

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FACILITIES & SERVICES

Hardwick's government

Prior to 1988, Hardwick had both a Village and a Town government. In 1988, they merged into one entity and a new Town charter was written and approved by the Vermont Legislature. Hardwick operates under a Town Manager form of government. The manager reports to the Select Board made up of five elected citizens. The manager is responsible for the day to day operations of the Town and prepares the annual budget for approval by the Select Board. Staff employed by the Town includes a police chief, police officers, public works foreman and crew, water and wastewater systems operator, administrative staff persons and a half time zoning administrator.

There are a number of boards, committees, and positions appointed by the Select Board. These include the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board, Conservation Commission, Hardwick's representative to the Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), the Hardwick Electric Department Board of Commissioners, and the Hardwick Recreation Committee. In addition to the 5 members of the Select Board, Town Clerk, and Treasurer, there are also more than twenty elected positions including three listers, three auditors, two constables (no authority assigned), four cemetery commissioners, and seven library trustees. Adoption of budgets and election of officials are done at the annual Town Meeting, held the first Tuesday in March.

Water systems

The Town of Hardwick operates a water system that serves 646 customers in the main business and residential district of Hardwick including the former Village and the industrial park. The Hardwick Water Department is funded entirely by user fees and receives no money from the Town General Fund.

The East Hardwick Fire District operates a water system supplying 70 customers in the Village of East Hardwick. User fees fund the system. The system is fed by gravity from a well field and is stored in a concrete reservoir above the village for delivery to system users. There are several hydrants in the Village area, maintained by the Fire District.

Sewage and septic systems

The Hardwick Sewer Department serves 582 customers, covering an area similar to the water lines. The Hardwick Sewer Department, like the Water Department, is funded entirely by user fees and receives no money from the Town General Fund. The wastewater treatment facility is an aerated lagoon system built in 1980. It has a rated capacity of 371,000 gallons of domestic sewage per day.

One significant area of concern is the age of the wastewater collection system. Some of the sewer lines date back 100 years or more. Town staff have identified streets where sewer lines have partially collapsed, but the Town has made significant efforts to slip line and replace bad sections of piping and that effort will continue until all damaged lines have been repaired.

Outside of the village service area, all sewage is treated via individual, on-site septic systems. Permitting and enforcement of these systems is the responsibility of the State Department of Environmental Conservation Regional Office in St. Johnsbury.

Public safety

Police

The Police Department's service area includes approximately 75 square miles, including the Towns of Hardwick and Greensboro. The Department currently maintains a staff of 8 full-time Certified Police Officers, 2 part-time Police Officers, and a Dispatcher/Administrative Secretary. The Officers consist of a Chief of Police, Sergeant, Detective, and uniformed Patrol Officers.

Rescue

The Hardwick Emergency Rescue Squad responded to 512 calls in 2017, including standby at community events and at structure fires. The service area includes all of Hardwick Greensboro, Craftsbury, Wolcott, Woodbury, and Stannard, as well as parts of Walden, Elmore, West Wheelock, and East Calais.

Fire

Currently the Fire Department has 20-23 members. Hydrants are well distributed throughout the area served by the village water system. If the reservoir is drawn down to a certain level, an automated system sends water from the Town wells to the reservoir, in order to maintain adequate water flows. There are several hydrants in the village area which are maintained by the Fire District. Presently, the hydrants in East Hardwick are not in service due to undersized waterlines feeding them.

The Department has been installing a dry hydrant system to give better access to water in the rural areas of town. There are currently dry hydrants on West Hill, Cobb School Road, Porter Brook Road and two at Mackville Pond. The Fire Department coordinates with the Rescue Squad and has a "jaws of life" to assist them. Hardwick participates in a Mutual Aid Agreement with other area Departments.

Emergency Coordination

The Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) provides Public Assistance grants through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to Vermont cities and towns to repair damaged infrastructure after a presidentially declared disaster. The state typically contributes half of the required 25 percent non-federal match for approved projects. Under new ERAF rules, the Town receives level funding from the state as a match to FEMA funds. The Hazard Mitigation plan was updated and accepted in 2018.

