MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING
20 CHURCH ST. 3rd FLOOR AND VIA ZOOM

Select Board	**Others Present**	**Others Present**
Ceilidh Galloway-Kane, Chair	David Upson, Town Manager	Alberta Miller
Shari Cornish, Vice Chair	Casey Rowell, Finance Director	Heidi Krantz
Tim Ricciardello	Mike Henry, Police Chief - *Zoom*	Dean Hale - *Zoom*
Larry Fliegelman	Kristen Leahy, Zoning/Floodplain Admin.	Raymonda Parchment
Derek Richardson	Tonia Chase, Town Clerk	Danny Hale - *Zoom*
	Jake Lester, Hardwick Electric	Michael Miller -*Zoom*
	Kent Osborne - *Zoom*	Rose Friedman
	Gary Circosta – *Zoom*	Ross Connelly
	Georgia Allen	Stew Arnold
	Steven Roselli	Kaydence Tucker
	Karli Thompson	Mary Gagnon
	Peter Moskovitz	Justin Lander
	Michael Parker	Oly Parker
	Rob Montgomery	Lydia Parker
	Kelly Dolan, Salvation Farms	

Regular Meeting

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

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – *Remove Item #6 and move other items up accordingly. We'll cover it at a future meeting as we need to collect more information.*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to adjust the agenda, as stated.

6:01 P.M. Communication from the audience –

Raymonda with the *Hardwick Gazette* introduced Georgia Allen as their new intern.

6:01 P.M. – **6:02 P.M.** Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of June 18, 2026

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the regular Select Board meeting of June 18, 2026.

6:02 P.M. – 6:05 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that we continue to work on the scope of work changes for FEMA projects, specifically the bridge crossings and the slope stabilization.

David provided an update on the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) projects. Insulation and air sealing work at the Town House has been completed. The contractor will next begin work at the Public Safety Building, where insulation removal is expected to take place next week to facilitate the installation of heat pumps and related HVAC work in the attic. Once work at the Public Safety Building is complete, the contractor will move to the Memorial Building to complete additional insulation improvements.

David reported that work has begun on the rail restoration project near the Depot and trailhead. Gravel Construction is completing the restoration work. Once the rail restoration is finished, the contractor will begin work on the trailhead improvements, including preparing the site for the installation of kiosks, picnic tables, and other amenities.

David reported that construction of the pedestrian bridge continues to progress. The wall footing was poured this week, and work is proceeding well overall. The project is currently running approximately one week behind schedule. The next phase includes pouring the wall adjacent to the sidewalk and bridge abutment. The bridge is anticipated to be set during the second week of August.

David also provided an update on the Fire Station FEMA project, noting that discussions with FEMA continue to move forward and that the outlook for relocating the fire station is optimistic.

6:05 P.M. – 6:08 P.M. Hardwick Police Report – Given by Mike Henry

Mike reported that they had a recent review to check for compliance with the Criminal Justice Training Council standards. This is a periodic review. The result was that they are complying.

Ariana Morris, who finished the Police Academy in May, is finishing up her field training and should be complete around the middle of next week and then be able to work on her own.

Mike reported that they have hired James McGowan as a part-time officer. He hasn't started yet but will be soon. He'll need to complete the officer's attestation and be appointed at the next Select Board meeting.

Mike gave an update on the radio system upgrade. The repeaters have been installed at West Hill and at the police station. The Greensboro one will be installed soon. They are working out kinks with Burlington Communications before that one is actually installed.

6:10 P.M. – 6:19 P.M. Hardwick Electric Report- Given by Jake Lester

Commissioner Jake Lester reported that the Hardwick Electric Commissioners approved the purchase of additional shares in Vermont Transco. He explained that the investment represents ownership in the regional electric transmission infrastructure used by utilities throughout the state and is expected to provide returns over time.

