appropriation requests coming from 48 Northeast Kingdom towns. As a Designated Agency serving Vermont's system of care, we are responsible for assuring that a comprehensive range of services are available regardless of an individual's ability to pay. The 503 NKHS professional employees work to help others live fulfilling lives and contribute to their community. We offer confidential services that include 24/7 emergency mental health care with Enhanced Mobile Crisis response, walk-in support at the Front Porch Urgent Mental Health Care center, and call/text/chat mental health support through 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. NKHS also offers outpatient therapy for adults, children, and families through various programs and supports individuals with developmental disabilities, ensuring equal rights, respect, and dignity. For more information about our agency and services, please visit our website at <https://www.nkhs.org> or call our offices.

Between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025, NKHS provided supportive services to 2724 individuals, **81** lived in the Town of Hardwick benefiting from 10,020 service hours. NKHS also provided 363 hours of community outreach with Starting Over Strong VT support, community meetings, and training impacting 6034 individuals. During this time, over 3,995 unique individuals benefitted from the 988-crisis line.

We strive to respond to community needs with quality care. Your support is integral to our mission. Thank you for considering our request.

Kelsey Stavseth, Executive Director

Northeast Kingdom Learning Services (NEKLS)

At NEKLS, our Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program, our K-12 Tutorial program and our Ready, Set, Grow Childcare Center (RSG) are on a mission to provide dynamic and impactful educational experiences for the members of our communities, including residents of Hardwick. Imagine a future where our adult education initiatives flourish and every individual can access high-quality learning opportunities to improve their skills and pursue their dreams. We believe that education is the key to a brighter future for our students, and we need your support to make that happen. Your appropriation of \$1000.00 will directly fuel our efforts to enhance and expand our programs.

Our Adult Education and Literacy programs, available at learning centers located in Canaan, Hardwick, Island Pond, Newport and St. Johnsbury, have directly benefited Hardwick residents who have earned their diplomas, GEDs, and work credentials with NEKLS. These include programs for residents age 16 and older who are not in high school and who are interested in:

- earning their high school diploma or GED
- gaining skills to transition into a new career
- improving their academic skills in reading, writing, and math
- becoming workforce or college ready or
- learning or improving English language skills as a second language

Our Tutorial program partners with local schools throughout the NEK to provide tutorial services for students K-12 to help them achieve academic success.

In Newport, our *Ready, Set, Grow Childcare Center*, a 5 STAR, high quality childcare is licensed to serve 99 children. Join us in making a difference by investing in the education of your community.

*Michelle Faust
Executive Director*

Rural Community Transportation, Inc.

Rural Community Transportation, Inc. (RCT) respectfully requests that the following special appropriation article appear in the 2026 warning for the Town Meeting:

Article: Shall the Town of Hardwick vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of \$6181.50 for the support of Rural Community Transportation, Inc. to provide services to the residents of the Town of Hardwick.

Please note that we have adjusted our appropriation request to reflect the level of service your community receives, using a formula of \$1.50 per ride based on the average number of rides provided to your town over the past three years. We truly appreciate your continued support, which helps ensure that residents have access to safe and reliable transportation throughout the region.

As a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, RCT provides public transportation throughout Caledonia, Orleans, Essex and Lamoille Counties.

In Fiscal Year 2025, RCT provided 6,310 rides, traveling 141,491 miles at a total cost of \$253,268.89 to Hardwick residents. RCT continued to provide safety-focused, demand-based rides and all buses operated fare-free.

RCT operates with federal and state funding; however, most grants require a local match of 20-50%. Town appropriations are used exclusively for this purpose and are therefore critical to maintaining and expanding our services.

We hope you will vote to fund this request, and RCT looks forward to continued service to the residents of Hardwick.

Renee Stalczynski, Office Administrator

Salvation Farms:

Salvation Farms respectfully requests a budget allocation of \$1,500 from the voters of Hardwick to be determined at the Town's annual meeting in March of 2026. Our organization has not previously received any allocation of funds from the town of Hardwick.

Salvation Farms is a federally recognized non-profit with a mission to build increased resilience in Vermont's food system through agricultural surplus management. Since 2005, Salvation Farms has been connecting communities with local farms and engaging volunteers to collect and distribute crops that would otherwise never make it off our Vermont farms. One of the organization's most notable efforts is the act of gleaning, or collection of surplus produce from farms with the help of volunteers, who then help distribute the gleaned produce to community food programs that feed many of our more vulnerable neighbors. Salvation Farms is an organization that is deeply rooted in serving the communities of the Lamoille Valley and Northeast Kingdom including Hardwick. Any financial support received is critical to our ability to distribute produce from local farms to the region's residents, ensuring that Vermont moves towards a more localized, resilient food system.

Over the course of the past four years, Salvation Farms has moved approximately 1,204,250 servings of surplus food from more than 45 local farms into the community, serving upwards of 50 community food programs. In this work, Salvation Farms has engaged volunteers who have contributed more than 4,415 hours collecting and distributing surplus farm food, among other tasks. All of this work is performed at no cost to farmers or the food programs that receive this food. During 2025, Salvation Farms delivered locally raised food, and vegetable starts to the following community food programs in the Lamoille Valley and Northeast Kingdom that are likely to serve residents of Hardwick:

| Food Program Served by Salvation Farms in 2025 | Produce Delivered in 2025 |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Craftsbury Community Care Center | 1,220 |
| Saplins Community Children's Center | 795 |
| Greensboro Free Library | 870 |
| Greensboro Nursing Home | 809 |
| The Greensboro Giving Closet | 920 |
| Hardwick Area Food Pantry | 2,267 |
| Hardwick Area Health Center | 1,360 |
| Wolcott Elementary Afterschool | 271 |
| Woodbury Calais Food Shelf | 397 |
| Lakeview Headstart | 865 |
| The Civic Standard | 96 |
| Lamoille Community Food Share | 3,984 |
| Lamoille Day Health Services | 999 |
| TOTAL: | 14,853 pounds |

Salvation Farms
Morrisville, VT 05661
www.salvationfarms.org

Hardwick Assessor

New England Municipal Consultants (NEMC) completed another year as the Assessor for the Town of Hardwick. NEMC has been the assessing consultant in Hardwick since 2018 and took over as Assessor following the retirement of the long-tenured Town Listers. In addition to the assessment work, NEMC has completed town-wide reappraisals in 2006, 2016 and now 2025.

The following assessment statistics were applied for 2025. The Town was issued actual equalization figures by the State in December 2024, but those were replaced by a temporary, reappraisal CLA applied to state education tax rates.

CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) – **103.18% (Reappraisal)**

This is a measure of current assessment value compared to recent market sales that have occurred in the community. It tells us on average how close to market value we are assessing property.

COD (Coefficient of Dispersion) – **N/A (Reappraisal)**

This is a measure of uniformity among all assessments in the community. This statistic can be summarized as a measure of equity.

Over the course of 2025, NEMC conducted property inspections related to the 2025 town-wide reappraisal. All improved parcels were visited in Hardwick with a good response and entry rate overall. NEMC worked with the

Hardwick administrative offices to schedule many property owners for inspections over the course of the year. Overall, the response was very good from the community. The Assessor's Office appreciates all the cooperation from the community throughout the data collection process.

Preliminary reappraisal valuation notices were mailed out in May 2025 and informal discussions regarding new assessments were held with NEMC at the town offices. Representatives from NEMC were made available to answer questions and provide explanations for the reappraisal process. There were several properties that were re-inspected as a result of the informational discussions, with data corrections warranted in several instances.

Formal grievance hearings were held with the Assessor following the filing of the abstract grand list in June. The Assessor fielded around 80 grievances and made decisions based on fairness and weight of evidence. Following the grievance process, 4 property owners chose to appeal to the Board of Civil Authority (BCA). There were no appeals beyond BCA to either State Hearing Officer or Superior Court. NEMC participated on behalf of the Hardwick Assessor's Office throughout the appeals process.

The Assessor's Office would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy new year. We look forward to continuing working with the Town of Hardwick in 2026.

*Matthew Krajewski (NEMC), Assessor
(802) 472-4054
assessor@hardwickvt.gov*

Hardwick Conservation Commission

The Hardwick Conservation Commission (HCC) has had a busy 2024-2025 year. In the fall of 2024, the HCC joined the Downtown Partnership to help with their tree-planting project. Thirty trees were planted this September. In October 2024, the HCC sponsored a nature walk to Tuttle Pond, led by Matt Peters and Jonathan Shapiro. We then hosted a public meeting in November about Vermont's conservation Act 59 (called the "30/50" act with the goal of conserving 30% of the state by 2030 and 50% by 2050). Trey Martin, Director of Vermont's Housing and Conservation Board, led the discussion.

In December, Emily Finnegan, Manager, Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District, organized a Jackson Dam Study Committee with representatives from various Hardwick organizations. Member Norma Wiesen is serving from the HCC. The CCNRCD has funded a large study of the flooding issues in the Lamoille River basin. Field work took place this summer. A feasibility study of both the positive and negative effects of the removal of Jackson Dam, looking at environmental, economic, agricultural and recreational impacts is expected at the beginning of 2026. The engineering firm doing the study will bring its findings to the committee and then to a public meeting of the Town. All residents will have access to the report.

The HCC participated in Springfest this year with a float dominated by a huge barn swallow and many decorations created by students from Hardwick Elementary School. We offered potted anise hyssop plants and garden seeds and information pamphlets at our table.

In June, we sponsored a Let's Go Fishing event at Lake Eligo conducted by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. In August, the HCC was delighted to welcome new members, Peter Moskovitz and Joe Nudell. We also co-sponsored a Geology Walk with the Hardwick Trails Committee in October led by Dave Mitchell and Lucy Zendzian.

We are excited about our biggest project to date: the possible acquisition of a 329-acre property of forested land for sale on Buffalo Mountain. Working with the assistance and financial support of the Trust for Public Land and the aid of the Northern Rivers Land Trust, we have begun the process. The Selectboard has agreed to take possession of the property on behalf of the Town if we can successfully accomplish a purchase. If so, a committee of interested townspeople would work to survey the community about how people want to use such a Town Forest. What recreational, educational, conservation, environmental or other goals are important? The possibilities are plentiful! Because this report is being written in December, more will have happened by the time you read this. Check hardwickvt.gov (under "Government- Committees and Boards – Conservation Commission"), the Hardwick Gazette and Front Porch Forum for updates.

We appreciate the support of the Hardwick Selectboard and welcome members of the community to our meetings on the second Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at the Memorial Building.

*Rachel Kane, Co-chair
Lucy Zendzian, Co-chair
Kathy Hemmens, Treasurer
Norma Wiesen, Secretary
Joe Nudell, Lesa Cathcart, Ben Pougner
Peter Moskovitz, Tyler Buswell*

Hardwick Downtown Partnership, Inc.

The Hardwick Downtown Partnership (HDP) was established in 2023 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to provide leadership to support the economic, social, recreational, and cultural vitality of Downtown Hardwick. The HDP organization is modeled closely on the National Main Street Center model for downtown revitalization. We employ a programmatic approach to identifying and attracting new businesses that complement Hardwick's downtown business and residential resources. We hold memberships in the Vermont Downtown Coalition and the National Main Street Association giving downtown Hardwick access to state and national resources to develop and support our activities.

