

MINUTES SELECT BOARD MEETING
6:00 P.M. Thursday, November 5, 2015
HARDWICK MEMORIAL BUILDING
3RD FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Select Board

Eric Remick, Chair, late
Kathleen Hemmens, Vice Chair
Lawrence Hamel
Shari Cornish
Elizabeth Dow

Others Present

Jon Jewett, Town Manager
Brittany Cote, Executive Assistant
Tom Fadden, Road Foreman
Aaron Cochran, Police Chief
Mike Sullivan, HED

Others Present

Mike Bielawski-Gazette
Roy Vance
Evelyn Lavelli
Lorraine Hussey

6:05 P.M. – Kathleen Hemmens, Select Board Vice-Chair, called the regular Select Board meeting to order.

6:05 P.M. – Approval of the minutes of the regular Select Board meeting of October 15, 2015 & the special Select Board meeting of October 19, 2015.

Upon motion by Larry Hamel, seconded by Elizabeth Dow, the Select Board voted to approve the October 15, 2015 regular Select Board meeting minutes as written.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to approve the October 19, 2015 special Select Board meeting minutes as written.

6:06 P.M. – Set/Adjust Agenda- Brittany said she would like to adjust the agenda, Item #2 from the Library MOU discussion, to an explanation of a new health plan for Town employees. The reason for the change was that the Library trustees could not attend the Select Board meeting to discuss the MOU.

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

6:08 P.M. – Communication from the Audience- Evelyn Lavelli, Pastor at the United Church of Hardwick, asked if she could comment on the streetlight issue and mentioned that she was speaking on behalf of 10-15 others from Town. She explained that she had attended the recent gathering of Community Allies in Hardwick and heard many people express their fear that streetlights were being turned off. She asked for the truth behind the matter. Kathleen Hemmens asked Jon Jewett to explain what the energy committee had recommended. Evelyn then expressed concern over pedestrian safety vs. traffic safety and asked for the Police Chief's comment. The Chief said that he also heard the concerns at the community gathering of about 100 people; that they want a light, safe community and he agreed with them. He also said that crimes do happen most often in the dark. Eric Remick responded explaining that the intention behind this effort was to have more energy efficient lighting and the most sufficient amount of lighting without having overly redundant lighting, but the Select Board did not intend on the Town being completely dark. Mike Sullivan stated that it was an organized community effort in choosing which lights could be shutoff. Elizabeth Dow mentioned that people could take over specific lights on their own if their light was selected to be turned off. Larry Hamel stated that he wanted to hear from people about which lights people wanted left on. Jon Jewett urged community members to contact him or attend Select Board meetings if they had concerns.

6:24 P.M. – 6:44 P.M. Town Manager Report – Given by Jon Jewett

Jon reported about new staffing agreements he had written for Karen Holmes and Jessica Manchester; MOUs he had drafted for the Library and Senior Citizens; and the Town Personnel Policies that were being reviewed and updated by VLCT. He also reported about the water supply goals, the Church St. water line upgrade, and the new health insurance option that would be discussed later in the meeting. Other items he reported about included the solar project, South Main St. sidewalks, Main St. Bridge parking, VTCMA meeting, and Streetlights (See attached report for more details). The Board discussed how the parking was going on the Main St. Bridge, and Eric said he had gotten a lot of comments about this and would like to have additional discussions at another time. Kathleen asked Mike Sullivan if all the targeted streetlights could be shut off to give people an idea of what the proposal would be like, but Mike said that would be too much work. Shari asked to have all the LED lights installed in the street lights that were definitely starting and let people see the difference.

6:44 P.M. – 6:48 P.M. Road Foreman Report – Given by Tom Fadden

Tom reported that the crew had been grading roads in preparation for winter, hoping to be finished next week and for the roads to freeze in good condition. He also said that they had cleaned out the ditch near Dona's and that brush cutting had been completed on Mackville Road. The crew also had repaired some water shut offs around Town and put on all of the plow frames and winter tires, making the trucks ready for winter. Lastly, Tom reported that the crew had hung up the Christmas lights around Town and had painted the handicapped parking space located at the United Church on South Main Street and posted the necessary sign. Eric asked if all of the trucks were in service, and Tom said yes they were.

6:48 P.M. – 6:56 P.M. Hardwick Police Report – Given by Aaron Cochran

Aaron reported about the yearly firearms training, Halloween, officer trainings, community allies event, the monthly police log, and the winter parking ban (See attached report for more details). He also mentioned the notice that he and Jon sent about the storage units in front of Positive Pie to be moved by Friday the 13th. Lastly, he mentioned the discussion of legalizing marijuana that would be occurring at the Town House on Tuesday November 10th. Eric asked about the parking ban signs, and Tom said he was going to put them up next week.

6:57 P.M. – 7:09 P.M. Hardwick Electric Report – Given by Mike Sullivan

Mike started with stating that he felt the community needed to be better informed of the streetlight project in order for it to go smoothly, and he recommended to move forward slowly as well. He stated that they were busy lining up projects for the winter, with the largest projects being the Greensboro Art Center and the Wolcott Substation. Next he explained that the LED lights that they had chosen were expensive but had a 15-year warranty. He also said that the HED commissioners would be attending meetings every other month, opposite of himself. Larry asked who was funding the electrical work for the Greensboro project, and Mike explained that under the state policy, the business requesting the work would pay the bill. Eric asked Mike for an update on HED's solar project at the Town gravel pit, but Mike said because they had been busy they had put that project aside and with power prices changing lately, this project may be dropped completely. Eric clarified that the Town's solar project was dependant on the HED solar project moving forward.