Jake reported that the Commissioners have been working on next year's budget following completion of the 2025 audit. He noted that they had an operating deficit of approximately $541,000, primarily due to higher purchased power costs, along with increases in operating, maintenance, and material expenses.

He said the management team continues to work on budgeting and financing future capital projects. He explained that it is common for electric utilities to borrow funds for major infrastructure improvements, such as system buildouts and advanced metering infrastructure, and that regulators generally expect utilities to demonstrate ongoing investment in their systems when considering rate increase requests.

Jake also shared that the Commissioners are planning a joint meeting with neighboring electric utilities, including Morrisville, Hyde Park, and Stowe, to learn more about each other's operations and identify opportunities for collaboration.

He also reported that additional progress has been made on maintenance work at Wolcott Dam and that discussions have also continued regarding other dams, including the Jackson Dam.

Jake discussed the recent power outage, explaining that it resulted from the failure of a component at the substation that serves all Hardwick Electric customers. He emphasized the importance of continuing to invest in and upgrading the electrical system to improve reliability and increase capacity.

Jake noted that Commissioner Roger Prevot attended his final meeting in June.

Board member Shari Cornish asked whether outage notifications could be distributed through TextMyGov. Town Manager David Upson responded that Hardwick Electric is in the process of implementing TextMyGov. Shari commented that such notifications would have been especially helpful to local businesses during the recent outage.

Ceilidh thanked Roger Prevot for his many years of service as a Hardwick Electric Commissioner.

6:09 P.M. – 6:10 P.M. Item #1 – Select Board to review and approve the annual Internal Financial Controls Checklist – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to approve the annual Internal Financial Controls checklist.

6:19 P.M. – 6:20 P.M. Item #2 – Select Board to consider approving liquor license renewals for DG Retail LLC d/b/a Dollar General and The Cork & Fork, LLC– *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the following liquor licenses (Cork & Fork has a new owner and is not a renewal)

<u>First Class License:</u>
The Cork & Fork, LLC

Second Class License:
DG Retail, LLC d/b/a Dollar General

Third Class License:
The Cork & Fork, LLC

6:20 P.M. – 6:22 P.M. Item #3 – Select Board to consider reappointing Ken Davis and Kole for 3-year terms on the Hardwick Planning Commission (HPC) – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to reappoint Ken Davis and Kole to 3-yr terms to the Hardwick Planning Commission.

There is going to be at least one seat open on the HPC soon and possibly another in the near future. There is an alternate seat available now. Talk to Kristen Leahy if you are interested in joining.

6:22 P.M. – 6:22 P.M. Item #4 – Select Board to consider reappointing Kole for 3-year term on the Hardwick Development Review Board – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to reappoint Kole to a 3-yr term to the Development Review Board.

6:22 P.M. – 6:24 P.M. Item #5 – Select Board to consider reappointing Myles Kamisher-Koch for a 3-year term as a Hardwick Electric Commissioner – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to reappoint Myles Kamisher-Koch for a 3-year term as a Hardwick Electric Commissioner.

There is currently a two-year Commissioner seat vacancy. Commissioner meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Residents who live within Hardwick Electric Department's service area are eligible to be considered for appointment. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend one of their meetings to learn more about the role. To apply, submit a letter of interest addressed to the Select Board, in care of the Town Manager.

6:24 P.M. – 6:27 P.M. Item #6 – Select Board to review bids received for the East Hardwick Flood Buyout Demolition Project, select a contractor, and authorize the Town Manager to execute a contract with the selected bidder – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager to execute a contract with Complete Demolition for $193,188 .

6:36 P.M. – 7:07 P.M. Item #7 – Select Board to hear from Rose Friedman with Civic Standard to discuss a proposed site for a skate ramp, and how best the project could move forward

Rose Friedman of The Civic Standard presented information regarding a proposed public skatepark in Hardwick.