HDP appreciates the support that Hardwick voters offer through annual appropriation. All financial contributions are investments that expand our capacity to leverage future grants and support programming. Our efforts are focused on maintaining and encouraging downtown vibrancy by providing a "one-stop-shop" for business and property owners seeking information and technical assistance. The board members and members of the community volunteer on HDP committees and work closely with Town leadership to make improvements in downtown Hardwick. The Partnership works to build relationships with downtown property owners to help address high-visibility vacancies and to leverage available State and Federal resources.

Our efforts increase economic vitality and have attracted both public and private investment. In 2024/25 HDP successfully attracted private donations of more than \$15,000 and grant awards of \$90,000 while aiding the Town in successfully obtaining \$400,000 in Downtown Transportation Fund Grants for the new pedestrian bridge. We dedicate time and energy to a myriad of infrastructure issues to support positive growth and preservation to enhance historic downtown Hardwick, the commercial hub for our surrounding rural communities.

We invite you to visit the HDP website: <https://www.hardwickdowntown.org> for more information about our ongoing efforts. Consider joining in our work by serving on a committee or the board of directors. Feel free to offer your ideas and feedback by contacting HDP by phone or text: 802-274-9858 or email: hello@hardwickdowntown.org.

Hardwick Downtown Partnership Inc. Board of Directors

Shari Cornish • Emily Hershberger • Tobin Porter-Brown • Kole • Tracy Martin
Ella Price • Nancy Durand & Heidi Krantz, HDP Administrative Coordinator

Hardwick Electric Department

Like many recent years, 2025 was a year of change, challenge, and opportunity for your municipal electric utility. Through it all, our focus remained the same: providing reliable, affordable electricity and good service to our community.

Leadership changes

This year we said thank you and farewell to two long-serving leaders. Lynne Gedanken, longtime Chair of the Electric Commission, stepped down after years of dedicated service. Her deep industry knowledge and steady guidance were invaluable. We also welcomed Jake Lester, who was appointed to the Commission and brings a fresh perspective. At year's end, our Finance Director and Controller, Beth Essary, retired after more than four years with Hardwick Electric. Beth's expertise and careful stewardship of the department's finances will be greatly missed, and we are grateful for her service.

Investing in reliability

A major focus in 2025 was improving system reliability. We completed a large vegetation management project along our Craftsbury line—work that was long overdue. Over time, customers should see the benefits through fewer outages and quicker restoration when outages do occur.

Electric rates

In the fall, Hardwick Electric filed for a rate increase. While the final decision is still pending with the state, it is important for customers to know that even after the increase, our rates are expected to remain lower than those paid by about 90% of Vermonters. This does not make increases easy—every added cost matters—but it helps put Hardwick Electric's rates in a statewide context.

Flood Recovery and hydropower

Recovery from the 2023–2024 floods continues. Our hydroelectric station in Wolcott remains out of service. Encouragingly, as 2025 comes to a close, it appears likely that FEMA funding will cover a significant portion of the repair costs. If funding is finalized, repairs and restart would likely occur around mid-2027. We will keep customers informed as this progresses.

Looking ahead

Late in the year, the Electric Commission began discussing what Hardwick Electric should look like in the future. These conversations include exploring possible ways to work with neighboring Morrisville Water & Light—ranging from limited operating agreements, to a merger, or potentially no change at all. The goal is to look for efficiencies while recognizing that today’s regulatory and operational requirements increasingly favor utilities with greater scale. By exploring these options, Hardwick Electric hopes to ensure it can continue providing low-cost, high-quality electric service well into the future. We expect to reach some conclusions from these discussions by mid-2026.

Commissioners:

*Michael Ambrosino – Chair/Hardwick
Roget Prevot, Renaud Demers,
Myles Kamisher-Koch, and Jake Lester*

Hardwick Equity Committee

Fiscal year 2025 was a busy year for the Hardwick Equity Committee. With support from the Vermont Community Foundation and the Town of Hardwick, we initiated the Hardwick Equity Project. This project brought together representatives of nine local organizations to examine ways to provide broader access to resources and promote a sense of belonging for all members of our community. The goals of the project were to:

- Learn from and build on local strengths and experience
- Foster greater collaboration
- Develop action steps—as organizations and as a community

Participating organizations included: Caledonia (East Hardwick) Grange, Center for an Agricultural Economy, East Hardwick Neighbor Organization, Hardwick Downtown Partnership, Hardwick Area Food Pantry, Lamoille Family Center, Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union, Salvation Farms, and the Town of Hardwick.

This project will also guide and inform education and outreach programs and other ongoing work to promote a more equitable community. Other programs that we have led include a book club, community conversations, a film series, and more. For more information about the Hardwick Equity Project, please visit hardwickvt.gov/equity-committee

We would like to thank the Town of Hardwick for helping us continue this work. We always welcome new people to join or get involved with the equity committee. We meet on the first Monday of the month at 6pm at the Public Safety Building. Please contact us at equity@hardwickvt.gov

*Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Chair
Amy Rosenthal, Vice Chair
David O’Brien, Treasurer and Jan Mueller, Secretary*

Hardwick Fire Department Report:

2025 was a busy year for the members of the Hardwick Fire Department (HFD). HFD saw over 145 calls for service. This is a 45% increase in calls from last year. Chief Perley Allen would like to thank all of the members of HFD and their families for their time, commitment, and support this past year. HFD would also like to thank the HFD Auxiliary for the on call support and community events they provided this year. The members and officers of HFD appreciate the continued community support of the citizens, friends and neighbors we serve.

HFD was busy not only responding to calls but training for the many types of scenarios we could potentially respond to. HFD members participated and hosted a wide variety of training including extrication, CPR/ First aid, ladders, EV and lithium ion batteries, rail trail emergencies, and much more. One of our newer additions this

year was how to better support our community with smoke and CO alarms. Thanks in part to the Vermont Division of Fire safety and Fire Safe 802, HFD provided approximately 30 new alarms to local residents.

Calls for 2025 (146):

Structure Fires: 5
Car Fires: 2
Chimney Fires: 2
Brush Fires: 6
Fire Other: 7
Fire Alarms: 31
CO Alarms: 10
Odor Investigation: 8
Motor Vehicle Accidents: 30
EMS Assist: 30
Other Calls: 4
Mutual Aid: 11

HFD would like to remind the public our station is not manned 24/7 as we respond to the station for calls. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Please be patient if you leave us a voice mail, note or other communication as it may be a few days before we receive it. The HFD is always looking for new members. If you are interested, please reach out on Facebook or with a letter of interest.

*Perley Allen
Fire Chief*

Hardwick Police Department

The Hardwick Police Department responded to 2880 calls for service in fiscal year 2025, which is a slight increase from 2470 calls in 2024. Calls for mental health related incidents increased from 57 in 2024 to 85 in fiscal 2025.

Below is a breakdown of the top five routine calls for service during the 2025 fiscal year:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Assist – Agency, Public, Motorist, & Other | 250 |
| Fingerprints | 234 |
| Suspicious Event | 226 |
| Motor Vehicle complaint | 144 |
| Medical Assists | 97 |

There was a 22% increase in requests for fingerprints this fiscal year due to more professions requiring background checks. We are happy to provide this service to residents when officers have down time.

One of the top complaints most police departments receive is regarding traffic issues. There were 144 motor vehicle complaints this year, which is down slightly from the previous year of 159. In addition, we receive requests from residents for speed enforcement in their neighborhoods, which are not captured in our statistics. We have 2 portable radar speed signs and three fixed solar radar speed signs: one on Wolcott Street, one on South Main Street, and a third on Mill Street.

Through a state grant, we were able to acquire an additional portable radar sign. These three portable signs are moved throughout the community, allowing motorists to check their speed. Officers randomly select problem areas for enforcement, and this was done in addition to 188 directed patrols. The high visibility reduces crashes and crime. The Hardwick Police Department's proactive motor vehicle enforcement resulted in 291 traffic tickets being issued and 650 written warnings. Below are the top types of tickets issued for fiscal 2025:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Persons required to register | 63 |
| Stop sign violations | 33 |
| Operating without liability insurance | 27 |
| Operating without a license | 20 |
| Local speed limit violations | 20 |

Below are the top five types of written warnings issued:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Stop sign and flashing signals violations | 323 |
| Defective equipment | 59 |
| State speed limit violations | 45 |
| Registration violations | 33 |
| Local speed limit violations | 26 |

Traffic crashes:

The Hardwick Police Department responded to a total of 102 reported traffic crashes, which is an increase from 79 in fiscal 2024. Most of these crashes (73) were property damage without injuries. There were 15 injury crashes but no fatal crashes. In addition, there were 14 crashes in which the operator left the scene of the crash.

Below are the types of reported traffic crashes:

| | |
|--|----|
| Property damage crashes – state reported | 36 |
| Property damage crashes – non state reportable | 37 |
| Leave the scene of a crash | 14 |
| Injury crash – state reportable | 15 |
| Fatal crash | 0 |

Criminal investigations take priority, and the investigations take up a great amount of the officer's time. The Hardwick Police Department arrested 105 people during the 2025 fiscal year. Some of these people were charged with multiple offenses; however, it is listed with only the most serious offense charged. This was a slight increase from the previous year of 91 people arrested. Some of the arrested individuals were referred to the Community Restorative Justice Program rather than the criminal court system.

The top arrest categories were as follows:

| | |
|---|----|
| Arrest on in-state warrant | 33 |
| Driving under the influence | 16 |
| Driving with a criminally suspended license | 15 |
| Petit Larceny from a building | 8 |
| Violation of Conditions of release | 5 |

Drug use and abuse continue to be a problem in our area as well as the rest of Vermont. There were quite a few drug overdoses this year, with two of them resulting in fatal drug overdose deaths. Members of the community raised safety concerns with the drug traffic in their neighborhoods. The Hardwick Police Department responded with increased patrols, search warrants, and regular contact with known drug distribution houses.

The Hardwick Police Department has built a great working relationship with the schools. We try to have high visibility at the schools during arrival and dismissal times to promote safety awareness. We have also built a positive relationship with students and staff.

Staffing continues to be an issue for the Hardwick Police Department. We started the fiscal year with an inadequate staff of three full-time officers, two part-time officers and a chief. This makes it difficult to provide 24-

hour coverage 7 days a week. In addition, one of our full-time officers was out on medical leave from mid-January to May 2025. Part-time officer George Sheldrick stepped up to help cover vacant shifts during this time period. We hired Robin French in April of 2024 and provided her with Level II law enforcement training. After completing this training, Robin went through Level III training in August of 2024. After completing all her training, she was on her own in January but subsequently left HPD for another department in September of 2025. We were fortunate to hire Joe Donna in August of 2024. Joe is well known throughout the community for his volunteer work with the Hardwick Fire Department and Rescue Squad. He attended the Level II Academy and completed his field training in mid-August of 2025. In October, Officer Donna accepted a full-time position with the Hardwick Police Department.

In May of 2025, we were fortunate to hire Lindsay O'Steen as a part-time officer. Lindsay is certified as a Level III officer in Vermont and previously worked for the Vermont State Police. Lindsay is a Doctor of Physical Therapy and holds a master's degree in healthcare administration. Her full-time position is with Northern Physical Therapy; however, she is well known throughout the community for her tireless volunteer work at Hardwick Rescue Squad and Hardwick Fire Department. Lindsay is passionate about helping her community.

