



TOWN OF HARTFORD SELECTBOARD Minutes

Tuesday, August 23, 2022, 6:00pm
Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street,
White River Junction, VT 05001

This meeting was conducted in person at Town Hall and on Zoom

Present: Michael Hoyt, Chair; Dan Fraser, Vice-Chair; Kim Souza, Clerk; Lannie Collins, Member; Mary Erdei, Member; Rocket, Member; Ally Tufenkjian, Member; Tracy Yarlott-Davis, Town Manager; Lana Livingston, Administrative Assistant; Russ North; Andrew Winter; Tim Sidore; Tim Fariel; Sara Campbell; Todd Campbell; John Hall

Zoom Participants: Marie Alvin; Colin Butler; Cathy Melocik

CATV LINK: <https://catv.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/show/29030?channel=1>

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting** at 6PM by Selectboard Chair, Mike Hoyt.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.
- III. Local Liquor Control Board: NONE**
- IV. Order of Agenda** There were no changes to the order of Agenda.
- V. Selectboard**

- 1. Public Comment**

Todd Campbell of WRJ asked the Board for an update on the Gates Street/Fairview Terrace project. He was promised regular updates a year ago and there seems to not be anything done. The Town Manager said there is \$100,000 in this year's budget, that began July 1, 2022, for an engineering study. The Selectboard is doing a Capital Improvement Plan planning session in September as well as discussing ARPA funds.

Tim Fariel of WRJ suggested that the Town would benefit from a different process to development projects. An overview of community development and vitality would be a desired way forward.

Marie Alvin of WRJ (zoom) asked about the street lights on Demers Ave. It seems like nothing has been done. She also recommends the Board to make a list of goals and how funds are going to be spent. It looks to her that the Town has no vision - they need a strategic plan.

Tim Sidore from Execusuite Suites addressed the Board to make them aware of what he says was an unfair increase of the property tax assessment by the Town. This situation is now gone to legal representatives.

Colin Butler (zoom) asked why the Twin Pine Riverwalk WRJ Housing Project is on the agenda as it has not gone to the Planning/Zoning Commissions. The reason it is on the agenda is to gain approval to hold a public hearing on September 6. At that hearing the public can ask all the questions about the project.

Cathy Melocik of Wilder (zoom) reminded the board of the conflict of Interest guidelines.

2. Selectboard Comments and Announcements

Lannie Collins asked who created the ARPA Survey and why it didn't go to the Board first. The Town Manager created the survey and sent it out.

Rocket wanted to thank all the staff for all their hard work especially in downtown WRJ.

Kim Souza thanked the Fire Marshall, Fire and Public Works for their swift response to the Briggs Block incident.

3. Appointments

Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to Re-appoint Larson Burns to the Design Review Board for a three -year term beginning August 23, 2022 and ending August 22, 2025. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

4. Town Manager's Report – there were no significant activity reports available at this meeting.

Police Chief Search

After my preferred candidate accepted another position and I declined to move forward with the second, the search is now back to square one. As of the writing of this report, I have a call scheduled with IACP leadership to determine what edits to make to the job posting and how we can together have a successful search. I'm honored and thankful that Acting Chief Connie Kelley and the rest of the Police Department support this decision and are willing to continue to take on additional tasks to keep the Police Department's day-to-day operations running.

Briggs Building Water Main Break

As I reported last week on Monday August 15th, it appears that the sprinkler main pipe into the Briggs building failed, dumping between 300 and 400,000 gallons of clean water into the basement.

Hartford Fire staff Keith Morse, Mitch White, Eli Snelling, and Sean Spencer responded to multiple sprinkler alarm calls. They worked quickly to get the electrical turned off and clear the building. Both Chief Cooney and Deputy Chief Czora were called onto the scene as was Fire Marshal Tom Peltier.

Evan Eccher and Kai Eastman from Public Works' Water division rushed over to identify and turn off the water main to the property to stop the water.

Throughout the rest of the week both Fire and Public Works, including Interim Director Jeremy Delisle and Chief Wastewater Operator Steve Brock were on site multiple times to assess the structure and systems, and investigate where all of the water went when it was discovered that the basement was dry Tuesday morning.

As of this writing, there is power restored to some of the building and some occupants have been allowed in.

I also want to thank Hartford Police for moving staff around so that the Windsor County State's Attorney, displaced by this incident, could resume operations in a temporary space at HPD.

Pool closing for the season

Due to staffing, this is your last week to visit our new pool. We look forward to enjoying in next summer. Thank you to Scott and the Parks and Recreation team for all of their hard work and creative thinking in getting it up and running.

No Sig Acts this week

Since we just met last week, I offered up a week off from Sig Acts.

Free COVID Tests

Covid-19 is still making its way through our community. If you have not yet received your free federal Covid-19 tests, please visit: <https://www.covid.gov/tests>

New Website – still remodeling

Town staff continue to find old links and routing as we clean up the migration. Please email me the broken URL links and we'll put in a ticket to fix them. Tvarlott-davis@hartford-vt.org

We are going to wait until the dust settles on content before editing photos so please stay tuned!

Upcoming Meeting Topics

These are tentative and subject to move or change. We also include additional items as needed.

