MINUTES REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 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	Brendan Buckley
Shari Cornish, Vice Chair	Amanda Fecteau, Payroll Administrator	Rachel Kane
Tim Ricciardello	Casey Rowell, Finance Director- *Zoom*	Michael Miller - *Zoom*
Larry Fliegelman	Tom Fadden, Road Foreman	Jack Travelstead
Derek Richardson	Kristen Leahy, Zoning/Floodplain Admin.- *Zoom*	
	Tonia Chase, Town Clerk	Molly Dockter
	Hannah Redmon**-** *Zoom*	Bruce Larrow
	Julie Sullivan	Andrew Gilbert
	Tracy Martin	Heidi Krantz

Regular Meeting

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

Ceilidh opened the meeting by thanking all voters who came out on Election Day to cast their votes. She also expressed her appreciation to Tonia and Kendra for their hard work and long hours.

6:00 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda - None

6:01 P.M. Communication from the audience – Tonia Chase reported that 1,362 voters participated in the General Election, representing 58.3% of registered voters. There were also 777 voters for the bond vote, representing 33.25% of registered voters. More than 900 absentee ballots were received. Tonia thanked the many volunteers who helped throughout the day, from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., including two Select Board members, Shari and Larry. She noted that there is also a significant amount of behind-the-scenes work that needs to be completed, including hand-counting the bond votes, verifying that both checklists match, documenting handwritten votes, entering the information into the system, and more. Without the volunteers it would be almost impossible to get through. Although the day was consistently busy, Tonia shared that everyone was kind, patient, and understanding. She expressed how thankful she is to live and work in such a wonderful community.

6:04 P.M. – **6:05 P.M.** Select Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Select Board meeting of October 15, 2026, the Public Hearing minutes of October 15, 2026, and the Public Hearing minutes of October 22, 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 October 15, 2026, the Public Hearing minutes of October 15, 2026, and the Public Hearing minutes of October 22, 2026.

6:05 P.M. – 6:12 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by David Upson

David also acknowledged the community and voters for their support of the bond vote, calling it a huge win for the community. A meeting with the architect is scheduled for Monday morning to begin moving forward with

the design. He would like a Select Board member to participate in the meetings. A list of action items will be developed following that meeting to help move the project forward. Ceilidh volunteered to be part of the discussion.

For the Fire Station, the Town is still waiting on FEMA to determine the best options moving forward. A no-rise scenario was previously submitted, but FEMA is requesting a new memo with an updated base flood elevation. This work and ongoing discussions will continue in coordination with the Town Garage project.

For the wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) Project, there has been ongoing communication with our engineer Aldrich & Elliot (A&E) to finalize the scope of work and ensure it aligns with FEMA's requirements for rebuilding at the current location. Once funding is obligated, the Town can begin moving forward with the relocation option and design as a possibility.

Demolition is scheduled for Monday for the Brush Street Property.

David attended the Vermont Local Emergency Management Director Course on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week and found it to be very helpful. Last week, David and Kristen also attended Municipal Day in Montpelier, where they participated in several different sessions throughout the day. Both found the sessions to be informative.

David met with the Regional Planner this afternoon to discuss the speed studies that were completed in East Hardwick and along Route 15 near the Yellow Barn. David would like to have a discussion of the report at a future Select Board Meeting.

The MERP Project is still ongoing. The Public Safety building has been completed, which included two new heat pumps, electrical work, and new insulation. The next phase is to have new insulation installed at the Memorial Building, hopefully within the next couple of weeks. The MERP deadline is the end of the year.

Shari asked when the Town House will be shutting down. David mentioned that it's usually in the middle of November.

6:12 P.M. – 6:19 P.M. Hardwick Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that sidewalks, crosswalks, and patch paving downtown have been completed. The work was finished on Tuesday, and the roads are now buttoned up for the year.

Ongoing maintenance is being completed on the trucks, including switching over to plow blades.

The crew has been dealing with beavers on Hopkins Hill Road and Dutton Road.

Gravel was hauled to Hardwick Farms, Mountain View, Ward Hill, Bayley Hazen, Richardson Road, Kate Brook, Buffalo Mountain, and Sawmill Road.

David asked about the paving project. Tom stated there hasn't been any further communication. The agreement stated it would be complete before winter. Ceilidh asked if this needs to be rebid. David mentioned that it will need to be rebid for it to be completed in the Spring.