The Hardwick Police Department works in partnership with the community to preserve and improve the quality of life and make it safer for all. We are fortunate to have all our local agencies and businesses working well together. We are very appreciative of the continued support received from the community throughout the year.

In closing, I would like to commend the dedicated employees of the Hardwick Police Department for their continued commitment to the community, professionalism, and continued effort to keep our community safe. The officers ensure that coverage is provided 24/7/365.

Interim Chief Michael Henry

Hardwick Recreation Committee

The Hardwick Recreation Committee has been dedicated to coordinating with organizations and individuals to bring wholesome, fun, and interactive recreational activities to Hardwick. The Committee is grateful to the Select Board for continuously supporting our programming and events. As the committee wraps up 2025, we look back at the successful events and look ahead to new and exciting possibilities. These events include:

Spring Egg Scramble: The committee came together to stuff over 3,000 eggs for this event. Although it was a chilly April morning, children and families lined up at Hazen Union to participate! The committee plans to upgrade this event in the future and collaborate to make it bigger and better.

Green-Up Day: Each year on the first weekend of May, the committee hosts Hardwick's Green Up Day at the Town Garage. This year we welcomed and thanked all who participated in keeping Hardwick Vermont green!

Family Fun Run 5K - This Springfest kickoff event has grown substantially over the past few years since its comeback. This year the committee had three gift cards per category for the runners who participated along with a free shirt provided by the Town of Hardwick dedicated to the Springfest 5k.

Teach America to Swim Swimming Lessons: In collaboration with Greensboro the committee successfully hosted another season of swimming lessons. The participation is increasing as the years go on and we are excited to see what the 2026 season brings.

Movie Night at the Town House: The Recreation Committee and the Civic Standard collaborated on the showing of Hotel Transylvania in October. There was a great turnout and those who showed enjoyed cider, popcorn, and sweet treats to amplify the fall season. The tone was set with some spooky decor within the entrance of the Town House. More events like these will be on the way in 2026!

Donations to Trunk or Treat: The committee unfortunately could not physically participate this year in the Trunk or Treat event. Instead, we donated \$500 worth of candy to support all those who displayed a trunk. In the coming year the committee will be making an effort to be more involved in the event.

In September, the committee's Coordinator, Jason Bahner, stepped down from his position. We would like to send a sincere thank you for supporting the committee for the last five years. We appreciate your dedication and wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

As we wrap up 2025, we look forward to setting up the town ice rink as weather permits. We are very excited for 2026 to bring more events, both new and returning to the Town of Hardwick. If you have interest in attending a meeting or joining the committee, reach out to recreation.committee@hardwickvt.gov for more information!

Hardwick Trails Committee

Throughout 2025 the Hardwick Trails Committee has continued to focus on public programming, improvement and maintenance of the trails network and on local partnerships.

2025 was an outstanding ski season! The volunteer trail groomers worked hard to keep up with this year's abundant snowfall, and a host of ski instructors and Saturday morning cabin-tenders helped outfit folks and guided them safely onto the trails. Thirty-eight people, spanning multiple generations, took part in the Saturday morning Loan and Lesson sessions this year, while others took advantage of equipment loans and headed to the trails on their own. The free ski and snowshoe loan program, made possible by the generous equipment donation from the Prevot Family Foundation, continues to lower financial barriers for local residents who want to learn to ski or otherwise use the trails during winter months. Free classic ski lessons, funded by the Hardwick Recreation Committee, were offered by experienced instructors sharing their expertise with those new to the sport.

In early March, the Jeudevine Memorial Library partnered with the Trails Committee to host "Snow and Show," inviting the community to pick up skis or snowshoes at the cabin and either head to the trails or join family-oriented games on the Hazen Union field. The Hardwick Recreation Committee organized a fat tire biking demonstration, with free demos provided by Riverside Cycles, introducing many to this popular winter sport. The Trails Committee closed out its winter programming by transporting skiers to the Craftsbury Outdoor Center for a morning of free skiing.

With the onset of spring, the trails once again served as a recreation space, training ground and race venue for local athletes. In June the trails were also featured in an international event when Adventure Racing World Series teams from the U.S. and Canada made stops on the Hardwick Trails as part of the seven-day, 475-mile Endless Mountain Adventure Race: Les Verd Mont.

The Committee sponsored many nature-based public events throughout the warmer months. These events were diverse and well-attended. Every Saturday in May there were Bird Walks, led by Dave Brown, Lucian Avery, Scarlett Podolin, Eleanor Hammond and Marie Grabon. There was also Wild Edibles Foraging with Lucian Avery; Mushroom Hunting with Joe Nudell; Medicinal Plants with herbalist Erin Rosenthal; a Geology Walk with Dave Mitchell; and Sketching in the Woods with Susan Sawyer. A highlight this year was Joe Nudell's Blacklight Night Walk under the new moon, where participants discovered the fluorescent wonders of the forest—glowing caterpillars, millipedes, spiders, mosses, lichens, and mushrooms. For younger visitors, Brittany Lumsden-Berry led an "Art, Walk and Story by the Brook" adventure where children painted walking sticks and tried them out on the trails. We continue to partner with the Jeudevine Library to maintain the Story Walk as a community asset. The Trails Committee can only offer such events because we have so many knowledgeable and willing local folks! It's an amazing community.

An annual highlight, The Pumpkin Walk celebrated its 20th anniversary this year, drawing approximately 500 participants. 400 pumpkins were carved by Hardwick Elementary school students under the tireless guidance of Beth LeCours. Due to drought conditions, electric lights illuminated the pumpkins this year instead of traditional candles. Lesa Cathcart, dressed as a friendly witch, continued her 20-year tradition of telling non-scary stories by the fire, while James Lockhart once again created an intricately carved pumpkin to welcome visitors at the entrance. As longtime volunteer Helen Beattie noted, the event has become truly multi-generational, with students who once carved pumpkins now bringing their own children.

Over the summer we added a new single-track trail, Reservoir Run, on Shepard family property east of Bridgman Hill Road. With the help of several dedicated volunteers, we added a total of 1.3 miles of new trail to our trail system! It's a scenic trail that climbs up along Eaton Brook to the old town water reservoir, then turns and heads up to the top of Slapp Hill behind Hideaway Acres before it heads back downhill through some exhilarating switchback turns. Reservoir Run is a great trail for hiking, biking, or snowshoeing. The trail starts at the bridge by the little library on the Green Trail.

We also created and dedicated a new parking area and trailhead on the north end of the trails property along Billings Road. The new trailhead is dedicated to the McCarthy family, for all their years of commitment to and

use of the Hardwick Trails. Sean McCarthy designed a beautiful plaque, and we officially inaugurated the trail entrance in September of this year. The McCarthy trailhead is located on the south side of Billings Road approximately 700' from the intersection with Bridgman Hill Road.

Finally, in the maintenance department, a number of significant improvements to trail drainage, including culvert replacements and grading, were made.

We remain grateful for the Shepard family's ongoing support and vision for trail expansion on their property. Our collaboration with the Green Mountain Technology Center staff and Hazen Union leadership continues to ensure the trails serve as both a learning laboratory for the Forestry Program and a recreational resource for residents. We continued to explore a partnership with Adaptive Sports Partners to improve trail accessibility. Thanks to the support of donors, including the Prevot Family Foundation, the committee was able to upgrade equipment for winter trail maintenance. We continue to anticipate increased use of Hardwick Trails as LVRT users become more aware of this remarkable resource through our connector trail and trailhead kiosk.

The Hardwick Trails Committee, a volunteer sub-committee of the Hardwick Town Recreation Department, welcomes everyone to our meetings on the first Monday of the month at 5:00 PM (email hardwicktrails@gmail.com for more information). Meeting minutes, trail conditions, event news, maps and other information are available on the website, <https://hardwicktrails.com>.

The Trails Committee thanks the Town of Hardwick for its support.

Submitted by Andy Gilbert

Jeudevine Memorial Library

The library is open! The biggest story this year is that the expansion of the Jeudevine was completed, and we opened the new building to the public on Monday, July 7, 2025. From the first day, with a crowd waiting outside to come in, through the change in season to winter, the new library has been full: people of all ages come in to work, pick up books, movies, and magazines, attend programs, or just hang out. The meeting spaces have been consistently booked both during the day and in the evenings and on weekends. It has been a joy to see the building finally open and utilized so well. We plan to hold a big first birthday party next summer.

With the first half of 2025 spent in construction and the second half with the new building open, we went from an average of 680 people per month to 1,200. As of early December 2025, we have seen more than 10,000 people come through our doors this year. We have circulated more than 13,000 items, and over 1,600 people have attended our library programs. The two new meeting rooms have been well used for library programs and by other organizations and individuals. The Jeudevine hosted 75 programs for the library, Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor, and Town of Hardwick, and was booked an additional 68 times for classes and gatherings, including tai chi, quilting, tutoring, online classes, telehealth meetings, and even a birthday party. Our programs included many for children, such as chorus, the Jeudevine Players, baking afternoons, a vacation-week movie, and, of course, storytimes. Programs for adults included readings by Vermont authors, a storytelling event, a sit-down dinner hosted by the Neighbors, and educational programs on topics such as bats and advance directives.

We manage all of this with a staff of three (two part-time, one full-time) and a volunteer crew that includes patrons, Friends of the Jeudevine, and the board of trustees. Volunteers who came in to help with re-shelving books and movies, preparing books for cataloging, light cleaning, and shelf-reading also moved many books into the new building and contributed over 200 hours to help the library run smoothly!

Although the bulk of our budget comes from the town, we also receive significant support from other sources. We are incredibly grateful to the newly revitalized Friends of the Jeudevine, which has done a fantastic job of fundraising this year. As they have in the past, they covered the full cost of programming for children and adults. The Friends helped purchase furniture for the new building, including a second book truck and a changing table, as well as two new staff computers, a comfortable chair for the children's room, and eight new folding tables for the Parker Ladd Community Room. We are grateful for the book-buying support we received this year, including donations from Merry Gangemi and in memory of Pamela Blumgart, Sharon Fradette, Linda Kinney, and Beverly

Pape. We also received a \$5,000 grant to hire a consultant to develop a strategic plan to serve as a roadmap going forward, now that the addition is complete.

The library continues to serve as a communication hub for Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor. We track emails and phone calls from people seeking help, dispatch requests to a volunteer coordinator, and assist with the logistics of matching volunteers with those who need them. Library staff manage the money the Salvation Army sends to this area to help people with emergency gas and grocery vouchers. This year, we distributed \$2,000 to community members.

In closing, I want to thank everyone - and there were so many! - who helped shepherd the library addition to completion, whether you gave your time, your money, or your goodwill. But most especially, I want to give big thanks to Kevin Hill and Rachel Funk, the library staff, who worked in a challenging and often loud construction zone with grace. The Jeudevine Memorial Library has been a source of pride and a well-loved community space in Hardwick since its construction in 1896. If it has been a while since you've been in, or you think the library doesn't have anything to offer you, we hope you'll stop in and see what's happening! The library is for everybody, and we hope to see you there.

Diane Grenkow, Library Director

Friends of the Jeudevine Library

The Friends of the Jeudevine (a non-profit separate from the library itself) has returned from hibernation to become a newly revitalized force. We continue to have new members join, until we are up to about 15 people who regularly attend meetings and another ten who follow our work to pitch in where possible. Then there's the Baking Team, who volunteer specifically for baking and/or food preparation. We're a lively group and we welcome new members.

