

**MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 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
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
Michael Miller - *Zoom*

Others Present

Peter Moskovitz

Regular Meeting

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

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – *Add an Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA § 313 for a real estate matter to include the Town Manager.*

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

***6:06 P.M.** Communication from the audience – Peter Moskovitz asked about the Town's participation in the clean water project at Caspian Beach and requested additional information. Ceilidh explained that the Town had been informed that the Orleans County Natural Resources District (OCNRD) would not be accepting the grant funding and, as a result, the project will not be moving forward.

6:00 P.M. – 6:01 P.M. Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of August 20, 2026

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of August 20, 2026.

6:01 P.M. – 6:06 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David reported that he was back in the office this week after being away the previous week and provided several updates.

The Zoning, Adaptation and Resilience Office received confirmation of FEMA and Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) funding for the final four property buyouts. Those properties are now moving through the appraisal process. David also announced a landslide presentation scheduled for September 9 at 6:00 p.m. in the Parker Ladd Community Room. State geologists will provide the presentation, and David encouraged Select Board members and residents to attend. See attachments for details on the Landslide presentation.

David and Kristen will attend a listening session and roundtable hosted by the State Treasurer's Office in Hyde Park. The session will provide an opportunity for state officials to hear from several local governments about the impacts of disasters on their communities and how disaster recovery funding can support local recovery efforts.

There has been significant interest in the Town's RFP for wastewater treatment plant engineering services.

Work on the pedestrian bridge continues to progress smoothly, with backfilling nearly reaching street level. The project remains on schedule.

Shari asked about the sections of sidewalk affected by the water main break near The Clip Joint. David confirmed that there are sections that still need to be repaired.

**Peter Moskovitz joined the meeting during the Town Manager's report. We returned to "communication from the audience" after the Manager's report, so Peter could address the Board.*

6:07 P.M. – 6:11 P.M. Hardwick Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom Fadden reported that the crew continues to add gravel to roads as needed, with recent work completed on Carey Road, Scott Road, Dutton Road, and Dusty Swamp Road. The crew also upsized a culvert on Bridgman Hill Road near Morin Lane.

The crew is finishing its final ditching work for the season near Town Farm Road. A culvert on West Hill Road is also scheduled to be replaced within the next couple of weeks. Tom expects the road will need to be closed for approximately half a day while the replacement is completed.

The crew responded to a water leak on Buffalo Street and worked with the Electric Department on brush cutting throughout the village and surrounding areas. Work was completed on Slapp Hill, Vermont Avenue, Highland Avenue, Spring Street, Lower Cherry Street, Mackville Road, Perry Lane, Sumner Street, Glenside Avenue, Lamoille Avenue, Caspian Avenue, and Marsh Road. Tom thanked Jim Lecours for assisting with his chipper during the brush cutting.

Tom reported that the shims on the grader had to be replaced and noted that the plastic replacement parts were surprisingly costly.

Looking ahead, the crew will begin transitioning to hauling gravel and buttoning up roads for the season in preparation for winter.

6:11 P.M. –6:19 P.M. Item #1— Select Board to discuss the Essential Services Complex/Highway Garage and the procedures and time frame for a proposed bond vote at the November 3 election

The Select Board discussed the proposed November 3, 2026, bond vote for the Essential Services Complex/Highway Garage project and reviewed the required timeline and procedures leading up to the vote. Discussion included deadlines for posting the official meeting warning, preparing the ballot, publishing the required newspaper notices, and holding a public informational hearing within the 30 days preceding the vote.

David said that there will be two public meetings on October 8 and 22. One will be an information session and the other will focus on the funding sources for the project.

This vote will be only for the highway garage portion of the project. The fire station relocation would be FEMA funds (still in process) and Hardwick Rescue has their own funding for their portion of the building.

