

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3rd FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM**

Select Board

Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Chair
Shari Cornish, Vice Chair
Tim Ricciardello
Larry Fliegelman
Derek Richardson

Others Present

David Upson, Town Manager
Casey Rowell, Finance Director
Kristen Leahy, Zoning/Floodplain Admin.

Others Present

Eric Jonathan
Paul Fixx
Linda Markin

Regular Meeting

6:00 P.M. David Upson, Town Manager, called the meeting to order.

6:01 P.M. Reorganization of the Select Board, Town Manager to take nominations for Chair:

- a) Floor opens for Select Board Chair nominations
- b) Board votes to elect Chairperson - *Action needed*

Shari Cornish nominated Ceilidh Galloway-Kane as Chairperson, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted unanimously for Ceilidh Galloway-Kane to be the Chairperson.

- c) Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Chair, assumed control of the meeting. She welcomed Derek and Larry to their first meeting after being elected to the Select Board.

6:01 P.M. Election for Vice-Chair of the Select Board - *Action needed*

Ceilidh Galloway-Kane nominated Shari Cornish for Vice-Chair, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, and the Select Board voted unanimously for Shari Cornish to be the Vice-Chair.

6:02 P.M. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Board meeting of February 19, 2026, and the minutes of the Informational Meeting of February 19, 2026 - *Action needed*

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of February 19, 2026, and the minutes of the Informational meeting of February 19, 2026, both as written.

6:02 P.M. Set/Adjust Agenda - none

6:04 P.M. Communication from the Audience - Eric Jonathan read a prepared statement regarding his views on the Select Board's role and authority, including comments about aligning with the Constitution rather than a corporate structure of government.

Paul Fixx noted that while the Town does not have established detours for construction, West Church Street can become a one-lane roadway on certain days when vehicles are parked in front of the food pantry. He suggested the situation may warrant attention.

Paul also provided feedback on the organization of Select Board documents on the Town website, suggesting that meeting agendas and minutes be placed together to make them easier to locate without having to scroll extensively.

Linda Markin shared that she parked on West Church Street during Town Meeting and her vehicle was sideswiped, resulting in damage to the mirror. She noted that the driver did not stop. Ms. Markin also stated that she is interested in volunteering to serve as the Town's alternate representative to the NEK CUD.

6:09 P.M. – 6:29 P.M. Item # 1 Town Appointments - *Action needed*

- David Upson, Jr., Civil Defense/Emergency Management Coordinator
- *Vacant*, Town Energy Coordinator
- Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, CVSWMD Representative
- *Vacant*, as CVSWMD Alternate Representative
- Tim Ricciardello, Town Service Officer
- Elizabeth Dow, as Agent to Convey Real Estate
- Shari Cornish, as Board Representative to Sign Warrants
- Shari Cornish, as NEKarts Board Representative
- Paul Fixx, as NEK Communication Union District Representative
- Linda Markin, as NEK Communication Union District Alternate Representative
- Eric Remick, as Hardwick Trails Committee Rep.
- Danny Hale, Hardwick/Woodbury Rail Trail
- Derek Richardson, Jackson Dam Study Committee Select Board Representative
- David Upson Jr., as Town Safety Officer
- Maya McCoy, Town Website Coordinator
- Kristen Leahy, Town Representative for NVDA
- Larry Fliegelman, Select Board Representative for NVDA
- Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Town Health Officer**
- David Upson, Jr., Deputy Health Officer
- Shari Cornish, as Hardwick Downtown Partnership Board Representative

The Board agreed to review each appointment individually and then vote on the full slate of appointments as a block at the conclusion of the discussion. Several positions already have individuals who have volunteered to serve, and reviewing the list in this manner allowed Select Board members the opportunity to consider potential candidates for the remaining vacant positions.

It was noted that the Town has not heard from Bill Chidsey in some time and was unable to confirm whether he wishes to continue serving as Town Energy Coordinator. The position will remain vacant at this time.

There was discussion regarding the time commitment associated with the CVSWMD. Meetings are held via Zoom once a month on Wednesday evenings and are listed as running from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Paul Fixx noted that although the meetings are scheduled for 45 minutes, his past experience was that participation in subcommittees is often expected, which can require additional time.

Paul said that he will stay as the NEK CUD representative this year but does hope to drop off the executive committee after that. He commented that the district has grown to a \$40M company with 30 employees.

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to approve the slate of appointments as presented above.

***The appointment of the Health Officer is through the Vermont Department of Health through a recommendation by the Select Board. Ceilidh Galloway-Kane will be the Health Officer by default as the Select Board Chair and David Upson, Town Manager, is the Deputy Health Officer. Recommendation form will need to be completed at the next meeting.*

6:29 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Item #2 Establish Select Board Calendar - *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to approve the 2026-2027 Select Board calendar as presented. See attachments for the calendar.