The Friends meet monthly (other than December) to plan and orchestrate both community events and fundraisers for the library. Community events have included speakers and films, along with activities at the Hardwick Spring Festival. This coming winter we'll be hosting a talk by Rick Winston on the film genre of "murder mysteries," followed by a monthly film series featuring what he discusses in his talk.

We'll host a Garden Tour fundraiser in July, and then we plan to repeat our successful "Warm Up the Library" soup and silent auction fundraiser in the autumn. These fundraisers specifically support programming at the library for both children and adults, along with furniture and supplies for the newly expanded space. This past year we helped purchase a second book truck and a changing table, as well as two new staff computers, a comfortable chair for the children's room, and eight new folding tables for the Parker Ladd Community Room. In the coming year we intend to outfit the entrances both upstairs and downstairs with coat racks and benches, along with whatever else is needed as our community continues expanding into the new rooms.

This is an exciting time for our town with so much new space at the library. It was a long haul to get here, but every single person in town helped in one way or another. Please visit to make use of the community space that belongs to us all!

*Jodi Lew-Smith
Board President*

Select Board Report

The Select Board continues to focus on affordability while maintaining the existing town services, replacing aging infrastructure, and taking advantage of federal and state funding opportunities. This year we are proposing a town budget of \$4,741,600 for fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027). This represents a 7.3% increase in spending over the prior year. Paired with a 12.3% increase in revenues, this yields a 5.8% increase in the amount to be raised by property taxes. While this is a higher increase than we would prefer, there are two major items driving this increase without which the amount to be raised by taxes would have remained flat.

First of these major drivers is costs related to flood recovery. We have several flood recovery projects lined up for the next couple of years including some bridge replacements. FEMA covers 90% of these costs, the state covers 5%, leaving only 5% for the town. Even so, we expect our 5% to total over \$350,000, excluding the

wastewater plant. We expect the projects to take place over 2-3 years, so we will need to reserve our share over the next few years. This year we are setting aside \$100,000 into capital towards the bridge replacements. While \$100,000 is a large sum in our budget, it allows us to leverage almost \$3 million in outside funds to make much needed repairs to our roads.

The second major new cost is a new town highway garage. We have conceptual plans and preliminary cost estimates for a whole new complex on Creamery Road to house Highway, Fire Department, and Hardwick Rescue. This project solves some pressing problems for all three entities. Hardwick Rescue desperately needs more space than their current facility provides. Hardwick Rescue is an independent organization which will pay its share of the project cost. The existing Fire Department flooded in both 2023 and 2024 (and many times before that). Moving the Fire Department out of the flood is long overdue. We are anticipating FEMA and other federal funding will cover the lion's share of the new facility for the Fire Department. The Highway garage was built in 1978 and, according to a recent engineering report, is at the end of its useful life. The building is deficient in many ways, including serious structural problems, poor energy efficiency, and just being too small for today's trucks. We do not anticipate finding any outside funding to help with the Highway Garage portion of this project, so we have included funding for a first bond payment in this budget. There will be a bond vote for this project when we have more details, probably sometime in May. Without the costs of flood recovery and a new highway garage, our budget increase would be much more modest. We feel strongly, however, that we need to take advantage of FEMA funds for flood recovery projects and that we need to undertake the Hardwick Emergency Services project on Creamery Rd.

To alleviate some of the burden of property taxes, the Select Board is asking the voters to consider instituting a 1% local option tax on meals, alcohol, and rooms. A local option tax has only recently become an option for smaller towns like Hardwick. We feel that this tax, though small, shifts some of our local tax burden from property to more luxury and tourist items such as eating out, alcohol, and lodging. The anticipated revenue from this local option tax is included in the proposed budget.

Another year has passed without replacing our beloved pedestrian bridge across the Lamoille River. Despite our best efforts, we were not able to overcome delays that pushed the project timeline out almost a year. We are now, at last, poised to construct the new bridge and repair the associated retaining wall in 2026. This project will cause some temporary disruption in our downtown this summer, but the final result will be a beautiful focal point and the structural stabilization of Main Street.

In closing, we wish to recognize the outstanding Town staff who have served us through another year. Keeping the roads passable, stewarding the finances, preparing for the future, and all other Town services only happen through the hard work and dedication of the Town staff. We thank you.

Eric Remick, Select Board Chair

Town Clerk Report

The Town Clerk's Office has been working on a long-anticipated project to upgrade the basement vault with a properly fire-rated door. This decade-long effort was expected to be completed by the time you are reading this and has resulted in significantly increased and improved document storage space. The project included removing and organizing more than 50 years of stored records, categorizing them for future storage and efficient access, and hiring a concrete cutter to enlarge the opening for the new vault door. Our Public Works Department and Town Manager were instrumental in removing the original vault door—now donated to the Hardwick Historical Society—and installing the new door. This was an exciting and much-needed improvement for our office.

The Town Clerk's Office offers many services to residents on a walk-in basis, including issuing marriage licenses, dog licenses, and certified copies of birth, marriage, and death certificates; voter registration; absentee ballot applications; and notary services.

Access to a wide range of information and forms through the Town Clerk's page on the Town's website. Available resources include election information, water and sewer rates, tax rates, assessor cards and tax maps, digital land records, redacted tax bills, and more. Please visit: hardwickvt.gov/government/town-clerk.

Notary services are available by appointment only. As the Town Clerk's Office has a single notary, please call 802-472-5971 or email tonia.chase@hardwickvt.gov to schedule an appointment.

The Town Clerk's Office continues to offer DMV registration renewals. To renew a registration in person, residents must bring their DMV registration renewal form. Please note that renewals more than two months past due cannot be processed at the Town Clerk's Office. Payment must be made by check or money order payable to Vermont DMV for the registration fee (cash and credit cards cannot be accepted), along with a separate \$3.00 cash or check payment payable to the Town of Hardwick.

In accordance with Vermont State Law, every dog or wolf hybrid in the Town of Hardwick must be registered with the Town Clerk's Office by April 1 of each year. Proof of a current rabies vaccination is required at the time of registration. Fees from January 1 through April 1 are as follows:

- Spayed/Neutered: \$11.00
- Not Spayed/Neutered: \$15.00

Tonia Chase
Town Clerk/Treasurer

Town Manager Report

Managing a small community is both deeply rewarding and increasingly complex. In communities like Hardwick, local government is personal. The decisions we make affect our neighbors, our families, and the places we care about every day. That closeness is our greatest strength, and at times, our greatest challenge.

One of the most significant responsibilities facing the Town is long-term project planning and investment in hard infrastructure. Roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, public safety buildings, and municipal facilities require constant attention. Much of our infrastructure is aging, and the cost to maintain or replace it continues to rise. Thoughtful planning, careful sequencing of projects, and an aggressive pursuit of grant funding is essential to ensure we protect taxpayers while meeting regulatory requirements and community needs.

In the coming years, Hardwick will be navigating several major construction and capital improvement efforts at once, these efforts are related to flood recovery and resiliency. Projects include bridge rebuilding or replacement on multiple town roads, ongoing investments in our wastewater treatment facility and necessary upgrades to sewer pump stations. These projects are critical to public safety, environmental protection, and the long-term functionality of the Town, but they also require careful coordination and clear communication so residents understand both the impacts and the benefits.

At the same time, the Town is facing an important decision about how best to invest in its essential services. Planning is underway for a consolidated Essential Services Complex that would support fire, rescue, and public works operations for decades to come. This level of investment cannot be accomplished incrementally. It will require broad community understanding and support for a large bond that reflects both the scale of the need and the long-term value of the investment. While no community takes on debt lightly, failing to act carries its own risks—continued vulnerability, higher long-term costs, and missed opportunities to build resilient systems that serve future generations.

Housing availability is another foundational challenge that affects nearly every aspect of municipal life. Hardwick must grow its housing stock in ways that are safe, resilient, and aligned with long-term community goals. This means actively pursuing partnerships with private investors and housing developers and making strategic use of newly available state programs designed to support housing development. It is imperative that we encourage housing located outside of flood hazard areas while still utilizing town utilities. Well planned and well executed housing projects will reduce future risks to residents while strengthening the Town's overall resilience both environmentally and financially.

Workforce challenges are another reality for small towns. Recruiting and retaining qualified employees for specialized, hard-to-fill positions, whether in public works, utilities, administration, or emergency services—is increasingly difficult. Competition with the private sector, housing shortages, and the rising cost of living all impact our ability to staff essential services. Despite these challenges, our municipal employees continue to show up with dedication, professionalism, and pride in serving this community.

Affordability remains a pressing concern. Rising costs affect not only municipal budgets but also residents and businesses. The Town must balance responsible fiscal management with the understanding that our residents already carry significant financial burdens. This is why we prioritize leveraging outside funding whenever possible and approach bonding and long-term obligations with care, transparency, and a focus on shared benefit.

At the heart of all this work is a simple truth: a town is only as strong as the people who participate in it. Attending meetings, voting, volunteering, serving on boards and committees, and staying informed all help shape the future of Hardwick. Local government is not something that happens to us, it is something we create together.

It is easy, especially during challenging times, to see community life as a burden. But communities thrive when we shift our mindset from scarcity to abundance—when we recognize the value of shared responsibility, collaboration, and care for one another. Loving your town means investing time, attention, and energy in its success, even when the work is hard.

Hardwick has weathered floods, economic shifts, and changing times before, and we continue to do so with resilience and determination. By working together, supporting one another, and staying engaged, we can ensure that Hardwick remains not just a place to live, but a place to belong.

Thank you to everyone who contributes—seen and unseen—to the life of this town. Your participation matters more than you may realize.

David Upson
Town Manager

Zoning and Floodplain Administration Report

The Hardwick Planning Commission (HPC) and Development Review Board (DRB) continued to meet regularly in 2025, both in person and via Zoom, on the third floor of the Memorial Building.

Planning Commission

In 2025, the Planning Commission focused on implementing zoning updates adopted in 2024 and advancing work related to land use, housing, transportation, and flood resilience. The primary area of work was continued development of the Village Center zoning district for East Hardwick. This district is intended to support compact development and housing opportunities in an area connected to Village water, while also accounting for flood hazards and river corridor constraints. The Commission advanced work related to river corridors, including coordination with the State on river corridor mapping and policy changes anticipated under state law. This work focused on aligning local land-use regulations with river corridor mapping and anticipated state requirements.

The Planning Commission also began early work on updates to the Municipal Plan, establishing the basis for future policy updates. Additional work included review of pedestrian and traffic safety considerations, including walkability concepts for South Main Street, Wolcott Street, a scoping study of Mill Street and Main Street and connections to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. The Commission continued to monitor implementation of the 2024 flood hazard area regulations as FEMA proceeds with updates to flood mapping.

Development Review Board

During 2025, the Development Review Board reviewed development applications including renovations to flood-impacted structures, change-of-use requests, subdivision applications, and flood hazard overlay permits. Property owners proposing work within the Flood Hazard Overlay District are encouraged to contact the Zoning Office early in the project planning process to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements. One vacancy remains open on the Development Review Board. Letters of interest may be submitted to the Town Manager's Office.