Shari raised concerns about snow removal around the Pedestrian Bridge, particularly protecting the new trees and pavers. David noted that the goal is to avoid damaging the pavers or burying the trees during plowing. Tom explained their typical process, and David mentioned that the snow can't be pushed towards the railings any longer. Shari asked about trucking the snow out of the area. Tom mentioned that it would not be time efficient to do that.

6:19 P.M. –6:20 P.M. Item #1— Select Board to consider appointing David Barnowski as the CVSWMD rep for Hardwick and as a second alternate on the Hardwick Development Review Board expiring 6/30/2029 – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Derek Richardson, the Select Board voted to appoint David Barnowski as the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District representative for Hardwick and as a second alternate on the Hardwick Development Review Board expiring 6/30/2029.

6:20 P.M. –6:21 P.M. Item #2— Select Board to consider appointing Teddy Wenneker to a regular seat on the Hardwick Planning Commission expiring 6/30/2029 (currently an alternate) – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Larry Fliegelman, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to appoint Teddy Wenneker to a regular seat on the Hardwick Planning Commission expiring 6/30/2029.

6:21 P.M. –6:24 P.M. Item #3— Kristen Leahy to give updates from the Zoning/Floodplain/Resilience & Adaptation Office

Kristen provided an update on several ongoing projects and initiatives, including the Granite Street Flood Resilience Plan, property buyouts and future property uses, the Jackson Dam project, the River Corridor and Watershed Projects, the Municipal Plan and future housing projects, Emergency Planning and Preparedness, public education and watershed efforts, and State and National contributions.

She also provided an update on staffing levels for both the Development Review Board and the Planning Commission.

Please refer to Kristen's full report for additional details on each of these topics. Thank you, Kristen, for all of your hard work and continued efforts.

The Zoning Office will be closed from November 6 through December 6. If you have any questions during this time, please contact the Town Manager's Office.

Shari asked for an update regarding the old Hardwick Gazette building. Kristen stated that the Town is waiting for the appraisal to come back.

6:24 P.M. –6:39 P.M. Item #4— Select Board to consider approving the final Management Plan, along with the forest management plan for the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest – *Action needed*

Brendan Buckley provided an overview of the changes made to the plan. The language regarding hunting has been cleaned up to ensure it aligns with codes and laws. He also mentioned that the section regarding action items for the future Board has been changed to bullet points rather than have them numbered. He mentioned that they received the forest plan. Within the plan, the forest report divides the property into five sections. Currently, there does not appear to be any valuable timber ready for harvest. The report also identifies a fair amount of honeysuckle that needs to be addressed, along with cleanup work along the river.

Once the property transfers to the Town, there will need to be a new task force created. Discussion took place regarding who the Town would like to serve on the ongoing oversight committee for the property. Some felt that the committee should primarily consist of members from the current group, while others felt that creating an entirely new committee would be a better approach.

Larry asked whether the governance section outlines the responsibilities and duties of the new group. It was clarified that the Select Board would need to establish the structure and responsibilities of the committee. David also noted there should be some overlap in committee membership and that finding enough members may be challenging. Ceilidh asked if the new committee would begin following the anticipated closing in January, and it was confirmed.

Hannah explained that both the Management Plan and Forest Management Plan need approval from the Town of Hardwick and two additional organizations, Northern Rivers Land Trust and The Vermont Housing Conservation Board. All three must sign off before closing can take place. Legal documents for the closing are also being prepared.

Ceilidh expressed that she would like to wait for the November 19 meeting before moving forward with the final plan as the Select Board only received the documentation hours before the meeting and haven't had a chance to fully review the documentation. Hannah suggested reviewing the documents and providing her with any requested changes. Ceilidh noted that this review had already taken place on October 1 and would prefer to receive the final copies after the other two organizations have completed their reviews.

David asked whether the other two organizations had reviewed the plans, and Hannah confirmed that they had. The group discussed waiting for the remaining reviews and signatures, potentially bringing the finalized documents back on November 19 or December 3.

Rachel Kane expressed her appreciation for having Brendan involved, noting that his knowledge and guidance helped keep the process on track. She also thanked Jack and Hannah for the significant time, thought, and effort they put into the project, commenting that it had been a great process. Brendan also described the group as remarkable, recognizing everyone's willingness to share their knowledge and contribute to the process. He also acknowledged Hannah's remarkable leadership throughout the project.

