

MINUTES SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. Thursday, August 18, 2016
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING
3RD FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Select Board

Eric Remick, Chair
Kathleen Hemmens, Vice Chair
Kory Barclay
Shari Cornish
Elizabeth Dow

Others Present

Jon Jewett, Town Manager
Amanda Atwood, Payroll Administrator
Ben Cavarretta- Police Officer
Dee Massey
Roberta Drown

Others Present

Mike Bielawski-Gazette
Gail LeBlanc
Ben O' Neill
Coco Holton
Rick Holton
Robert Dragon

6:00 P.M. – Select Board Chair to call regular Select Board meeting to order

6:01 P.M. – Approval of the minutes of the regular Select Board meeting of August 4, 2016

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2016 regular Select Board meeting as written.

6:01 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda

Jon asked that the Select Board that in place of the Police Report, that it add the appointment of Brad Ferland as a Hardwick Electric Commissioner. Police Chief, Aaron Cochran did not attend the meeting.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to adjust the agenda as requested by the Town Manager.

6:02 P.M. – 6:10 P.M. Communication from the Audience

Ben O' Neill, new Hardwick resident, explained this his house is currently in the hands of the Town Lawyer's office getting ready for tax sale. He stated that the amount that was originally owed was low (less than \$200.00), but the amount more than doubled once it went to the lawyer's office. Ben asked the Select Board to consider a tax collection policy that established a minimum delinquency amount before a property was sent to tax sale through the Town's Lawyer. The tax sale and advertising fees can greatly increase the amount that is necessary to pay back.

Coco Holton also spoke about his concern with the way that the Town handles delinquent utility rate payers. He stated that water is a utility and shouldn't go to Tax Sale. Instead, it should be shut off until it's paid. Jon explained that normally the Town doesn't go to Tax Sale for very small amounts. He explained that the Town does perform disconnections of service according to State statute, but not generally for commercial property and apartment buildings. He explained that water can't always be turned off due to problems with shutoffs and winter freezeups. He also explained that the water and sewer utilities were very small entities compared to the Town and can't afford to have a significant amount of delinquent user accounts that remain unpaid for a long time. The Town would have to borrow money or charge other users higher rates, which would be unfair. Tax sales are used as part of the process in addition to disconnection of service.

6:10 P.M. – 6:20 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by Jon Jewett

Jon reported on the Water System Asset Management project, which is now underway and about the large number of water leaks that the Town has had to repair this summer. He reported that the Town has shown a reduction of about 81,000 gallons per day of water production as a result of fixing the leaks. Additionally,

there has been an approximately 32,000 gallon reduction in the wastewater flow to the Town's wastewater treatment facility. Jon also reported on the denial of the Downtown RDBG grant, the boundary adjustments for the Library, a lawn sale for the Senior Citizen building, and lastly, the Sanborn Cemetery property which has been transferred to the Town. (See report for more details.)

6:20 P.M. – 6:28 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Jon Jewett

Jon reported that the public works crew has repaired water leaks on Atkins Lane; they've installed a new variable speed drive in two of the wastewater pump stations- the one on Buffalo Street and the one on Route 14. Jon also reported that there were transfer switches installed in all three water system pump stations. On the highway aspect, the road crew has finished ditching on Montgomery Road and repairing washouts throughout the Town. The plan is to haul in stone for future ditch work on Town Farm Road and Mackville Road. Lastly, the bobcat has been in the shop for corrosion related repairs to its hydraulic systems. (See report for more details.)

6:28 P.M. – 6:29 P.M. Hardwick Select Board to consider appointing Brad Ferland and Hardwick Electric Commissioner for a 2 year term ending on June 30, 2018. Action is necessary.

Brad Ferland provided an email to the Town Manager indicating his willingness to serve a 2 year term as a Hardwick Electric Commissioner, ending June 30, 2018.

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to appoint Brad Ferland to the two year term as the Hardwick Electric Commissioner, ending on June 30, 2018.

6:29 P.M. – 6:38 P.M. Jean Hackett, Lister to discuss and ask Select Board approval to adjust the Grand List for “Errors and Omissions”, action necessary.- Given by Jon Jewett

Alberta Miller provided a memo to the Select Board, Town Manager, and Business Manager stating that after the Grand List was transmitted to the State of Vermont, the Listers discovered three important “Current Use” errors, and an error that included a Veteran's Exemption. If all the changes to the Grand List are implemented, they will reduce the Grand List by approximately \$84,500.00. (See report for more details.)

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the reduction in the Grand List in the amount of \$84,500.00, but not to send out new tax bills or change the tax rate for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

6:38 P.M. – 6:42 P.M. Item # 1, Select Board to hear from Gail LeBlanc relating to a community service activity for the Memorial Park bell. Action may be necessary.