Floodplain Administration

Floodplain administration work remained elevated in 2025 following the July 2023 and July 2024 flood events. Substantial Damage estimations were completed, and zoning and flood permits for impacted properties continued to be processed through early 2025. The Town continued coordination with FEMA, Vermont Emergency Management, and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources regarding updated FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps anticipated to take effect in early 2027. Outreach and guidance for affected property owners will continue as this process moves forward.

Why This Matters

Zoning, planning, and floodplain administration establish the framework for how land is used, how rebuilding occurs, and how flood risk is managed. This work affects permitting, flood insurance, infrastructure planning, and future land-use decisions. Ongoing coordination and regulatory updates are intended to provide clearer expectations for property owners while aligning local regulations with state and federal requirements.

*Kristen Leahy
Zoning & Floodplain Administrator
Resilience & Adaptation Coordinator*

Hardwick Flood Buyout Program: Myths and Facts

Hardwick has partnered with the State of Vermont and federal agencies to purchase and remove flood-damaged properties to reduce long-term public risk and protect nearby homes, roads, and essential infrastructure. The following sections address common questions and misconceptions about how the program works and what it means for taxpayers.

Myth 1:

“The buyouts are raising our taxes.”

Fact:

The buyouts are financed entirely through federal and state disaster-recovery programs, meaning no local tax dollars are used for acquisition, demolition, or site restoration. Hardwick does not contribute a local match, and the program’s structure ensures that the Town continues receiving municipal tax revenue for years after a property is removed from private ownership. It is important to understand that it was the flooding itself, not the buyout program, that reduced property values in the affected neighborhoods. Flooding impacted the Grand List well before any buyout occurred. The combined pre-flood assessed value of all 20 buyout properties is approximately \$1.5 million dollars. The Grand List is projected to be around \$339 million on July 1, 2026. This means the buyout properties represent less than one-half of one percent of the total Grand List, a difference far too small to influence the tax rate in any meaningful way.

Myth 2:

“These properties should have just been rebuilt.”

Fact:

All of the properties selected for buyouts had sustained repeated flood losses and were in areas where long-term structural solutions were not feasible. In several cases, the underlying land was unstable or subject to ongoing erosion, and in others, the homes sat within floodway or high-hazard zones where elevation, armoring, or similar approaches would not provide reliable protection. The buyout process eliminates unsafe structures and converts these parcels into open space that can store floodwater and reduce downstream impacts, providing a community-wide public benefit during future storms.

Myth 3:

“The Town will lose revenue on this.”

Fact:

The State reimburses the Town of Hardwick for the municipal portion of taxes on each buyout property for a total of 10 years. This protects the Town from sudden revenue loss and allows for careful long-term financial planning. How the payments work: For any property purchased before August 31 of a given year, reimbursement begins on January 1 of the following year. For example, a property bought out prior to August 31, 2025, will begin

generating reimbursement on January 1, 2026, and will continue for nine additional years. If another property is bought before August 31, 2026, then on January 1, 2027, the Town will receive the second year of payment for the 2025 buyout and the first year of payment for the 2026 buyout. Payments accumulate in this way over time. *Payment levels:* For years one through five, the Town receives 100 percent of the municipal tax amount. For years six through ten, the Town receives 50 percent of the municipal tax amount. *What portion of taxes is reimbursed:* Only the municipal portion is reimbursed. This does not include school taxes or local agreement rates. The Department of Taxes determines payments using the grand list value of the property for the year it was damaged or designated as flood-prone, multiplied by the municipal tax rate, including any sub-municipal rates. FY26 payments are based on 2025 municipal tax rates. Without this reimbursement system, many of these properties would likely have become tax-delinquent or left the Town responsible for costly stabilization or cleanup. Instead, Hardwick avoids those expenses while maintaining predictable municipal revenue.

Myth 4:

“This only helps the property owners who got bought out.”

Fact:

The benefits of the buyouts extend well beyond the individual property owners. When repeatedly flooded structures are removed and the land is restored to open space, the entire watershed functions more safely. These sites now serve as part of Hardwick’s flood and stormwater mitigation network, lowering water levels during major storms and reducing pressure on neighboring homes, roads, and utilities. This approach strengthens public safety, protects public infrastructure, and limits long-term municipal costs.

Myth 5:

“We could have just left the properties alone.”

Fact:

Leaving the structures in place would have prolonged existing health and safety risks and eventually shifted full responsibility for damaged or collapsing buildings onto the Town through tax delinquency or abandonment. The buyout program, by contrast, covers the complete cost of acquisition, removal, and site restoration through state and federal funding. Hardwick gains safer, more stable land with no local financial burden.

Summary

Hardwick’s buyout program removes the most vulnerable properties, safeguards remaining neighborhoods, and relies entirely on outside funding. It reduces future flood damage, limits long-term financial exposure, and helps stabilize the municipal budget. The program is a strategic investment in public safety, community resilience, and fiscal responsibility, not a driver of higher local taxes.

Resilience and Adaptation in Hardwick – 2025 Year in Review

Hardwick continues to adapt to a changing climate while recovering from repeated flooding in 2023 and 2024. In 2025, the Town focused on strengthening infrastructure, reducing future flood risk, supporting neighborhoods and businesses, and integrating long-term resilience into everyday planning and decision-making. This work spans rivers, roads, public facilities, housing, emergency readiness, and community partnerships.

Rivers, Floodplains, and Downtown Areas

Throughout 2025, the Town advanced several projects aimed at restoring river and floodplain function while protecting critical areas. Along the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook, engineering and permitting work moved forward for long-term bank stabilization, floodplain restoration, and corridor-wide planning. These efforts build on emergency stabilization completed after recent floods and are designed to reduce erosion, lower flood heights, and create safer conditions for nearby properties and infrastructure.



In the downtown area, the Town continued work on river corridor stabilization near Brush Street, the Buffalo Mountain Co-op, and the Hays Service Station area. A former flood-damaged property at 41 Brush Street was demolished and returned to open space, while planning advanced for future retaining wall replacement and phased river corridor improvements. These projects are intended to protect businesses, pedestrian access, and essential services in the heart of the village.

Neighborhood-Scale Flood Mitigation

In 2025, Hardwick expanded its focus from individual properties to neighborhood-scale resilience. The Granite Street Historic District became the center of a comprehensive planning effort to address stormwater, basement flooding, drainage, and historic building floodproofing. Working with residents through the Granite Street Neighbors initiative, the Town began developing practical solutions such as utility elevation, drainage improvements, and flood-compatible open space. This approach emphasizes collaboration, local knowledge, and solutions that respect historic neighborhoods while improving safety.

Public Facilities and Critical Infrastructure

Protecting essential services remained a priority in 2025. The Town advanced planning for flood mitigation at the Wastewater Treatment Facility, including options to relocate or elevate critical components and allow the site to provide flood storage in the future.

The Hardwick Fire Station, which sustained significant damage in recent floods, underwent a feasibility study to evaluate relocation to a flood-safe location. These efforts reflect a long-term shift toward placing critical facilities where they can function reliably during emergencies.

Repairs to roads, culverts, and bridges damaged in recent storms were completed, and engineering work continued for long-term upgrades to key bridges and river crossings in Hardwick and East Hardwick.

Voluntary Property Buyouts and Open Space Restoration

Flood-prone property buyouts continued as a key resilience tool. By the end of 2025, multiple properties acquired through FEMA programs were either completed or nearing completion, with additional applications submitted following the 2024 flood. These properties are being restored to open space, allowing rivers more room to move during high water and reducing future risk to residents and the Town.

Emergency Readiness and Community Support

Resilience in Hardwick extends beyond infrastructure. In 2025, the Town and Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor continued strengthening emergency preparedness through improved coordination, volunteer planning, and development of a local partner annex to the Local Emergency Management Plan. The Emergency Supply and Support Center is now equipped to support rapid response during emergencies, reinforcing Hardwick's ability to care for residents during and after disaster events.

Planning for the Future

Economic and watershed modeling funded through the U.S. Economic Development Administration continued in 2025, with updated flood models for the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook received in late 2025. These tools will help guide future land-use decisions, infrastructure investments, and economic resilience strategies. The Town also continued a feasibility study related to the Jackson Dam and Hardwick Lake area, examining how future actions could reduce flood risk while balancing environmental and community needs.



Looking Ahead

Resilience and adaptation in Hardwick is an ongoing effort. In 2025, the Town strengthened its foundation by pairing recovery with forward-looking planning, investing in safer infrastructure, restoring natural systems, and supporting neighborhoods. This work reflects a long-term commitment to living with water more safely while preserving the character, economy, and community life of Hardwick.

Dog Licenses and Vital Records Reports

| <u>Town of Hardwick</u> <u>Dog License Report</u> July 01, 2024 to June 30, 2025 | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Total Number of Licenses</u> | <u>Price Per License</u> | <u>Total Collected</u> |
| 4 | \$ 3.00 | \$ 12.00 |
| 1 | \$ 7.00 | \$ 7.00 |
| 7 | \$ 9.00 | \$ 63.00 |
| 195 | \$ 11.00 | \$ 2,145.00 |
| 53 | \$ 13.00 | \$ 689.00 |
| 50 | \$ 15.00 | \$ 750.00 |
| 1 | \$ 17.00 | \$ 17.00 |
| 7 | \$ 19.00 | \$ 133.00 |
| 2 Kennel Permit | \$ 31.00 | \$ 62.00 |
| 1 Pet Dealer Permit | \$ 25.00 | \$ 25.00 |
| 329 | | \$ 3,903.00 |
| Total Collected for FY25 | | \$ 3,903.00 |
| Fees to State of Vermont | | \$ 2,107.00 |
| Total Revenue for FY25 | | \$ 1,796.00 |

| <u>Town Clerk's Office</u> <u>Vital Records Information:</u> July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 The following records were filed: | |
|---|--|
| 18 Birth Certificates | |
| 18 Marriage Certificates | |
| 39 Death Certificates | |