She reviewed the benefits of a skatepark for youth and the community, outlined the organization's efforts over the past three years to develop the project, and discussed the need for a permanent, publicly owned location that could be insured and would strengthen future grant applications. She noted that the existing seasonal mini ramp demonstrated community interest and asked the Select Board to consider partnering with the organization and identifying a suitable site to support future planning and fundraising.

Michael Parker of Skate Park Construction submitted a letter expressing support for a Hardwick skatepark. He shared his experience constructing municipal skateparks throughout Vermont and New Hampshire, stating that identifying a permanent site is the primary step in moving the project forward. He also indicated he would offer discounted pricing on a Hardwick project through the Town's competitive bidding process.

Board members discussed insurance coverage, maintenance responsibilities, usage of the existing mini ramp, and potential locations for both a temporary and permanent skatepark. Larry asked about insurance and long-term maintenance costs. There was discussion that included the possibility of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between The Civic Standard and the Town to address ongoing maintenance responsibilities. Larry also asked about usage of the existing ramp. Michael Parker and community member Steven Roselli reported that the ramp was well used last season. Roselli stated that he used the ramp approximately twice a week and observed that it was used regularly by other skateboarders and scooter riders, particularly on Fridays and on most dry days.

Ceilidh asked about insurance coverage. Michael Parker explained that municipalities typically cover skateparks under their general liability insurance with appropriate safety signage, such as advising users to skate at their own risk and wear helmets and protective equipment. Additional discussion followed regarding insurance coverage and maintenance responsibilities.

Rose noted that The Civic Standard maintains a lending library of skateboards, helmets, and protective pads, but explained that participation has declined since the temporary ramp was removed because there is no longer a dedicated place to skate.

David stated that the immediate challenge is identifying a location for the existing temporary ramp while also pursuing a permanent site for a future skatepark. Rose reiterated that the organization would like the Town to indicate its willingness to partner on the project and that the group hopes to reinstall the existing ramp only if it supports the long-term goal of establishing a permanent skatepark.

Board members expressed general support for continuing to explore the project. Tim stated that he was supportive of a partnership but wanted additional information regarding a permanent location. Ceilidh noted the importance of developing a long-term maintenance plan. Shari suggested exploring a temporary location near the Town House trailhead. Tim also suggested that the Town consider a non-binding expression of support while additional planning continues.

Tim made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to explore locating the temporary skate ramp on Town-owned property near the Town House trailhead. The motion was seconded by Shari Cornish. Motion passed unanimously.

David also reported that he has inquired about the possibility of the Town acquiring a small parcel of land owned by the school that could serve as a future recreational area outside of the floodplain.

6:28 P.M. – 6:36 P.M. Item #8 - Select Board to review and approve the Town Meeting Options Task Force structure and operating guidelines - *Action needed*

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to approve the Town Meeting Options Task Force structure document with two changes: the due date will be November 19, 2026, for the task force to present to the Select Board and changing language in the sunset clause to …"dissolves on July 16, 2027, unless otherwise extended by the Select Board."

7:07 P.M. – 7:15 P.M. Item #9 – Select Board to appoint members for the Town Meeting Task Force- *Action needed*

People who were present introduced themselves. Alberta Miller, Dean Hale, Peter Moskovitz, and Ross Connelly

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to appoint the following people to the Town Meeting Task Force:

Karen Collier
Ross Connelly
Maureen Demers
Patrick Larsen
Amy Rosenthal
Peter Moskovitz
Alberta Miller
Dean Hale

Shari and Larry will volunteer as the Select Board representatives.

Mary Gagnon asked about recording the task force meetings. We do have Zoom options, and it will be an open meeting, so it is possible that the meetings could be recorded and anyone can also attend in person.

There was a general consensus that a representative should come to a monthly Select Board meeting for updates during their process.

7:16 P.M. – 7:19 P.M. Item #10 – Select Board to appoint members to the Jackson Dam committee – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to appoint the following people to the Jackson Dam Steering Committee:

Norma Wiesen

Lesa Cathcart
Reg Phelps
Dave Gross

Kristen said that she would be able to report back on the progress as she will be involved in the committee's work. We also need a Hardwick Electric Department representative and a Select Board member. Derek will serve as the Select Board representative.