Gail LeBlanc proposed a Community Service Project to work on the Hardwick Academy School bell. Currently, the bell is located at the Memorial Park, and Gail asked permission to repair the roof of the structure and paint it. Her grandson is in highschool and is seeking community service hours for graduation, and she would be very happy if one of his projects would be the repair of historical structures within the Town. She would also asked permission to install a plaque explaining where the bell came from and why the bell is important. Gail told the Select Board that her daycare will do a fundraiser to pay for the plaque. She said that she wants to teach her daycare children the importance of giving back to the community.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Kathleen Hemmens, the Select Board voted to approve the request made by Gail LeBlanc to clean and repair the structure of Hardwick Academy School Bell as a Community Service project, as well as installing a plaque explaining the history of the bell.

6:42 P.M. – 6:47 P.M. Item # 2, Select Board to approve Hardwick Land and Learning change to its water and sewer use. Select Board to consider approving change action necessary.

Jon stated that he recently received a Municipal Water System Service Application from Hardwick Land and Learning. Hardwick Land and Learning is located on 39 North Main Street. The service application states that Dee Massey is looking to rent a portion of the building for her business; Nodeli's. Nodeli's is a company that is designed to make and sell pre-portion meals which can be cooked at home. These meals can be ordered online and delivered, or can be picked up on-site. Dee's goal are to use as much local produce as possible, to help people within the surrounding areas reduce the stress of preparing their meals, and to help people make healthy choices. There will be some baked good as well. The flow rate in gallons per day is predicted to be around 200 gpd. There will be a three basin kitchen sink, one bathroom sink, and one toilet that will be connected to the building's sewer. Dee is predicting that the business will start the middle of October.

Upon motion by Kory Barclay, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the change in the water and sewer set-up on 39 North Main Street, in order for Nodeli's to rent part of that building.

6:47 P.M. – 7:02 P.M. Item # 3, Select Board to hear Robert Dragon request to pull logs across Town property near the Buffalo Street pump station. Lumber would be cut off from land owned by Roy Hopkins of 219 Buffalo Street, action necessary.

Robert Dragon talked to the Select Board about cutting lumber on the Town's right away in order to pay off his Delinquent Tax bills. He has been working on Roy Hopkins land and would just like to continue cutting onto what he believes to be Town land. If he goes beyond Roy Hopkins land, he will be able to cut trees that are worth a lot and uncover the sewer manholes. Eric said that the Town could not just provide him with permission as the Town may not really own the land in that area. He said if this property is really just a right of way, the Town couldn't give the wood away. He asked that the Town Manager to look into the ownership of the land and get back to Mr. Dragon.

Eric Remick stated that board shouldn't make a motion until there's more information about who owns the land. If the Town does end up owning the land, then there will need to be a contract and proof of insurance.

7:02 P.M. – 7:13 P.M. Item # 4, Select Board to discuss leasing land of the Hardwick Woodbury Rail Trail that goes from Lamoille Valley Ford to the Knights of Columbus building. Action necessary.

Jon reported that the State of Vermont has rail banked the Hardwick Woodbury Rail Trail. This trail runs from Lamoille Valley Ford, behind Tops and David Stratton's Sawmill, crosses Wolcott Street and continues behind the House of Pizza until it reaches the Knights of Columbus building on the other side of Town. The State would like the Town to lease the land and enter into a discussion with the property owners in hopes to clean up the trail and remove encroachments onto the property. Jon said that he would recommend against leasing the trails to avoid issues with tax payers at this time. He recommended the State take up the encroachment issue rather than the Town.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board has decided not to move forward with leasing the Hardwick Woodbury Rail Trail that runs along Lamoille Valley Ford, crosses Wolcott Street and goes to the Knights of Columbus.

7:14 P.M. – 7:18 P.M. Item # 5, Select Board to review and decide on changes to handicapped parking locations in Hardwick Village area. Action Necessary.

Jon reported about changes to the Town Traffic Ordinance that pertains to restricted zone/ handicap parking within the Town. (See report for more detail.). There will be details published in the Gazette.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Kory Barclay the Select Board has decided to approve the changes in the Traffic Ordinance given by Jon.

Select Board Reports

Elizabeth Dow reported that the Hardwick Library is sponsoring a Hardwick Reads Program which focuses on the story of Ernest Shackleton's expedition to the South Pole in which twenty-six men were trapped in the ice in Anartica from 1915 to 1916. This year marks the 100 anniversary of their release. The first public event will be held at the Hardwick Historical Society on August 21st, at 4pm. The Library has copies of the book.

New Busisness None

Old Business None

7:19 P.M. - Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Kathleen Hemmens, the Select Board voted to enter into an executive session to discuss Tax Sale Policy attorney recommendations.

7:47 P.M. – The Select Board came out of executive session, no action taken.

7:49 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

Minutes approved by: _____
Eric Remick, Chair of the Select Board

Minutes taken by: _____
Amanda Atwood, Payroll&Benefits Administrator