| CURRENT TAX RECONCILIATION: 7/1/2024 TO 6/30/2025 | | |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|
| MUNICIPAL GRAND LIST AT 1% | \$ | 1,998,184.00 |
| HOMESTEAD GRAND LIST AT 1% | \$ | 1,122,162.99 |
| NON RESIDENTIAL GRAND LIST AT 1% | \$ | 816,908.01 |
| TAXES BILLED ON 7/22/2024 | | |
| MUNICIPAL TAXES BILLED | \$ | 1,740,217.98 |
| HIGHWAY TAXES BILLED | \$ | 1,311,208.64 |
| LOCAL AGREEMENT BILLED | \$ | 24,377.87 |
| HOMESTEAD TAXES BILLED | \$ | 2,224,014.97 |
| NON RESIDENTIAL TAXES BILLED | \$ | 1,688,712.30 |
| LATE HOMESTEAD PENALTY | \$ | 994.34 |
| MISC. BILLING (GARBAGE) | \$ | 120.00 |
| TOTAL TAXES BILLED | \$ | 6,989,646.10 |
| TAX BOOK BILLING BALANCE 6/30/25 | | |
| MUNICIPAL TAXES BILLED | \$ | 1,740,361.68 |
| HIGHWAY TAXES BILLED | \$ | 1,311,316.91 |
| LOCAL AGREEMENT BILLED | \$ | 24,379.89 |
| HOMESTEAD TAXES BILLED | \$ | 2,260,825.83 |
| NON RESIDENTIAL TAXES BILLED | \$ | 1,649,084.94 |
| LATE HOMESTEAD PENALTY | \$ | 1,898.27 |
| MISC. BILLING (GARBAGE) | \$ | 120.00 |
| TOTAL TAXES BILLED | \$ | 6,987,987.52 |
| COLLECTIONS REPORT 7/1/2024 TO 6/30/2025 | | |
| ABATEMENTS | \$ | (7,583.52) |
| ADJUSTMENTS | \$ | 11,265.41 |
| AVAILABLE CREDITS FOR FY24 | \$ | 2,868.83 |
| AVAILABLE CREDITS FOR FY25 | \$ | 4,095.81 |
| COLLECTIONS | \$ | 6,745,815.92 |
| CREDIT REFUNDS (HS-122 & OVERPAYMENTS) | \$ | (10,582.59) |
| STATE TAX PAYMENTS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT 7/1/2024 TO 6/30/25 | \$ | 567,137.28 |
| STATE TAX PAYMENTS TO TOWN OF HARDWICK 7/03/2024 | \$ | 128,026.55 |
| STATE TAX PAYMENT TO TOWN OF HARDWICK 7/31/2024 | \$ | 52.00 |
| STATE TAX PAYMENTS TO TOWN OF HARDWICK 8/7/2024 | \$ | 2,760.00 |
| STATE TAX PAYMENTS TO TOWN OF HARDWICK 9/20/2024 | \$ | 1,101.00 |
| STATE TAX PAYMENTS TO TOWN OF HARDWICK 10/30/2024 | \$ | 2,921.00 |
| STATE TAX PAYMENTS TO TOWN OF HARDWICK 11/19/2024 | \$ | 10,041.00 |
| STATE TAX PENALTY PAYMENTS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT | \$ | - |
| PROPERTY TAXES ACCOUNTED FOR ON JUNE 30, 2025 | \$ | 7,457,918.69 |
| DELINQUENTS ON JUNE 30, 2025 | \$ | 242,171.60 |
| PROPERTY TAXES ACCOUNTED FOR ON JUNE 30, 2025 | \$ | 6,988,051.46 |
| ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE - NEMRC | \$ | (6,987,987.52) |
| **DIFFERENCE** | \$ | 63.94 |

**TOWN OF HARDWICK
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MARCH 04, 2025**

Orise Ainsworth, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The voting audience included approximately one hundred and seventy-three people.

Article 1. To elect a moderator to govern said Town Meeting and for the year ensuing.

Orise Ainsworth nominated by Dave Shepard
Motion passed unanimously

At 10:03 a.m. our State Representative, Mike Southworth, took to the floor and gave some updates coming out of Montpelier. He stated that right now there are over 450 house bills that have been introduced and that very few have made it out of committee and have been voted on at this point. He discussed a few of these bills including one bill with an extreme amount of support, a bill to exempt state income tax on veteran and survivor retirement benefits. He also brought up education funding and public safety. He stated that there is part of a bill to repeal the raise the age law; a housing proposal for rental housing, global warming standards act, and PCB remediation.

Dave Shepard asked if funding comes from the state for PCB and if the bond vote passes how will that affect Hardwick. Mike said that if the bond passes that the state has informed the school board that has been working on this that they will reimburse the money as soon as they can. However, he does not know when that would be.

Beth Lecours wanted to inform everyone that the Vermont Art Educators Association put up the show yesterday at the State House and encourages them to attend during the month of March.

Paul Fixx wanted to go back to the PCB question. He believes the governor budgeted nine million dollars for PCB remediation which won't be enough to cover Hardwick. Mike said that it is not budgeted for this current fiscal year; it is for next year.

Orise asked if there were any objections to having employees that do not live in Hardwick to speak, there were no objections.

The front table was asked to introduce themselves. The front table included Eric Remick – Select Board Chair, Ceilidh Galloway-Kane – Select Board Vice Chair, Shari Cornish – Select Board member, Tim Ricciardello – Select Board member, Danny Hale – Select Board member, David Upson – Town Manager, Tom Fadden – Road Foreman and Mike Henry – Police Chief.

Orise read Robert's Rules.

A brief break was taken to set up more chairs. Orise gave a run-down of the organizations that are out in the lobby.

Article 2. Shall the Town accept the Town Report, year ending June 30, 2024?

Motion by Jean Hackett
Seconded by Deborah Hartt
Motion passed unanimously

Article 3. To elect all Town Officers and School District No. 26 Directors as required by the public laws of Vermont and the Town Charter. (Select Board, Town Clerk & Treasurer and Union School District No. 26 Directors, to be voted by Australian Ballot).

First Constable
Larry Hamel nominated by Dave Shepard
Motion passed unanimously

1-year term

Second Constable
Lindsay O'Steen nominated by David Upson
Motion passed unanimously

1-year term

Town Agent
Dave Shepard volunteered
Dave Shepard nominated by David O'Brien
Motion passed unanimously

1-year term

Surveyor of Wood, Bark and Lumber
Levi Chase nominated by Ben Nottermann
Motion passed unanimously

1-year term

Tree Warden
Geoffrey Fehrs nominated by Rachel Kane
Motion passed unanimously

1-year term

Cemetery Trustees
Main Street, Maple Street, Fairview, Sanborn, Hardwick Street, West Hill, Hardwick Center
Motion made by Dave Shepard to nominate the Select Board
Motion passed unanimously

1-year term

Fire Dept. Officers (can be voted as one vote)

1-year term

Paul Fixx called Point of Order, he asked if everyone on list are officers? He wanted to note that Lamoille County Sheriff are not residents, does there need to be a special motion to allow that? Orise stated that in the past we have always accepted the list, and they hire Lamoille County Sheriff as dispatch. Orise asked if there were any objections, no objections were made.

Motion made by Dave Shepard to nominate as presented in 2024 Town Report
Motion passed unanimously

One Library Trustee
Vince Razonale nominated by Daphne Kalmar
Motion passed unanimously

3-year term

One Library Trustee
Solomon Lew nominated by Daphne Kalmar
Motion passed unanimously

3-year term

One Library Trustee
Mary Meyer nominated by Daphne Kalmar
Motion passed unanimously

3-year term

Grand Juror

1-year term

Raymond Bellavance nominated by Dave Shepard
Motion passed unanimously

Article 4. Shall the Town have its current taxes collected by the Town Treasurer?

Motion by Dave Shepard
Motion passed unanimously

Deborah Hartt asked how she would request to change an article later, she is interested in reallocating appropriation requested monies. Orise explained how to make an amendment.

Another audience member asked how taxes were collected. Orise explained that they are currently collected by the Town Treasurer.

Article 5. Shall the Town vote a budget of four million four hundred seventeen thousand seven hundred fifty-two dollars (\$4,417,752) to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Town and authorize the Select Board to set a new tax rate sufficient to provide the same?

Motion by Ron Wiesen
Seconded by Dave Shepard

David Upson, Town Manager, came up to the podium and gave an uplifting intro about our Town and its residents and community that received applause.

Eric Remick started the discussion on the budget. He started by talking about what the estimated impact the proposed budget would have on tax rate. He explained the grand list and how it is estimated in the Town Report. Hardwick is currently in the process of a town wide reappraisal and that the values have gone up, so we are expecting a larger grand list total because of value increases estimated.

He then discussed the budget summary (located on page 11 of Town Report at bottom of page). He stated this is the largest increase proposed since he has been on the Select Board. He then explained the main drivers of the \$400,000 increase. Approximately half is an increase in expenses in the cost of doing business as we use today and the cost of health insurance and vehicle purchases. The other \$200,000 is driven by 2 new employees. A brand-new position of Public Works Director, who will focus on projects like bridges and roads and culverts, many due to the flooding. The other position will be bringing back a full-time police officer. The Police force has been a little short staffed and bringing back this position would help reduce reliance on part-time officers.

Anne Galloway asked if President Trump stops all federal funding on town projects how this would affect the public works director position? Eric said he wonders too but doesn't know but as Opie reminds us, we can't plan by planning for the worst, we need to plan as if we are moving forward full steam.

PollyAnna Cooper-Levangie asked for some help in understanding the math, if the budget is going up but grand list tax liability is going down, is it because the assessment property getting valued at higher values? Eric explained how setting tax rate is done.

David Upson gave information regarding the question on federal funding, he said in numerous meetings he has attended regarding funding there has been no indication that federal funding for town and state infrastructure will be compromised.

Lynne Gedanken asked if assessed values go up the average amount and if the budget increases 10% does that mean taxes go up 10%? Eric said that it is a great way to look at it but also to keep in mind that when you receive your tax bill a portion is municipal, but the other portion is education and that each year properties are added to grand list, which increases the grand list and therefore spreads the load out a little more.

Carol Schminke wants to call attention to employee health insurance. She feels like she is paying double tax by paying her own insurance and the employees' insurance in her taxes and that taxpayers shouldn't have to pay

for employees' health insurance. She feels the employees make "lovely amounts of money" and should be penalized like everyone else and be paying for their own health insurance. Eric commented that like most employers the town offers health insurance as a benefit but that the employees do pay a portion of that out of their paycheck.

Dave Shepard wondered what other staff in the Town Manager's office do, he said that there had been an explosion of office expenses in that office. He also wondered if the new Director of Public Works could be part-time. Eric said the part-time was discussed but the consensus was that there is work for a full-time person and the Town would have an easier time hiring for a full-time position. Casey Rowell, Business Manager, stated the 57% increase last year was due to moving the Zoning Administrator and Community Development Coordinator positions from their own separate line to the Town Manager line in budget since they report to the Town Manager.

Griffin Schneider asked how the new Director of Public Works position would be appointed. Eric explained how the hiring process works.

Rachel Kane asked to be reminded what the Community Development Coordinator does and if some of that work could be taken over by the new Director of Public Works? David Upson explained that the part-time community development position is mainly for grant writing and seeking funding for projects. He said that one of the tasks that the Director of Public Works would do administratively is capital planning.

Anne Galloway asked how much was spent on the new library building. Daphne Kalmar answered that the building was funded by a bond approved by voters, donations and grants. She does not know the total yet but stated it is over \$3,000,000. Ann then asked what level of oversight the Select Board has on the library. Eric stated the library is a town building, and the entity is run by a board of trustees who are voted on at Town Meeting. Anne then asked if the payroll for the library comes out of the town, Eric stated it mostly does along with some grants. She then asked if there were any fundraising plans in future to fund the operating budget. Daphne Kalmar stated that it would be ideal but would take several years to establish that.

Meredith Holch said that most town libraries are funded by towns including all the staff in every state in the United States and is wondering why people have problems with that.

Dave Gross, a past library trustee, wanted to clarify that the library is a separate entity from the Select Board and town budget.

Danny Hale wanted to let people know that those questioning the library doesn't mean they don't care, he said it's also about money. He pointed out that we fund our fire department for under \$90,000 of taxpayer dollars, including capital equipment, and we fund the library \$200,000. He said it's not a matter of what we like or dislike but rather what can be afforded.

Rachel Jacobson sees the benefit of having both a Public Works Director and Community Developer Coordinator.

David Upson explained about different projects and infrastructure and the difference in jobs of road crew and projects that had to be put aside. The Town needs someone that can look ahead and plan for projects. This position is long overdue, the two positions would work together to implement projects.