6:50 P.M. –6:47 P.M. Item #5— Select to consider giving their consent on USGS installing a stream gauge upstream of Hardwick to collect weather data – *Action needed*

Molly Dockter from NVDA explained that she was not involved in the original grant process, but another NVDA staff member had secured funding for the water gauge. The LVRT bridge was identified as the proposed

location for installation. As she was unfamiliar with the process, she leaned on Kristen to explain the process. Kristen mentioned that she has been working on the project for three years. The gauge would be mounted on the side of the bridge and provide real-time information about rising water levels, allowing for earlier warnings and better communication between communities. Kristen asked Molly to explain the project further. Molly explained that the funding has been secured for the first two years. After that, the anticipated cost would be approximately $20,000. Molly explained that NVDA is committed to helping raise funds on behalf of the towns, and the ongoing expense would not fall on the Town of Hardwick.

Derek asked about ongoing maintenance responsibilities. Molly explained that the gauge has to been checked to ensure it is measuring correctly and that individuals service the equipment every three months to ensure it continues working and collecting data. Molly clarified that maintenance would not be the responsibility of Hardwick.

Derek asked for clarification regarding the transmitter sending information to other communities. David pointed out that some of this information can be sent to the National Weather Service. Derek acknowledged this but explained that the Town of Hardwick is already keeping a close eye on the river levels. David agreed, but stated that the gauge would allow communities such as Lamoille to receive information when water levels in Hardwick begin rising, providing an additional heads-up before flooding reaches their area.
Kristen explained that the gauge would provide another tool for the Lamoille Valley communities to monitor rising floodwaters. Currently, the Town often relies on police officers and individuals to report changing water conditions. Having an online gauge would allow more people and communities to access the information directly. She also explained that this gauge would become part of a larger regional monitoring system. If funding is no longer available in the future, the equipment could be removed, which Molly confirmed that it could be removed at any point.

Upon motion by Tim Riccardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to give consent for USGS to install a stream gauge upstream of Hardwick to collect weather data.

6:47 P.M. – 7:42 P.M. Item #6 — Finance Director Casey Rowell to present the first drafts of the following FY28 budgets: Highway Department, Trails, Buildings, and Capital Funds

The Finance Director went through each department one at a time offering comments about increases and decreases.

Discussion highlights included the following:
~Highway Department increasing about 9% overall due to diesel fuel costs and rising costs of repairs, culverts and truck maintenance
~Capital funds remain stable other than decreasing the capital general fund set aside specifically the DR4720 Local share because we reserved $100,000 last year and can start decreasing that amount as the repairs will be a phased approach over a few years.
~Trails budget is flat with a $350 decrease
~Buildings are increasing 14% due to the price of heating oil – we are converting the Public Safety Building to propane

See the meeting attachments for the detailed drafts.

7:43 P.M. – 7:43 P.M. Item #7— Select Board to consider approving an amendment (addition) to the Town's Procurement Policy – *Action needed*

Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello, seconded by Larry Fliegelman, the Select Board voted to approve the amendment to the Town's Procurement Policy.

Select Board Reports: None

New Business:

- Shari reported that the planter sponsorship program has officially started to help fund planters for the downtown lamp posts. Community members, neighbors, and local groups are encouraged to sponsor a planter.

Old Business:

- Shari would like to make a greater effort educating the public on the Local Options Tax ahead of the Town Meeting vote. She proposed possibly creating a task force in collaboration with the Hardwick Downtown Partnership to provide information needed, assuming it will be on the warning. Shari and Heidi attended a webinar, and VLCT strongly encouraged creating an ordinance on how the revenue will be spent. Shari has created a draft ordinance and would like to see it added to the next agenda for discussion. Larry and Tim, although they support the overall Local Options Tax, they're not sure this is the right time. Shari stated it's only a 1% increase. Larry stated that the Town just passed a $6 million dollar bond, and asking the taxpayers to distribute further funds might be a bit difficult. Ceilidh would like to look at the wording at the last Town Meeting and discuss it further. It was also pointed out that even if the Select Board move forward, the voters ultimately have the final say.

- Ceilidh stated that the Select Board is officially in budget season and encouraged the public to get involved.

7:52 P.M. *Upon motion by Tim Ricciardello , seconded by Derek Richardson , the Select Board voted to enter an executive session pursuant to 1 VSA § 313 for a personnel matter to include the Town Manager.*

8:29 P.M. Exited executive session. *No action taken.*

8:29 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