September 6: Flag and Banner Policy, Open Container Item, Twin Pines WRJ Housing Project

September 20: FY22 Encumbrances, Allocating Town APRA Funds

October 4: FY24 Operating Budget

If you have an item that you'd like to bring forth to the Board, please email the Chair (mhoyt@hartford-vt.org) and Vice Chair (dfraser@hartford-vt.org). We meet on the Wednesday prior to the meeting to set the agenda.

The agenda is released the Thursday prior to the meeting and supporting documentation is emailed out by 3pm Friday.

5. Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances

a. Overview of the Twin Pine Riverwalk WRJ Housing Project

Presented by Lori Hirshfield, Director of Planning and Development and Andrew Winter of Twin Pines.

Recommendation: Hold a public hearing on September 6, 2022 to determine if the Town should submit a VCDP application for the Riverwalk Multifamily Housing Project.

The Board agreed unanimously and had no objections for a public hearing on September 6.

b. Assessor Update on Reevaluation presented by Joe Turner, Assessor.

Discussion: Vermont Property Valuation and Review (PVR) has specific regulations associated with a town wide revaluation. These regulations can affect when a town begins the revaluation process and contains some regulatory requirements. The impact on both the town and the taxpayers should also be understood before undertaking a town wide revaluation.

Financial Impact: A town wide revaluation would have a large financial impact on the Town. A revaluation would also redistribute the tax burden placed on taxpayers.

Presentation:

<https://cms5.revize.com/revize/hartfordvt/Town%20Wide%20Revaluation.pdf>

c. HCOREI Update presented by Sara Campbell, Chair of HCoreI.

The Chair gave an update on the committee's work and asked the Town about the progress they have made on items presented at the last update.

d. VLCT Welcoming and Engaging Communities Cohort presented by Tracy Yarlott-Davis, Town Manager.

The EPIC Journey program is in direct alignment with the Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Participating in the Welcoming and Engaging Communities Cohort will not only allow Hartford to participate in the program for free but also allow Town leaders to collaborate with colleagues from around the state. I am happy to join from the municipal operations side and urge the Selectboard to select one member to also participate. In order to process our application, I have drafted a letter of interest for the Board's consideration.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Dan Fraser made the motion

- That the Selectboard approve the letter of interest in participating in the cohort
 - That the Selectboard request that the Town Manager complete the application
 - That the Selectboard include Town Manager Tracy Yarlott-Davis as a participant.
 - That the Selectboard include member, Kim Souza, as a participant.
- Selectboard Member, Mary Erdei seconded the motion. 4 were in favor, 2 (Souza & Rocket) abstained and 1 (Collins) voted no. The motion passed.

e. Vermont Community Foundation Equitable & Inclusive Committee Grant

NOTE: Not presented at this Selectboard meeting. Will try for the next regular Selectboard meeting.

- f. **Housing Committee** – Selectboard of a Liaison
On July 26, the Selectboard created the Hartford Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Selectboard Member, Rocket made the motion to accept Ally Tufenkjian as the Selectboard Liaison to the Hartford Committee on Housing and Homelessness. Selectboard Vice Chair, Dan Fraser seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 1 (Tufenkjian) abstained and the motion passed.
- g. **FY24 Budget Guidance Finalization**
Background:
Since 2016, the Hartford Selectboard has provided a guidance document to the Town Manager at the beginning of the budget cycle. This document provides a set of overarching goals for the upcoming operational budget cycle for the Town Manager and their staff to consider when drafting and presenting budgets.

Approved Budget Guidance Memo:
<https://cms5.revize.com/revize/hartfordvt/Town%20Wide%20Revaluation.pdf>
- h. **Reallocation of General Funds for the Bugbee Senior Center**
Selectboard Member, Lannie Collins made the motion That the Selectboard allocate up to and not more than \$80,000 to the Bugbee Senior Center from the ARPA Funds to fund the installation and associated project costs of handicapped accessible doors. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. 6 voted yes and 1 (Rocket) abstained. The motion passed.
- i. **Response to Complaint of Alleged Open Meeting Law Violation**
Background:
On July 12, 2022 the Selectboard approved a change to the By-laws of the Hartford Energy Commission to allow the Commission to consist of between five and seven members. The Commission was unaware that the Town charter specifically lists this Commission and states that the membership shall be seven. The error was inadvertent.
Discussion:
On July 22, 2022, we received a complaint from an individual about the action taken on July 12 among other items. Our legal counsel advised that we bring forth the complaint for your consideration. In addition, our counsel has drafted a response letter for the Board's consideration. Counsel has authorized us to have this conversation in open session as well.
Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion That the Selectboard approve the letter dated August 23rd to Remington Nevin regarding the allegations of violations of Open Meeting Law and also that the Selectboard rescind the motion of July 12th regarding the number of members of the Hartford Energy Commission. Selectboard Member, Mary Erdei seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. Commission Reports - None

VII. Consent Agenda: **Selectboard Vice Chair, Dan Fraser made the motion to approve the consent agenda and amend the approval for the Selectboard Chair to sign the A/P manifest dates August 5, 2022 and the Payroll manifest dates August 11, 2022 to correctly reflect the**

dates of those documents. Selectboard Member, Rocket seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Approve Payroll Ending: 8/20/2022

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 8/15/2022 & 8/16/2022

Approve A/P Manifest of: 8/19/2022 & 8/23/2022

Selectboard Special Meeting on September 13th

Selectboard Meetings Already Approved: 9/6/2022 & 9/20/2022

- VIII. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting: Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:10PM. Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.



Kim Souza, Clerk