

MINUTES SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. Thursday, August 4, 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
Brittany Currie, Business Manager
Alberta Miller, Town Clerk
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
Aaron Cochran, Police Chief
Nancy Kellogg

Others Present

Nat Smith, HED
Orise Ainsworth
Coco Holton-Brown
Rick Holton
Robin Grant
Stephanie Fraser

6:00 P.M. – Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, called the regular Select Board meeting to order.

6:00 P.M. – Approval of the minutes of the regular Select Board meeting of July 21, 2016.

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Kory Barclay, the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2016 regular Select Board meeting as written.

6:01 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda – Jon reported that there would be a Hardwick Electric report given by Nat Smith after the Police Department Report.

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to adjust the agenda as stated.

6:03 P.M. - Communication from the Audience – Nancy Kellogg, the Town's representative for CVSWMMD, reported that the next step of Act 148 would be the elimination of building and yard waste from the land fill. She said that CVSWMMD was working to set up a board of municipal representatives to discuss how to deal with this part of Act 148. (See attached report)

Alberta Miller reminded people of the upcoming primary election on August 9th from 9am-7pm at the Memorial Building. She also mentioned that the first quarter water/sewer bills went out but that people would not be billed based on the meters for at least a year while data was collected. She hoped the program would show people their water usage once things were set up completely. Eric added that he thought maybe bills would show comparisons to average households as well.

6:09 P.M. – 6:23 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by Jon Jewett

Jon offered to represent the Town on the CVSWMMD Board of municipal representatives described by Nancy Kellogg. Shari Cornish offered to participate also, as often as she is able. Jon also discussed storm water planning, handicapped parking, health notice, dangerous buildings, and water system asset management (See attached reports for more details).

There was a brief discussion about current and potential handicapped parking spots in Town and a request by Larry Rossi of Woodbury to have a handicapped spot set aside for his new building on 206 South Main Street. The Board generally agreed to have Jon draft potential changes to the traffic ordinance to be

discussed at the next meeting.

6:23 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that he hoped to have all the trucks back on the road Monday as only one truck was currently running. He reported on work recently completed such as grading, excavating, culverts, hauling gravel, and brush cutting. Eric asked about the summer road projects Tom is considering this year. Tom said that the projects he has in mind include Town Farm Road (per a Vtrans requests), Montgomery Road, and Cobb School Road. Jon mentioned there had been a call about the Town applying chloride on the roads, but the truck that hauls chloride (Tom's) was currently down so it could not happen at this time.

6:30 P.M. – 6:43 P.M. Police Department Report – Given by Aaron Cochran

Aaron reported that there had been 367 incidents in July and compared statistics from January-June 2015 to January-June 2016. Kory asked how the new K9 was doing and Aaron reported he had been in school 2 days a week and would continue full time shortly, due to graduate in November but reported he was far ahead of his class. Aaron reported that parking issues continued in front of the Laundromat, at times making the road impassible for two cars, he suggested painting hash-marks to block off one parking space near the Laundromat. Aaron reported that Vermont mental health issues continue to plague the Police Department keeping one officer on shift for 29 hours last week at Copley Hospital. He mentioned that the Sheriff's Department wouldn't help out even though they would be getting paid to do so. As a result, he asked for the necessary State reimbursement to help cover costs to the Town for its hardship. Aaron also reported about a recent break in a case of a burglary spree in the area, with much of the stolen property being recovered.

6:43 P.M. – 6:47 P.M. Hardwick Electric Report – Given by Nat Smith

Nat reported about purchase power costs, health care issues, lawsuit with previous auditors, new software system, mutual assistance for Washington Electric Coop, Wolcott Hydro, and the solar project (See attached report for more details). Kory asked about the HED budget now that the office staff has been reduced and one meter reader was gone. Nat replied that a new part time person has been hired for the office and they were waiting to see if they needed more help with the recent changes in billing software. Nat noted that one of the linemen had started a grievance with the Union, which was being dealt with. He wanted people to know that there was still an opening on the HED Board of Commissioners and he hoped to see it filled.

**6:47 P.M. – 6:59 P.M. Alberta Miller, Town Clerk, to present the Town Tax Rate to the Select Board.
Select Board to consider approval of tax rate.**

Alberta reported about the reappraisal being completed and the work required in setting the tax rate (See attached sheets for more details). A discussion was held to learn more about the differences of the residential tax rate and the non-residential rate. Orise asked about the Common Level of Appraisal numbers for Hardwick. Alberta said that it should be at 100% now that the reappraisal was complete.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Kathleen Hemmens, the Select Board voted to set the 2016-2017 Municipal Tax Rate at 1.1582.

