

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, MAY 21, 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- *absent*

Others Present

David Upson Jr., Town Manager
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator
Mike Henry, Police Chief
Kristen Leahy, Zoning/Floodplain Admin.
Rachel Kane
Andrew Gilbert
Joe Nudell

Others Present

Robert Gerrish
Amy Rosenthal
Jessica Louisos-SLR
Emily Finnegan- *Zoom*
Paul Cillo
Danny Hale
Mike Miller- *Zoom*
Josephine Alling-SLR

Regular Meeting

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

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – None

6:01 P.M. – Communication from the audience – Amy Rosenthal let the Select Board know that when considering the upcoming Town Meeting and concerns surrounding equity issues, the equity committee would be willing to offer guidance to the Select Board. David mentioned that it would be an appropriate opportunity for the equity committee to weigh in.

Robert Gerrish introduced himself as a candidate for Caledonia County Sheriff.

Danny Hale discussed the following items:

1. Improving the Zoom quality for meetings.
2. He recently visited the cemeteries and expressed concern about their condition. He proposed creating a cemetery commission with five members and hopes to have the matter voted on at Town Meeting. He asked the Select Board either for permission to proceed or to work with David on the effort. Ceilidh noted that each cemetery is in a different stage of need and that there are separate projects associated with each one. She stated that she would like to see a plan developed for each cemetery. David mentioned that the Town has funding available for these projects. Danny added that Joe Mangan is doing a good job and emphasized that his comments were not a criticism of Joe's company.
3. Regarding the old Gazette building, Danny stated that he does not believe FEMA should acquire the property. Instead, he believes the Town should purchase the property, demolish the building, and redevelop the space so Main Street does not lose the property entirely. Tim asked whether acquiring the building would create significant liability for the Town. Danny clarified that he envisioned converting the space into a parking lot. Danny also suggested that the Town should consider acquiring Mike Brochu's property as well for parking spaces.

6:16 P.M. – Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of May 7, 2026, the minutes

of the Informational meeting of May 7, 2026, and the minutes of the Special Select Board meeting of May 13, 2026

Upon motion by Larry Fliegelman, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the regular Select Board meeting of May 7, 2026, the minutes of the informational town meeting Select Board meeting of May 7, 2026, and the special meeting minutes of May 13, 2026.

6:17 P.M. – 6:27 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that the MERP insulation work through NEK Comfort is scheduled to begin at the Town House next week, followed by work at the Memorial Building and then the Public Safety building. This work is being funded through a state grant. David noted there was a second phase of the grant for the installation of heat pumps; however, the Town is waiting until the current installation work is completed before moving forward with that portion.

David has had several meetings with the Town's project manager and the engineers regarding the bridge projects. The project manager is working on transitioning FEMA involvement from A&E services to the construction phase.

The Town continues to meet biweekly with FEMA regarding the wastewater treatment facility and fire station. There have not been many updates. David noted that the Town needs to move forward by issuing a request for proposal (RFP) for design work. Currently the Town needs to decide if the design work is going to include rebuilding or relocating and how to proceed without spending unnecessary time or money on design work prematurely.

Funding updates for the Hardwick Rescue project were also discussed, specifically the congressionally delegated funding application. David noted there is still significant work ahead on the project.

The Town previously partnered with Heartbeet Life Sharing on a grant application two years ago. Heartbeet recently withdrew from the grant. David reported that the Town incurred legal fees related to the matter, which will be repaid by Heartbeet.

The bridge and wall project remains on schedule and is progressing well. A minor redesign to the micro pile system was required in order to coordinate tie-ins with the wall structure, and the issue has since been resolved. The cofferdam installed at the site performed well during recent rain events. David also reported that the north abutment has been completed.

Ceilidh asked about the traffic flow for SpringFest. The parade route and traffic pattern will remain the same as in previous years, and the street fair will be located behind the American Legion. The fire and police departments will assist with traffic control.