6:19 P.M. – 6:33 P.M. Item #2 — Finance Director Casey Rowell to present the proposed FY27 water and sewer rates for Select Board to consider approving - *Action needed*

Finance Director, Casey Rowell, presented the proposed FY27 water and sewer rates. She explained that FY26 usage revenues came in significantly below budget and that the proposed increases are intended to bring projected revenues in line with the adopted FY27 expense budgets. The proposed rates include increases to both base and overage charges, with a typical residential customer seeing a combined increase of approximately \$64 per year, or \$16 per quarter. See attached memo and rate schedules for additional details.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Tim Ricciardello, the Select Board voted to accept the FY27 water and sewer rates as proposed.

6:33 P.M. – 6:34 P.M. Item #3 — Select Board to consider approving a banner application for the Department of Children and Families for a 2-week period on the iron fence near the Village Restaurant - *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to approve the banner application for the Department of Children and Families for a 2-week period on the iron fence near the Village Restaurant.

6:34 P.M. – 6:45 P.M. Item #4— Select Board to discuss the upcoming budget season, including goals and when certain committees will be reviewed

Ceilidh opened the discussion regarding the upcoming budget season, including the meeting schedule, which departments will be asked to attend, and what information the Board would like to see during the process. She noted that the Board will also need to consider how to handle the Recreation budget in the absence of an active Recreation Committee.

Ceilidh asked whether the Board wanted to establish a target for the maximum overall budget increase. Last year's increase of 7.33% was discussed. The general consensus was that the goal should be to keep any increase as low as possible while maintaining the current level of services. Tom noted that some Highway Department expenses have increased significantly, citing plow blades and grader teeth as examples, with some costs increasing by as much as 500%.

David reported that Senator Scott Beck had indicated that municipalities may begin to see some relief in education taxes during the FY2027-28 budget season. Tim noted that the Board needs to focus on what it can control, which is the municipal budget, rather than the education tax.

David encouraged Board members and residents to consider not only what services they want the Town to provide, but also what they might be willing to see reduced as the budget is developed. Larry stated that he does not want to see a decrease in the current level of services.

The Board also discussed ways to make residents more aware of the budget process and encourage public participation. Shari emphasized the importance of clearly identifying on meeting agendas which departments and budgets will be discussed. She also suggested that Front Porch Forum posts include a brief description of the budget topics being covered rather than only a link to the agenda. Casey noted that agendas during previous budget seasons have identified the departments scheduled for review.

Larry asked what additional steps could be taken to notify residents about upcoming budget discussions. Budget review typically begins in November and continues at each regular meeting until the budget is approved in January. Casey offered to make several posts in October reminding residents that budget season is approaching, and Shari noted that Select Board members can also post information on Front Porch Forum.

Tim agreed that the Town should make an effort to advertise the budget season and encourage participation. He expressed frustration that residents sometimes do not participate during the months of budget discussions but raise concerns after the process is complete or at Town Meeting. He emphasized that the Board welcomes residents to attend budget meetings, bring forward ideas, and provide input throughout the process. The Board agreed that public participation during budget development is both welcomed and valued.

Select Board Reports:

Tim shared that he attended a meeting along with David that was held at the library with several West Church St. residents to talk about their concerns on West Church St. about speed and the upcoming paving. He is asking the public to be considerate about speeding and safe driving on our streets.

Shari said that there are several other streets that are experiencing the same thing during the construction.

Ceilidh circled back to Peter Moskowitz's question from earlier. She reiterated that the clean water project that OCNRC was working on through a grant is not happening, primarily because no organization was willing to commit to the operation and maintenance of it for the next 10 years.

Larry said that he and Shari have been attending the Town Meeting Options Task Force meetings. There will be a survey coming out soon specifically about what people's preferences with voting.

No new or old business.

6:50 P.M. *Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to enter an executive session pursuant to 1 VSA § 313 for a real estate matter to include the Town Manager.*

6:57 P.M. *Exited Executive Session. No action taken.*

6:57 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