6:59 P.M. – 7:20 P.M. Item # 1, Select Board to hear from Stephanie Fraser relative to Tax Sale Statutes and Town policy and procedures.

Stephanie discussed general information about tax sales, what her family's situation was, and her suggestions to the Board for new policies and procedures dealing with tax sales (see attached sheet for more details). She said that tax sales are difficult actions for Towns to take and are so potentially devastating to

property owners that the Town should do all it can to make sure people are notified. *No action was taken, but the Board reported they would re-discuss this in a month.*

7:20 P.M. – 7:40 P.M. Item # 2, Select Board to hear the Town’s year-end financial report given by Brittany Currie, Town Business Manager.

Brittany reviewed the FY2016 end of year budget report, ending with \$99,437.02 being added to the Town's fund balance (see attached report for more details). Orise asked if the tax due date of May 10th would be considered to be moved or if the bill could be split with two payments to help the schools get their funding earlier. Alberta explained that this discussion had been brought up off and on for over 25 years and it had always been voted down at Town Meeting. She also said that the schools get money from the Town throughout the year even with the majority of taxes being collected at the end of the year. Eric said that he was not against putting this on the warning again for discussion but there would need to be a good reason to do so.

7:40 P.M. – 7:43 P.M. Item # 3, Select Board to consider approval of Coin Drop Schedule – for the Hardwick Historical Society, AWARE, and Trails.

Brittany reported that only 3 requests came in for the 2017 coin drop schedule so no drawing was needed.

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to accept the 3 coin drops for 2017 according to their requests.

7:43 P.M. – 7:55 P.M. Item # 4, Select Board to consider request to switch times for Town Meeting with the School meeting.

Orise reported that the Hardwick Elementary School Board was still 2 people short. She also mentioned that the School Board hoped to have their meeting prior to Town Meeting in hopes of having a large audience for their 20 minute meeting versus Town Meeting being 2.5 hours. She had hoped to start the school meeting at 9am and have Town Meeting however many minutes after and reported Craftsbury did this and had a better outcome this past year. Alberta expressed her support for this idea, but had concerns that the School Board had voted to hold their meeting after Town Meeting and was uncertain if it would require another similar vote to change it going forward. She also recommended a meeting start time of 9:30a.m. since the general voting starts at 9:00 a.m. Eric asked Alberta to find out more information on this item before they could consider making a decision.

7:55 P.M. – 7:58 P.M. Item # 5, Select Board to consider request by Steve Hill to place a plaque to his father (William S. Hill) on the Memorial Park water fountain.

Jon reported that William S. Hill, Dan and Steve Hill’s father, had been a very prominent person in Hardwick Town government for many years. Steve had asked to place a memorial plaque on the Memorial Park water fountain in memory of his father. Eric asked Tom what he thought and Tom said he had no issues with that. The Hill family originally had the fountain built to commemorate their father.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Kathleen Hemmens, the Select Board voted to grant the request by Steve Hill to place a plaque on the Memorial Park water fountain in honor of his father.

7:58 P.M. – 8:06 P.M. Item # 6, Select Board to discuss Town cemetery funding in light of fencing needs of Hardwick Street Cemetery and other cemetery matters.

Jon reported that there had been many comments and requests for the Town to clean up the Hardwick Street

Cemetery and other cemeteries in Town so there would be a need for additional funds in the upcoming budget. Jon said that having nice looking cemeteries would make the Town look better overall. Kory recommended taking down the cemetery fence and maybe only replacing the front part to make it look good. He also recommended getting a group of students who needed community service hours to help out. The Board decided to have Jon take a site visit to determine what steps to take next.

Select Board Reports – Shari reported the Town House has a wooden replica in the Town House entrance way that honors large donors who've helped finance improvements over the years. She also mentioned on August 6th & 13th at 7pm there would be the last shows of the performance, the "Sinners", and proceeds would go to AWARE.

Shari also mentioned that First Friday was scheduled on August 5th with a bouncy house this month.

New Business – Shari suggested that she and other Board members go to the Town Health Officer training coming up to brush up on this topic.

Old Business – None

8:17 P.M. - Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to enter into an executive session to discuss real estate at 71 Wolcott Street.

8:43 P.M. – The Select Board came out of executive session, no action taken.

8:44 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair, adjourned the meeting.

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

Minutes taken by: _____
Brittany Currie, Business Manager