7:19 P.M. – 7:24 P.M. Item #11 – Select Board to discuss whether to initiate an amendment to the Town Traffic Ordinance to reduce the posted speed limit on T.H. #71 (Dimick Road) from 35 mph to 25 mph – *Possible action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to initiate an amendment to the Town Traffic Ordinance to reduce the posted speed limit on T.H. 71 (Dimick Road) from 35 mph to 25 mph and instructed the Town Manager's office to proceed with next steps.

Mike explained that we will need to conduct a speed study first. Therefore, the timeline that was presented in the packet is not at all feasible. The speed study will have to be done before we can move forward with public hearings and postings.

Shari asked whether the Town's traffic ordinance addresses bicycles or skateboards being ridden on Main Street sidewalks. She expressed concern about bicyclists and skateboarders traveling at high speeds on the sidewalks and the potential safety risk to pedestrians. She suggested a "walk your wheels" addition to our traffic ordinance if it doesn't exist now, especially for the S. Main business section of downtown. This change would address bicycles and skateboards that she feels have been and are dangerous to pedestrians on the sidewalk. David responded that he believes the ordinance addresses the issue and will review the language to confirm.

7:24 P.M. – 7:33 P.M. Item #12 – Select Board to draw names for the requested 2027 coin drop requests – *Action needed*

Nine organizations submitted requests for the six available coin drop months in 2027. In accordance with the Town's Coin Drop Policy, all eligible organizations were entered into a lottery, and six organizations were selected by random drawing.

Board members discussed the current policy and whether future lotteries should consider which organizations had been awarded coin drop months in previous years. It was noted that the existing policy specifies that the selection process be conducted by lottery.

All names were put into a bucket and six were drawn at the meeting. The following organizations were selected for 2027 coin drop months:

AWARE
HU/HA Alumni Association

Hardwick Historical Society
Friends of the Jeudevine Library
Hardwick Conservation Commission
Hardwick Trails

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to approve the 2027 coin drops for the six organizations that were drawn.

7:33 P.M. – 7:35 P.M. Item #13 – Select Board to review Act 162 Changes to Vermont Forest Fire Warden Law

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) has notified municipalities of changes to Vermont's forest fire laws under Act 162 of 2026, which take effect July 1, 2026. The Department has requested that the Select Board review these changes and share the information with the Town's fire department leadership.

The most significant change is that the Fire Chief of the department with primary responsibility for fire protection will automatically serve as the Town Forest Fire Warden. The Select Board will no longer approve appointments, although municipalities served by multiple fire departments must designate which fire chief will serve in that role. The Town is also responsible for ensuring FPR has current contact information for the designated Forest Fire Warden and any deputy wardens.

Perley Allen, Fire Chief, is now the Fire Warden. He appointed two deputies: Doug Casavant and Charlie Bartlett. Their contact information has been updated on the Town's website.

7:35 P.M. – 7:37 P.M. Item #14 – Fire Chief to request up to $18K out of Fire Capital to make a repair on the Tower Truck- *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to allow up to $18,000 out of fire capital to repair the tower truck.

7:37 P.M. – 7:39 P.M. Item #15 – Select Board to complete the Municipal Attestation for the Hardwick Downtown Partnership's Downtown Vibrancy Fund Grant from the State of Vermont – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to complete the Municipal Attestation for the Hardwick Downtown Partnership's Downtown Vibrancy Fund Grant from the State of Vermont.