7:09 P.M. – 7:19 P.M. Item #1, Caledonia County Court budget for FY17, presented by Roy Vance

Roy Vance presented the Caledonia County Court budget (See attached for more details) and stated that the overall budget was going to decrease by \$15,000, but he would not have each Town's portion of the budget available until the equalized grand list came out.

7:19 P.M. – 7:40 P.M Item #2, Select Board to authorize the Town Manager's Office to start a new Insurance Package for Town Employees.

Brittany presented a PowerPoint presentation comparing the current IBEW health insurance package to a new package option she had put together (See attached for more details). She recommended the Town vote to approve the new package which would save the Town approximately \$18,000 for the first year.

Upon motion by Shari Cornish, seconded by Larry Hamel, the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Manager's Office to set-up an alternative insurance package for Town employees to include an HRA limited to \$2,000 for individuals and \$4,500 for other groups. This includes a buy-out option for employees who choose to leave the Town insurance program all together at a rate of \$425.00 per month cash in lieu or \$496.00 per month into a deferred comp account.

7:40 P.M. – 7:41 P.M. Item #3, Select Board to authorize signing the memorandum of understanding allowing the Hardwick Senior Citizens Group to use a part of the Public Safety building on Thursdays of each week for a prescribed period of time.

Upon motion by Kathleen Hemmens, seconded by Shari Cornish, the Select Board voted to authorize Jon to sign the memorandum of understanding between the Hardwick Senior Citizens and the Town of Hardwick.

7:41 P.M. – 8:01 P.M. Item #4, Town Manager to discuss Heilig property and potential impacts to the Town.

Jon explained that the Heilig property was located across from the Town House on Depot Street. He identified it as a small garage that had no water or sewer hook-ups and was right on the edge of the Town road right-of-way, so it lacked parking as well. He explained the difficulty of having water and sewer at the property and that the owner would sell this to the Town for \$12,000. Shari mentioned that the NEKARTS organization was in support of using some of the Capital Fund out of the Town House budget in order contribute toward the town purchasing this property. Kathleen stated that if zoning regulations prevented occupancy there would be no problem, and Jon stated that Karen Holmes said the Town could not prevent people from occupying the space, but they could prevent them from expanding it. Eric stated that it seemed as though purchasing the property only served to prevent potential issues, but wanted to know what the other benefits were if any. Shari stated that the Town House and possibly the Historic Society could share in use of this space as storage or a dressing room. Eric asked what the sense of urgency on this issue was, and Jon said that he was getting back to a potential buyer who was interested in the property. The Board asked Brittany where the money could come from, and she said purchasing property would only be appropriate out of the Town's capital fund and the only building that had the appropriate amount of funds was the Town House Capital Fund. Elizabeth asked the Board to table this item to allow more time to think about it. The Board generally agreed to take no action.

8:01 P.M. – 8:04 P.M. Item #5, Select Board to sign Church St. water planning loan documents.

Jon explained that these documents were necessary for the Town to borrow \$16,300 from the State Revolving loan fund as a planning loan in order to fund the engineering costs for upgrading the Church St. water line. This project would be going to bond, if approved at Town Meeting 2016 and should be another -3% interest loan.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Larry Hamel, the Select Board voted to approve the \$16,300 water planning loan documents for the Church St. water line upgrade.

8:04 P.M. – 8:22 P.M. Item #6, Shari Cornish to discuss a plan to free up the Memorial building Memorial Room by moving Town staff. Time frame and funding will need to be resolved.

Shari explained that she would like the room that currently houses the Listers and Zoning be returned to its original function as a Memorial room now that there was additional space in the Memorial Building basement due

to the departure of the Police Department. Brittany proposed the idea of the Town Manager’s Office moving downstairs with new construction to make 3 offices. This would free up the current Town Manager's Office to move the Listers and Zoning Administrator, leaving the front room empty. Shari said she wanted the Select Board to direct the Town Manager's Office to make this happen, and make sure the Memorial Room turns back into a Memorial Room where the marble tablets carved with the names of the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War (1898) and Civil War veterans and prevent this from becoming another office space in the future since the building was built to memorialize these solders.

Upon motion by Elizabeth Dow, seconded by Kathleen Hemmens, the Select Board voted to authorize Jon and Brittany to move forward with renovating the basement in the Memorial Building to make it suitable for occupancy by staff. Once the renovation and staff moves are complete, the Memorial Room will no longer be used as an office or storage space. This is all pending the availability of funds to do the necessary work.

Select Board Reports- Shari reported that the Wizard of Oz would be playing at the Town House this weekend. She also mentioned that there would be a discussion surrounding the legalization of marijuana at the Town House on Tuesday November 10th.

Elizabeth reported that the Historical Society was closed for regular hours for the winter season, but was still available upon appointment.

New Business- Shari said she had communication with the owner of Positive Pie, and they hoped to open the weekend after Thanksgiving.

Old Business – Shari reported about the new pictures up in the windows of the vacant space next to the Yummy Wok on Main St. are the work of the Chamber of Commerce in an effort to improve the street-scape.

Eric wanted to know why the Town couldn’t get glycol in the Town House heating system, so they didn't have to open and close it every year. Shari added that the NekArts Council continues to prefer this method. There was no continued discussion on the topic.

8:27 P.M. Eric Remick, Select Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

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

Minutes taken by: _____
Brittany Cote, Executive Assistant