Hardwick Area Community Justice Center

The Hardwick Area Community Justice Center provides restorative resolution options to people affected by crime and to those responsible for crimes and other offenses to individuals and the

community. Volunteer-led restorative programs and practices were utilized for the Hardwick Area community to process a total of 35 case referrals in 2018 with an 86% positive completion rate.

AWARE

AWARE is a non-profit established in 1984 and dedicated to resolving the causes and effects of domestic violence and sexual assault in the greater Hardwick area. AWARE provides services year-round, 24 hours a day. The organization is focused on two priorities: crisis intervention and prevention education.

Health services

The Hardwick Area Health Center is part of Northern Counties Health Care, Inc., a non-profit organization administering several rural health clinics in the Northeast Kingdom. It operates a family care facility providing general health care for Hardwick and surrounding towns. Health maintenance is emphasized through a variety of educational programs and special clinics.

Hardwick is also fortunate to have two dental offices- the Hardwick Dental Group and Northern Counties Dental Center. There are also local specialists in physical therapy as well as a variety of mental health providers. Hardwick is also home to many holistic medical providers such as chiropractic care, Reiki, acupuncture, massage therapy, and more.

Copley Hospital is the closest full care facility, located in Morrisville, 13 miles to the west. Providing continuity of care, the Health Center physicians are also members of the staff at Copley Hospital. Other area hospitals include North Country Hospital in Newport, Northern Vermont Regional Hospital in St. Johnsbury, Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin, and the UVM Medical Center in Burlington.

Child care

Childcare is a critical service for many families, especially single parent families and where both parents work. Child care facilities are all privately operated although there are some state programs to help individuals and families pay for the service. According to the state childcare database (www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us), in 2018 there were 7 registered child care homes and three licensed child care facilities in town.

Jeudevine Memorial Library

The Jeudevine Memorial Library has transformed in the past twenty years from a building from the past – full of old books – to a vibrant modern place with new collections and excellent educational



programs for both children and adults. As more people use the library, it becomes increasingly pressing that the library have more space to offer the collections, services and ADA accessibility. A capital campaign is underway to expand the Jeudevine.

“We need an accessible library with a pleasant meeting room for community groups.”

Hardwick Resident from the 2018

What Places Would You Improve? Survey

Cemeteries

There are seven cemeteries in the Town of Hardwick with four of these under the care of the Hardwick Cemetery Trustees. Main Street Cemetery, Maple Street Cemetery, Fairview Cemetery, and Sanborn Cemetery are all under the care of the Cemetery Trustees. West Hill Cemetery, Hardwick Center Cemetery, and Hardwick Street Cemetery are under the authority of the Select Board and are under the care of the town public works crew.

Recreation facilities

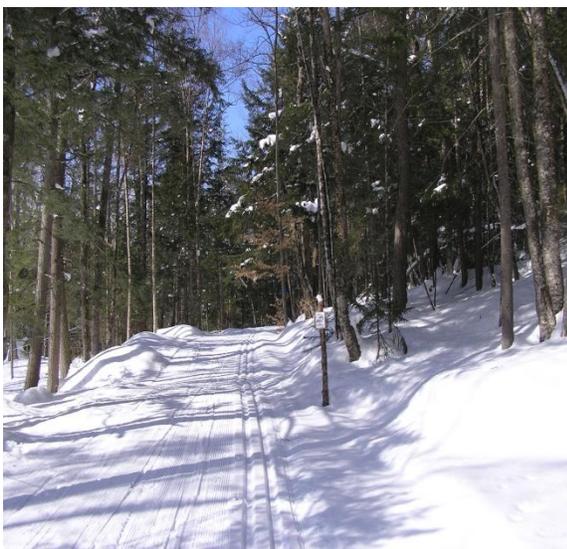
The Town has a volunteer Recreation Committee with a paid part-time coordinator who coordinates a number of activities for community members including a summer swimming program, an outdoor skating rink at Atkins Field, and a variety of on-going activities. The Committee is currently improving the Mackville Pond Recreation Area by adding new tables, grills, and a new playset.