7:39 P.M. – 7:44 P.M. Item #16 – Select Board to review the paving bids received, select a contractor and authorize the Town Manager to execute a contract – *Action needed*

There was discussion about speed tables that we want to install as a traffic calming method on West Church Street. David spoke to representatives from Warren, VT who installed speed tables and they think they are working. Pike did not submit a bid for the speed table. See the attachments for the detailed bids, *Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to have Gray's Paving do the Town's paving projects this year and authorized the Town Manager to execute a contract.*

7:45 P.M. – 7:46 P.M. Item #17 – Select Board to consider approving a water and sewer connection application for 170 Caspian Avenue – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the water and sewer connection for 170 Caspian Avenue.

7:46 P.M. – P.M. Item #18 – Select Board to hear from Salvation Farms about a request for an Economic Development "bridge" loan to support fit up of a food processing space at the Food Venture Center

Kelly Dolan, Executive Director of Salvation Farms, Inc., explained that they are requesting $50,000 to provide short-term bridge financing for the implementation of their food processing facility at the Vermont Food Venture Center in Hardwick. The organization has been awarded grant funding for the project, with all required matching funds secured. Because the grants are reimbursable, Salvation Farms must incur and pay eligible project expenses before requesting reimbursement from the grantors. The requested loan would provide temporary cash flow to cover eligible project costs until grant reimbursement proceeds are received, at which time the loan would be repaid.

Shari asked whether the project would result in job creation. Kelly explained that the business is utilizing a co-packing model through the Center for an Agricultural Economy. While the project is not expected to create new positions immediately, it is expected to strengthen the business and improve job stability, with the potential for existing part-time positions to become full-time as the business grows.

Select Board Reports: Shari shared that the first of eight performances by the Craftsbury Chamber Players took place this evening at the Town House. Performances will continue every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. for the next seven weeks. She also noted that two art exhibits are currently on display at the Town House. One of the featured artists will be present on Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and artwork will be available for purchase.

New Business: Ceilidh reminded everyone that the Jeudevine Memorial Library will celebrate its 130th birthday and the one-year birthday of its addition with a "birthday party" on Saturday from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. The event will include cake and entertainment.

Casey reported that roadside mowing began today. Derek asked about the status of street sweeping. David explained that securing a contractor has been challenging, but a contractor was ultimately found to complete sweeping in East Hardwick and some of the downtown area.

Old Business: Larry reported that he has prepared a draft Public Engagement Policy, which he plans to send to David for review. He hopes to bring the draft before the full Select Board for discussion at a future meeting.

Shari expressed concern about the vacancy in the Community Development Coordinator position and emphasized the importance of moving forward with filling the role, noting the value the previous position brought to the Town through grant funding and project development. She also noted that the Downtown Partnership works closely with the position and has projects they would like to advance.

Casey and David commented that the Town needs to evaluate its current needs and determine whether the role should be restructured with a different title and job description, such as an Economic Development position. It was noted that this would represent a substantially different position and should be considered as part of the Town's broader strategic planning and budget discussions.

In the meantime, it was confirmed that funding currently allocated for the position could be used to hire consultants on a project-by-project basis for grant writing or other specialized work if needed, allowing the Town to pursue grant opportunities without immediately filling the position.

7:56 P.M. *Upon motion Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to enter an Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA § 313 for a loan contract discussion to include the Town Manager, Finance Director and Kelly from Salvation Farms, Inc.*

8:12 P.M. Exited Executive session.

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to approve the loan request for Salvation Farms, Inc in the amount of $50,000 with the first choice of collateral being an assignment of grant proceeds and the second being the two trucks that were offered as collateral.

The Board discussed the balance of the Economic Development Fund, noting that it is approximately $315,000, excluding the outstanding Yellow Barn loan. Shari encouraged promoting the fund to increase public awareness of its availability and cited the Salvation Farms loan as an example of how the program can support economic growth and development in the community.

Derek requested an update on repayment of the $200,000 loan made to the Yellow Barn project. David reported that discussions with the NEKDC Board are ongoing regarding repayment terms. Rather than a lump-sum repayment, one option under consideration is a structured monthly repayment plan. No agreement has been finalized.

8:22 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