6:27 P.M. – 6:31 P.M. Hardwick Police Department (HPD) Report – Given by Mike Henry

Mike reported that the radio system is still not operable. He has been in communication with Burlington Communication and during the set up it was discovered that the fiber was not wired properly. Mike is hoping

this will be resolved by June.

Mike has ordered a radar solar sign and will be placing it on Church Street in East Hardwick. Mike plans to apply for grants for two more signs.

The state is going to mandate e-tickets by 2030. HPD is working on a plan and will apply for grant money in order to get the cruisers outfitted with the proper equipment. Shari asked how each department in the state was going to implement this since not every town has cell service. This is still unknown.

There have recently been complaints about early morning traffic. Mike has increased patrol.

Next Friday, Officer Morris will graduate from the Police Academy. She will have one-week post-graduation to complete but then will be back at HPD full-time.

6:32 P.M. – 7:10 P.M. Item #1 – Presentation of the Jackson Dam design scope of work and cost estimate given by the Caledonia County Natural Resource Conservation District

Emily Finnegan, with the Caledonia County Natural Resource Conservation District, along with Jessica Louisos and Josephine Alling from SLR originally presented a feasibility analysis on March 26. At the time, the Select Board approved to gather further information, cost estimates, and funding options in order to get to design phase.

Tonight, Emily, Jessica, and Josephine presented that information.

Please see the attached sediment sample locations, the topographic survey area of the Dam, the proposed tasks in order to get to the removal design and draw down. Attached are also the proposed cost estimates for the proposed tasks. Emily explained that she's hoping to pursue grant funding to cover the costs, and not have it fall on the Town.

The March 26 minutes will have more detail on the project as a whole. Currently we are trying to break the steps down and gather further information. The data that was collected and presented tonight was to get the project to a 30% design.

Jessica explained that during the process they have communicated with State and Federal regulators. One regulator suggested that they also consider doing asbestos testing.

David asked Jessica how the task list was developed and whether it was a standard list. Jessica explained that SLR has removed approximately thirty dams in Vermont, so the list is based on that experience. However, additional tasks were included for Hardwick due to the specific type of dam and the Town's past flood issues. She stated that the goal is to ensure everyone feels comfortable with the situation moving forward

On the proposed task form, there's a box that are items that are currently not included at this time. Ceilidh asked at what point does the Select Board need to decide whether those items need to be included. Jessica said after the 30% design as they want to focus on other items first. The Town of Hardwick may not need these items, but more information is needed to determine that.

Ceilidh also asked if the Town had to do all of the tasks at once, or could we break it up and allow public engagement throughout the process. Jessica was unclear, but thought if the tasks were tied to funding, then they all would need to be completed.

Ceilidh asked about timing for proposal as she wants to make sure there's public engagement. Jessica stated that in order to give the best information to the public and decide whether a removal will happen or not, these tasks would need to be completed first.

Jessica encouraged the Select Board to create a steering committee. Kristen created the format for the steering committee, please see attached.

Ceilidh asked if the board were to accept this project moving forward, is there a timeline. Emily stated it depends on how fast funding could be obtained. However, the tasks would take roughly 3-5 years to be completed.

The Select Board is open to more information but does not want to commit to the full project. Ceilidh asked Emily to provide a letter of support and project timeline for the Select Board next meeting.

7:10 P.M. – 7:11 P.M. Item #2– Select Board to consider approving the 2026 Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to approve the 2026 Local Emergency Management Plan.

7:12 P.M. – 7:13 P.M. Item #3 – Select Board to consider approval of a 3-year IBEW contract for the Highway Department collective bargaining unit and to authorize the Town Manager to sign it- *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to sign the 3-year IBEW contract for the Highway Department.