Eric added that part of the discussion has been around project management and, since the 2023 flood, the Town has had a lot of projects to be implemented and we have received funding and have reason to believe we will continue to receive funding, but someone needs to manage those projects.

An audience member called for vote.

Motion passed unanimously

Orise stated appropriations can be voted on as a block if in favor of and then particular appropriations can be pulled separately to be discussed. Orise asked if there was any objection to putting appropriations as a group. There were two objections. Deborah Hartt wants to discuss Article 8 and 22 individually. Orise read the remaining articles to be voted as a block.

Motion made by Dave Shepard

Seconded by Ann Gilcris

Motion passed unanimously for Articles 6,7, and 9 – 21

Article 6. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) for the support of AWARE?

Article 7. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand six hundred dollars (\$2,600.00) for the support of Caledonia Home Health Care and Hospice?

Article 8. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) for the support of Center for an Agricultural Economy?

Debroah Hartt asked what the \$4,000 appropriation request from Center for an Agricultural Economy was for. Orise asked for motion to move the article to start discussion.

Motion made to approve Article 8 by Dave Shepard

Seconded by Ron Wiesen

Dave Shepard stated that he supports this article.

Deborah Hartt moved to make an amendment to the motion to decrease Article 8 to \$2,000. Seconded by Justin Lander

Rachel Kane hoped that Deborah could give background on why she would like this.

Paul Fixx stated he heard Deborah Hartt say that the CAE built a building, and he believes that the Town owns that building and would like some clarification. Eric stated that the Yellow Barn and new accelerator building next to it are owned by the Town of Hardwick and leased to a non-profit called Northeast Kingdom Development Corporation which in turn leases to Cabot Creamery, Center for an Agricultural Economy, and Jasper Hill Farms.

Nancy Nottermann wondered if anyone from CAE could speak on their role, she also thinks that CAE has done amazing things for this town.

Helen Beattie spoke for CAE, she believes that their role in this community is invaluable, and that they have been at the forefront of every single emergency. Helen thinks we should keep it at \$4000.

Several other audience members seconded Helen's opinion.

David Upson explained what the \$4000 will probably cover expenses associated with the Atkins Field pavilion. Michael Dimarco requested clarification on how CAE and Salvation Farms relate to each other.

Erin Rosenthal asked if it is possible to increase an appropriation amount on one article without reducing another. Orise answered yes.

Lynne Gedanken wants to point out that funding does not need to be reduced for CAE to increase for Salvation Farms.

Paul Fixx learned during a tour that there is some sort of relationship between CAE and Salvation Farms. Danny Smith, who used to work for Salvation Farms, stated there is a strong relationship between the two and that they are not competitors.

Deborah Hartt stated she has no dispute about CAE, she is simply trying to give more to Salvation Farms.

Paul Fixx suggested motion be withdrawn, Orise said it is easier to vote on it.

Michael Lew-Smith called to vote on amendment. Motion denied.

Motion made for \$4000. Motion approved.

Article 9. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for the support of Craftsbury Community Care Center?

Article 10. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) for the support of Greensboro Nursing Home?

Article 11. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) for the support of Hardwick Area Food Pantry?

Article 12. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for the support of Hardwick Community Television?

Article 13. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand eight hundred dollars (\$2,800.00) for the support of Hardwick Downtown Partnership, Inc.?

Article 14. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for the support of Hardwick Historical Society?

Article 15. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) for the support of Justice For Dogs?

Article 16. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for the support of Lamoille Family Center?

Article 17. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Arts Council, Inc. (NEKarts)?

Article 18. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging?

Article 19. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand one hundred sixty-one dollars (\$3,161.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Human Services?

Article 20. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) for the support of Northeast Kingdom Learning Services?

Article 21. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed three thousand four hundred dollars (\$3,400.00) for the support of Rural Community Transportation, Inc.?

Article 22. Shall the Town appropriate a sum of money not to exceed one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) for the support of Salvation Farms, Inc.?

Motion by Robin Leslie
Seconded by Dave Shepard

Deborah Hartt made a motion to increase to \$3500.00
Seconded by Griffin Schneider

Nancy Nottermann suggests people look at page 10 of the Town Report to see the total requests.

Dave Gross thinks the dollar amount they originally requested should be respected.

Nancy Nottermann suspects we are going to have more hungry people in the coming year and agrees with the increase.

Motion passed unanimously

Article 23. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board, for the period of one year, to enter into contracts with new industrial and commercial owners, lessees, bailees, of real property, or with existing or new owners, lessees, bailees or operators who construct, acquire or renovate industrial and/or commercial real property, including additions to existing property for the purpose of fixing and maintaining the municipal rate applicable to such real property or for the purpose of fixing the amount of money which shall be paid as an annual municipal tax upon such real property pursuant to the provision of Title 24, VSA, Section 2741?

Motion made by Dave Gross
Seconded by Norma Wiesen
Motion passed unanimously

Article 24. Shall the Town authorize the Select Board, for the period of one year, to enter into contracts with operators of agricultural real property, or with existing or new owners, lessees, bailees, or operators who construct acquire or renovate, or who intend to construct, acquire or renovate agricultural real property for the purpose of fixing and maintaining the valuation of such real property in the Grand List for the purpose of fixing and maintaining the municipal rate applicable to such real property or for the purpose of fixing the amount in money which shall be paid as an annual municipal tax upon such real property pursuant to provisions of Title 24, VSA, Section 2741?

Motion made by Norma Wiesen
Seconded by Dave Shepard
Motion passed unanimously

Article 25. To transact any other nonbinding business proper to be brought before said meeting.

The legal voters of the Town of Hardwick are further notified that voter qualifications, registration, and absentee voting relative to said Annual Town Meeting shall be as provided in Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Orise said this will be her last town meeting and received a standing ovation for her years as moderator.

Neal Yurick discussed his opinion on moving Pre-K to Lakeview and to not close Lakeview.

Paul Fixx mentioned that with the recent misappropriation of funds from a bookkeeper, as was reported in Gazette, he would like to ask the Select Board in the future when receiving appropriation requests to require a statement that those organizations are conforming with accepted accounting principles.

Jan Mueller gave an update on the upcoming Springfest and the change to the street fair in downtown.

Tracy Martin said that on March 12th at 6:30 pm that there is going to be a community gathering on the 3rd floor of Memorial Building about the Better Connections grant for East Hardwick.

Brendan Buckley would like the Select Board to consider having Town Meeting not be in the middle of the workday so more people could attend.

Lesa Cathcart discussed a silt issue at Jackson Dam.

Nancy Nottermann asked Helen to address the local emergency management plan. Helen Beattie from Neighbor-to-Neighbor explained the plan.

Alana Considine proposed a non-binding resolution. "We the residents of Hardwick resolve to formally request that our Governor, Phil Scott, publicly reaffirm his commitment to uphold the rule of law protecting the rights of Vermonters and the Vermont Constitution amidst federal overreach, even if confronted with federal threats related to funding or other matters. Furthermore, we encourage him to proactively leverage his authority and engage with his colleagues nationwide to advocate for the protection of the rights of government personnel, immigrants and individuals belonging to the LGBTQIA plus disabled and BIPOC communities. Additionally, we call on you to work with his colleagues to be the state and federal level to safeguard federal services such as Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security which are essential to the wellbeing of all Vermonters.

Orise stated the Town is not able to legally do anything with a resolution since the matter is federal and is not something the Select Board can control.

Ross Connolly thinks this does pertain to Hardwick and is a local issue.

Orise polled the audience to see if this is something the Town should be involved in and motion carried to accept the non-binding resolution.

Dave Shepard echoed support for all of Orise's years as moderator and wanted to recognize Tom Fadden for his years of service.

Carol Gosselin asked for an update on the swinging bridge.

Eric came to the podium to respond to three comments. Paul Fixx regarding the handling of funds inappropriately. He is not sure that the town offices can put restrictions on appropriations that were voted by the Town. He said that the swinging bridge project is scheduled, it has gone out to bid and the town is about \$200,000 shy but has a grant application submitted and are hopeful that the project will be under construction this summer. The third update is that they have been working on getting the fire department out of the flood zone and will shortly be sharing draft plans for a new fire station, rescue, and town highway garage on Creamery Road.

Motion to adjourn made by Robin Leslie
Seconded by Lesa Cathcart
Meeting adjourned at 12:13 pm

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Tonia Chase, Town Clerk

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End of minutes

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

300 Granger Road, Berlin, VT 05641 www.cvswwmd.org 802-229-9383

The Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) serves 19-member cities and towns and approximately 53,000 residents. CVSWMD's mission is to provide education, advocacy, and services for residents and businesses to reduce and manage their solid and hazardous waste to protect public health and the environment. CVSWMD is committed to providing quality programming, meeting state mandates, and providing information and resources to our member communities. The per capita assessment has been established at \$1.29 for fiscal year 2027.

The Hardwick alternate for CVSWMD's Board of Supervisors is Ceilidh Galloway-Kane. The seat on CVSWMD's Board of Supervisors is currently vacant. Contact your Selectboard to become a Board member and represent your town.

CVSWMD continues to provide valuable programs and services to its residents, including:

Additional Recyclables Collection Center (ARCC): CVSWMD recycles TVs and computers, paint, batteries, and mercury bulbs and thermostats free of charge through State programs. We also accept dozens of hard-to-recycle items that cannot be placed in Regular Recycling. In FY25, 149,839 lbs. of materials were collected and diverted from the landfill. The ARCC permanently closed in May of 2025. Staff worked to ship out as much accumulated material as possible and relocate ARCC operations to Berlin under a new name: the Eco Depot.

Eco Depot: Located in Berlin's Industrial Park, the CVSWMD Eco Depot opened November 24, 2025. Please note that the facility is open by appointment only to ensure safety and short wait times. This specialized facility is open year-round and accepts Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) from Vermont residents, and Hazardous Waste (HW) from Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) businesses. In FY25, CVSWMD held four one-day haz-waste collections throughout the District and helped 400 in-district residents dispose of 39,418 lbs. of household hazardous waste. We accepted 690 lbs. of hazardous waste from businesses. In addition to hazardous waste, the Eco Depot accepts the same special recycling items we used to take at the ARCC (electronics, paint, batteries, mercury devices, bulbs). Please see our website cvswwmd.org or call for a full list and to make an appointment.

Grants: CVSWMD continues to offer several grant programs: the Organizational Waste Reduction and Reuse Program (OWRRP); the Municipal Services Program (MSP); the Emergency Municipal Solid Waste Response Program (EMSWRP); and the School Grant (SG) program. In FY25, CVSWMD awarded \$5,641 in grant funding to towns, businesses, organizations and schools in our District. Green-Up Day grants totaling \$6,227 were distributed to member Towns. The Kellogg Hubbard Library received \$1,080 from the OWRRP and three schools received \$4,441 collectively in grants.

Compost and Waste Reduction: CVSWMD sells Green Cone food digesters and Soil Saver composting bins to District residents at discounted rates and provides them with free kitchen compost buckets and recycling bins.

School Program: In FY25 the CVSWMD School Program reached 2,018 K-12 students through 107 visits. Presentations and initiatives included information on living more sustainably, engaging in the "Rs" (recycling, repurposing, reusing), using food scraps as a natural resource, and special recycling. We also conducted 10 Food Waste and Single-use Item Reduction Reviews with school food service staff, and 12 Solid Waste Management System Reviews with custodial staff. We discussed Blue Bin and Special Recycling, food scrap diversion, and safe management of hazardous waste.