6:30 P.M. – 6:31 P.M. Item #3 Selectboard to reappoint Kristen Leahy as Zoning Administrator pursuant to the Hardwick Town Charter and 24 V.S.A. §4448 – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to reappoint Kristen Leahy as Zoning Administrator pursuant to the Hardwick Town Charter and 24 V.S.A. §4448.

6:31 P.M. – 6:45 P.M. Item #4 Zoning and Floodplain Administrator, Kristen Leahy, to go over the bylaw updates

Kristen Leahy informed the Board that she will be on medical leave from March 27 through April 27.

During that time, there will be a plan in place for accepting applications through the Town Manager's office; however, applications will not be processed until she returns. Kristen noted that she has been conducting outreach to inform the public about the office closure.

She also asked whether the Board would like to receive quarterly updates from the Zoning/Floodplain Office, and the Board indicated that it would. She will continue to provide monthly updates in the shared folders.

Ms. Leahy also noted that resources have been added to the Zoning/Floodplain page on the Town website. She shared that she has been writing a regular opinion column in the Hardwick Gazette on floodplain-related matters. Additionally, a community survey regarding the municipal plan has been released. Approximately forty responses have been received so far, and the survey will also be distributed electronically.

Kristen Leahy provided an overview of the Planning Commission's proposed update to the Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws. The update modernizes the bylaws and aligns them with the Municipal Plan, recent state legislation, and issues identified through flood recovery, housing needs, and infrastructure planning.

Key elements include creation of an East Hardwick Village Center district, addition of a River Corridor Overlay to reduce flood and erosion risk and improve eligibility for state funding, removal of the Town's Act 250 review authority to reflect current state law, and updates to housing terminology to align with the HOME Act.

The Select Board scheduled a public hearing on the proposed bylaw update for March 19 at 5:00 p.m.

Eric Jonathan said everyone should familiarize themselves with authority levels at the local and state levels.

6:45 P.M.- 6:51 P.M. Item #5 Select Board to review a recommendation for a consultant for the environmental assessment for the CDBG-DR grant and authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract – *Action needed*

The Town received seven proposals. A rubric was developed to evaluate the submissions, which were narrowed down to the top three candidates. VHB was recommended for selection based on the fact that they have staff in-house to perform all necessary components of the work, whereas other firms would need to subcontract for certain elements, such as wetlands delineation. The cost of the work will be covered by the grant.

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with VHB for the environmental assessment.

6:51 P.M. – 7:01 P.M. Item #6 Select Board to discuss forming a steering committee or task force for the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest purchase and possibly appoint members (if approved by voters) – *Possible action needed*

The Board discussed the next steps following voter approval at Town Meeting for the Town to move forward with the potential purchase of Buffalo Mountain Forest to establish a Town forest. The possibility of forming a steering committee or task force to guide the process was discussed.

The Board agreed not to appoint members at this meeting. Several individuals have already expressed interest in serving, but the Board would like to first determine the structure, scope, and expectations of the committee before making appointments.

Ceilidh Galloway-Kane noted that the Town of Wolcott recently went through a similar process and suggested gathering information about how their Town Forest Committee is structured, including the number of members and terms. It was noted that Wolcott currently has sixteen members serving on its committee.

Larry Fliegelman stated that the Board should determine what the committee will look like before appointing members. The Board also discussed inviting someone to speak about the anticipated closing timeline and the expected role and commitment of the steering committee.

Paul Fixx recommended that a plan be developed prior to the property closing.

Kristen Leahy will begin working on the process of committee development related to the Town forest. Ceilidh Galloway-Kane will reach out to the Town of Wolcott to gather information about their process, including public hearings, committee structure, and how management decisions were developed. The Board also discussed inviting a member of the Conservation Commission to a future meeting to participate in the discussion.

Select Board Reports: none

New Business:

Ceilidh noted that some downtown businesses have expressed concerns about traffic conditions and suggested placing the topic on a future agenda for discussion.

Town Manager David Upson responded that while the Board could certainly discuss the issue at a future meeting, he could also provide an update at this time. David reported that he and the Police Chief are collaborating with the contractor, CCS, to adjust traffic signal timing around morning arrival and afternoon dismissal times at the school to improve traffic flow. Barriers on Main Street are also being moved to allow for oil deliveries to businesses. Work on these issues is ongoing, and residents or businesses with concerns are encouraged to contact the Town Manager's Office.

Shari Cornish also mentioned the possibility of additional signage to highlight that businesses remain open and to identify alternative parking options for staff. She emphasized that all Main Street businesses remain open during construction.

Old Business:

Tim Ricciardello reported that the Town is nearing the end of negotiations for the Road Crew's next three-year union contract. The agreement is expected to be ready for the April meeting, at which time the Board will be asked to authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract.

Ceilidh Galloway-Kane thanked everyone who attended and participated in Town Meeting. Larry Fliegelman also thanked Audrey Grant for serving as moderator and noted that she did an excellent job. Appreciation was also expressed for the support of NEKarts and Town staff.

7:06 P.M. Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Casey Rowell, Finance Director

Minutes approved by: _____
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Chair