7:13 P.M. – 7:43 P.M. Item #4 — Select Board to consider appointing members to the Buffalo Mountain Steering Committee- *Action needed*

There were fourteen applicants that had sent in their letter of interest. The committee is committing to seventeen members; however, the meetings are open to the public and anyone can weigh in. Those 17-members are the only ones who can actually vote.

Larry asked for clarification about residents. The document states that it must be a Hardwick resident or taxpayer.

David asked if there are specific requirements that the land trust will give that the steering committee must follow. Paul Cillo stated that the goal is to develop a management plan in which it needs to get approved by the land trust. Paul does not know if there's predetermined items for the land trust, but Hannah Redmon will be at the meetings to assist.

There was discussion on one of the individuals that applied as they are from Greensboro but has property on

Buffalo Mountain. The Select Board thinks that the applicant's land is technically in Woodbury and would like Amanda to reach out for clarification.

Larry asked about the Select Board, Planning Commission, and Conservation Commission being members on the committee. Joe Nudell clarified that there are members from the Conservation Commission and Trails committee that are part of the thirteen applicants. It was agreed that a Select Board member would join but not be a voting member.

There will be a table at Springfest with applications to be on the steering committee and fill in the remaining seats. Tim stated that he would like to wait until after Springfest before making a decision.

Tim asked about the requirements for the meetings. Paul Cillo stated that for the first three months it would be two meetings per month, and two-hour meetings. Amanda pointed out that the document stated periodically, which the Select Board asked Amanda to reach out to the thirteen to make sure they were still on board for that commitment.

Paul wanted to start the process and get a date set for the first meeting. He suggested June 1. Paul presented the board with a draft agenda, see attached.

Amanda raised the concern about timing. If the four remaining members don't get appointed until June 4, then they will miss the June 1 meeting and Ceilidh stated that it would be fine.

Joe asked how many people need to attend each meeting to make a quorum, and the Select Board stated at least seven.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to appoint thirteen of the fourteen applicants who applied to the Buffalo Mountain Steering Committee and asked them to attend the first meeting on June 1 at 6 pm pending library availability. Tim abstained.

The thirteen people are:

- Andrew Gilbert
- Brendan Buckley
- Danny Hale
- James Kelley
- Joe Nuddell
- Julie Sullivan
- Leif Goldberg
- Lucian Avery
- Matt Renaud
- Paul Cillo
- Phillip Robertson
- Renaud Demers
- Sue Rivard

7:44 P.M. – 7:49 P.M. Item #5 — Select Board to discuss the Select Board retreat- Date & topics.

The Select Board originally voted to have the retreat on June 23. There was a conflict with one of the members. Tim suggested Tuesday, June 30 or Wednesday, July 1. Shari suggested that the Board does not need to decide tonight, and those dates do not work for Town Staff as that is year end. Town staff will start to work on the agenda.

The topics that the Select Board would like to discuss are as follows:

Highway Garage
Waste Water Treatment Facility
Jackson Dam
Town Meeting
Flood mitigation
Affordability
Committees and the organizational structure
Policies
Housing/ Development

Select Board Reports - None

New Business –

- Ceilidh would like to thank everyone who came to the Special Town Meeting.
- The Select Board heard a lot from the community that the Select Board can do better- Ceilidh would like to dig more into this and create a Town meeting steering committee/task force.
- Ceilidh would like a Public Engagement policy to be created for real estate- she asked this to be placed on a future agenda.
- Ceilidh agreed that the Select Board needs to look at better Zoom options as the current system does not work when attending meetings. Tim added that he would like to see more people attend meetings in person.
- Shari would like the Town Staff to advertise the agenda in more places such as Front Porch Forum.
- Shari suggested two different informational meetings before Town Meeting to get more participants.

Old Business –

- Shari would like to revisit the Recreation policy.
- Larry would like to talk about the Economic Development Loan policy. Shari said it would be on the June 4 meeting.
- Shari asked about the trail head work and when it would be completed and David mentioned July.

7:58 P.M. Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator

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