Outreach and Education: CVSWMD emails a bi-monthly newsletter, is active on social media, and attends local events to answer questions and address waste management concerns. We conduct outreach to businesses, schools, and organizations. We are rebooting our Repair Fairs and Composting workshops next year. We also plan to re-open our Low Waste Event Kit and Bin Loan programs to help reduce and manage waste at events.

CVSWMD maintains its website with information about waste disposal, recycling, and composting as well as how to safely store and dispose of hazardous and landfill-banned waste materials. The website has resources for businesses, waste haulers, schools, and Towns. Check out our A-Z Guide for disposal options for over 190 different items!

For questions about waste or to find out more about our facility, programming, and collections, please call us at (802) 229-9383 or visit us at cvswwmd.org.

Senator Scott Beck, Senate Minority Leader: Town Meeting Report

Serving the Caledonia District: Barnet, Danville, Groton, Hardwick, Newbury (Orange County), Peacham, Ryegate, Stannard, St. Johnsbury, Walden, Waterford, and Wheelock

Key Community Priorities

Education

There are ten public schools and one approved independent school in the Caledonia Senate District. Enrollment varies from less than 50 to 1,000; all play a vital role in their community and beyond. Vermont has lost 30% of its students, and current birth rates suggest that we will lose another 10-15%. Many Vermont schools have already lost over 50% of their students. The question confronting Montpelier is how to reform and transform our school districts and schools so that students will receive excellent educational opportunities and options at a price that property taxpayers can afford.

I don't have a crystal ball and can't predict what this reality will mean for our schools. I am committed to ensuring that local communities will have a say. Please attend school district meetings, especially budget meetings. Take the time to understand what is going on in your school district and help your school board members; they are making difficult decisions.

Housing Affordability

The legislature is committed to making housing more affordable and available. This is a monumental problem that has evolved into a crisis over the last 40 years. Efforts to slow development many decades ago were not revisited, and Vermont chronically underbuilt housing.

Vermont is now trying to catch up. Vermont Housing Improvement Program (VHIP) and Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) are programs that will help, but the bigger problem to solve is how to reduce the cost to construct a home enough so that banks can lend without requiring very large downpayments that most Vermonters cannot afford. Smart deregulation, density, and competition are our allies.

Energy Affordability

The price of oil is down right now, thankfully. The cost of electricity is increasing too fast for Vermont family budgets. The best use of public assistance is efficiency, especially weatherization. I continue to remain committed to repealing the Clean Heat Standard, which, if enacted, would add \$0.59 to a gallon of heating fuel. The acceleration of the Renewable Energy Standard is projected to increase Vermont's electric costs by \$1B over 10 years. Our electric utilities already receive 97% of their kilowatts from carbon-generation.

Our area generation plant in Ryegate produces 7% of all Vermont electricity and is undergoing an upgrade to increase efficiency. This is great news for ratepayers and our area economy, especially the forest industry.

Healthcare

Vermont healthcare and hospitals are transforming rapidly. The Oliver Wyman report issued in 2024 recommended that hospitals seek efficiencies and reduce their budgets by \$300M by 2030, combined. Our hospitals have stepped up and already trimmed costs by \$200M and are expected to meet the final goal two years earlier.

Hospitals are doing this through shared services and cooperation. The legislature invoked reference-based pricing and pharmaceutical cost controls in 2025. The Green Mountain Care Board took dramatic steps to reform the UVM Medical Center and replaced senior leadership.

There are many other important topics: mental health, addiction, public safety, transportation and many others. Please reach out if you would like to discuss any of them. I can be reached at sbeck@leg.state.vt.us.

Morrisville Local Health Office Annual Report: 2025

Twelve Local Health Offices around the state serve as your community connection to the Vermont Department of Health. The Morrisville Local Health Office provides essential services and resources to towns in Lamoille, Orleans, Caledonia, and Washington Counties. Some highlights of our work in 2025 are below. For more information, visit HealthVermont.gov/local/morrisville

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact ahs.vdhMorrisville@vermont.gov

Improving Family & Child Health



Our **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** program supports pregnant people, infants, and children under 5 with nutritious food and nutrition education. In 2025 we served ~660 WIC participants through tele-WIC and in-person visits in Johnson, Cambridge, Morrisville and Hardwick.

- Provided a total of \$3,000 in fresh produce through our Farm to Family Program.
- With Salvation Farms, provided 1,700 pounds of free seasonal produce.
- Supported over 128 prenatal and postpartum families.
- Through Building Bright Futures resumed Dabble Day with over 80 kids and families attending to play and learn about community resources.

The **Family Child Health Program** supports the health and well-being of parents, newborns, and children. Local Health Offices work with primary care, home visiting, and early education partners to coordinate services for families. We also collaborate with hospitals, birthing centers, and home visiting agencies to ensure timely referrals after discharge.

Substance Use Prevention



Our Prevention Consultants (PCs) work in Local Health Offices across Vermont to help prevent youth substance use. They support community groups in planning and carrying out prevention activities. Throughout the year, PCs attend events to share information, answer questions, and promote skills that help young people stay substance-free. They also work with local and statewide partners to look at substance-use data, understand what puts youth at risk, and create strategies and programs to reduce those risks.



HealthVermont.gov/local/morrisville
802-888-7447



Emergency Preparedness



- Our teams continue collaborating with Critical Access Hospitals, Copley, NWMC and NCH to establish mutual preparedness goals and share resources.
- A Local Health workgroup and MRC are partnering with VEM and DPS to better understand and prepare for environmental emergencies related to climate change.
- We have provided personal preparedness information and education at Highland Center for The Arts, local libraries, Farmers Markets and other events, including Bright at Night Reflector and Road Safety Resource. We have partnered with Sterling College and Jenna's Promise to provide Stop the Bleed Trainings for students, staff and clients.

We also recruit and support Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers who are critical resources to our community during emergencies. We need clinical and non-clinical volunteers. Everyone is needed. Contact us for more information or go to:
healthvermont.org/emergency/volunteering/oncall-vermont

Protect & Promote Community Health

Our team is committed to preventing disease and investigating reports of infectious diseases.



Vaccine Access

Our team provided vaccines to people who are uninsured or have trouble getting health care. By offering vaccines for preventable diseases, we helped lower the risk of serious illness in our community. This year, we vaccinated about 100 people and gave more than 130 doses at nearly 30 clinics. These clinics offered protection against COVID-19, flu, MMR, Tdap, Hepatitis B, Varicella, Shingles, HPV, and Polio.

Worksite Wellness

Through our Chronic Disease Program, eight employers in Lamoille Valley received worksite wellness mini-grants from the Vermont Department of Health. Local libraries, childcare centers, and community organizations asked for tools to help staff take part in wellness activities during their breaks. Our chronic disease nurse provides expert support to help workplaces and community partners promote healthy work environments across many sectors.

Town of Hardwick General Information:

Visit us at www.hardwickvt.gov

Town Manager's Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.
Phone: 472-6120 Fax: 472-3793

Town Clerk/Treasurer's Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M, Fridays 7:30 – 11:30 A.M.
Phone: 472-5971 Fax: 472-3108

Property Tax Collection Information:

Taxes are due to be paid in full by May 10 of each year. Each tax bill is issued with four quarterly payment coupons for convenience, but the mandatory due date for the entire amount is May 10. An 8% penalty is assessed once on May 11 of the year in which the property tax is due. A 1% per month interest charge will be applied against all taxes owed on the 11th of each month for the first 90 days and 1.5% per month thereafter until all taxes are paid in full.

Voter Registration:

Hardwick residents who are not currently on the Voter Checklist can register through the Town Clerk's Office. Please call 472-5971 or email a request to: tonia.chase@hardwickvt.gov

DMV Registration Renewals:

For your convenience, the Hardwick Town Clerk's Office can process Vermont DMV renewals. If you have your renewal card from the DMV and it is not more than 2 months past the renewal date, you can renew it at our office. DMV fees can be paid with either a check or money order. There is also a separate \$3.00 processing fee to the Clerk's Office that can be cash or another check.

Zoning & Floodplain Administrator | Resiliency & Adaptation Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays 11:00 to 1:00, Tuesdays 8:30 to 2:00, Wednesdays 9:30 to 2:00, Thursdays 8:30 to 2:00, Fridays and Saturdays by appointment. Phone: 472-1686 Email: zoning.administrator@hardwickvt.gov

Zoning permits are issued by the Zoning Administrator. These permits are required for all property development in the Town of Hardwick. Permit applications and fee schedules are available on the Town of Hardwick website or can be picked up from the Zoning Administrator.

Hardwick Police Department: Monday – Friday 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Located at 56 High Street (the former Hardwick Health Center Building) Entrance is at the rear of the building.
Phone: 472-5475

Other Important Contact Numbers:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|--|----------|
| Hardwick Town Garage: | 472-6029 | Hardwick Area Food Pantry: | 472-5940 |
| Hardwick Rescue Squad: | 472-6343 | Hardwick Deputy Health Officer (Manager) | 472-6120 |
| Hardwick Fire Department: | 472-5482 | Hardwick Water/Wastewater Operator: | 472-5939 |
| Hardwick Electric: | 472-5201 | Jeudevine Memorial Library: | 472-5948 |
| Neighbor to Neighbor: | 441-3301 | Cemetery Sexton, Joe Mangan: | 426-3121 |

TOWN OF HARDWICK

WINTER OPERATIONS PLAN

1. Plow Routes are set up to open the major bus routes first. After all bus routes are finished, staff will plow the roads which appear historically to cause the most problems for the public. This is based on traffic volume, steepness, and curves. Staff will continue plowing until all roads are open. Please note that good winter tires are necessary for safe driving in the climate we live in, and Hardwick does not have the resources to maintain bare roads throughout the Town.
2. The Town of Hardwick has six road crew members to maintain (plow, sand, salt) 80 miles of Town roads and Town sidewalks. Town plow vehicles do not travel at high rates of speed while performing road maintenance operations. Each member of the road crew has their own specific route, which takes anywhere from three - five hours to complete. These routes only vary in instances of emergency needs.
3. The Town does not plow or sand class four roads, private roads, or driveways.
4. Road operations generally start at 3:00 a.m. on weekdays to have the bus routes clear by 6:30 a.m. The Road Foreman and the Police Department monitor conditions and respond accordingly. Highway maintenance staff will be called in to work at the discretion of the Road Foreman.
5. Salt is not effective when the road temperature is below 20 degrees.
6. The Town's sand and salt resources are to be used for winter maintenance of the roads, not for private commercial use, though individual public use of Town sand is permitted.
7. Please be aware that the Town is not responsible for items left or placed in the Town road right of way without permission of the Town and these may be damaged or destroyed during road maintenance activities. Per the Town Traffic Ordinance, during the period from the 15th day of November of each year to the 15th day of April of the following year, no person shall park any vehicle or permit any vehicle to remain parked on any public highway in the Town between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
8. If there is an emergency after regular working hours regarding water, sewer, or highway, please call the Police Department at 472-5475 to have them contact the necessary resources.

Please give yourself some extra time when the weather is bad and please drive safely.

Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
David Upson, Town Manager
Effective Date 2026-2027

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.