“Make Mackville Pond more ‘family friendly’ again.”

Hardwick Resident from the 2018 What Places Would You Improve? Survey

Hardwick’s recreation facilities also include the ball fields at Hazen Union High School and at the Elementary School. Men and Women’s softball leagues use Hazen Union during the summer as well as two privately maintained fields, Shepard’s field on Bridgman Hill and the Hootie Dome in East Hardwick. Little League is played at the Hardwick Elementary field. Hodgdon field, located on the corner of Cottage and Cherry Streets is used for T-Ball. There are also two public tennis courts located at Hazen Union.

The Center for Agricultural Economy has improved the recreational facilities at Atkins Field. There is now a bicycle pump track and community gardens. Atkins Field is in the midst of a multi-phase renovation which will ultimately include hiking trails and outdoor education spaces, as well as the winter skating rink.



“Atkins Field is a great asset – particularly with the cooperation of the Ag Center.”

Hardwick Resident from the 2018 What Places Do You Love? Survey

The volunteer Hardwick Trails Committee (under the Recreation Department) maintains six miles of hiking/walking trails, groomed for cross country skiing in the winter, and six miles of single-track

biking trails. These trails, begun in 2003, are located in the woodlands behind Hazen Union School. They host nature-based events, races, charity fund-raising events as well as the annual Pumpkin Walk in October which draws 500-700 community participants.

The Town of Hardwick is currently making plans to extend a bike path west of the village. This trail system would also use existing paths maintained by the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST).

In addition to the Lamoille has an entire network of trails Vermont All-terrain vehicle (VASA) also has plans for an in Hardwick.



Valley Rail Trail, the VAST throughout the state. The Sportsman's Association expanded ATV trail network

"I would love the rail trail/bike open."

"Let's get the Rail Trail finished East Hardwick!"

Hardwick Resident from

path to be finished and

through town and connect

the 2018 What Places Would

You Improve? Survey

The plan is to connect the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, the Hardwick Trails, the Hardwick to Woodbury Rail Trail, and other local trails. The Hardwick Trails also has a long range cooperative plan to connect to the Highland Lodge and Craftsbury Outdoor Center ski trails.

Solid waste facilities

Hardwick is a member of the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD), a municipal district formed to serve 22 towns in Central Vermont. Funding for CVSWMD expenses is covered entirely by user fees and service fees. More information on CVSWMD can be found at www.CVSWMD.org In addition to CVSWMD, there are private haulers for curbside pickup as well as All Metals Recycling (AMR) and Gates Salvage.

Town owned buildings and properties

According to the Grand List the Town of Hardwick owns 33 properties totaling 153.96 acres. These include 0.40 acre for the Memorial Building, 14.00 acres for the wastewater treatment facility, 70.5 acres on Buffalo Mountain Road and 36.5 acres on Hopkins Hill Road. In addition to the Town-owned lands the Hardwick School District owns 13.1 acres associated with the elementary school and the Hazen Union School District owns 96.7 acres with the high school. Hardwick Electric also owns 7 properties totaling 380.3 acres, most of this associated with 320 acres on Billings Road. The East Hardwick Fire District owns 94.38 acres.

Other public lands

Within the Town of Hardwick are four properties owned by the State of Vermont, two by the Agency of Transportation (AOT) and two by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife (F&W). The AOT properties are associated with the Glenside landslide region along Route 15. The F&W properties are associated with accesses onto Hardwick Lake (Craftsbury Rd) and the Lamoille River (Route 15).

Goals, Policies, & Recommendations

GOAL

- To ensure adequate facilities and services are available to protect and enhance the lives of the residents, visitors, and businesses of Hardwick.

POLICIES

- Hardwick's cemeteries should be maintained with respect and dignity and have sufficient capacity to support future need.
- Developers of large residential projects should include adequate open space for recreation by the future residents of the project.
- The Health Officer or Select Board should report any failed wastewater systems to the State for compliance with State wastewater regulations.

ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The Select Board should support efforts to fund improvements to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.