

TOWN OF HARTFORD SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, December 12, 2023, 6:00pm
Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street,
White River Junction, VT 05001

This meeting was conducted in person at Town Hall

Present: Michael Hoyt, Chair; Kim Souza, Clerk; Lannie Collins, Member; Mary Erdei, Member; Rocket, Member; John Haverstock; Dillon Walsh; Lori Hirshfield; Rick Vincent; Greg Sheldon; Eric Clifford; Tom Howell; Maggie Burnett; Sue Barrett; Lynn Bohi; Chuck Wooster; Nancy Howe

Zoom: Dan Fraser, Vice-Chair; Gail Ostrout; Heidi Duto

JAM LINK:

https://www.youtube.com/live/mVU0cmYg3M4?si=BD6Yj2QC-J_7VG5r

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting by Chair, Mike Hoyt at 6pm.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by John Haverstock
- III. Local Liquor Control Board: None
- IV. Local Cannabis Control Board: None
- V. Order of Agenda: Executive Session was moved up to follow the Town Manager's Report
- VI. Selectboard

1. Public Comment

Heidi Duto asserted that Selectboard Oaths and the Open Meeting Law were being violated by the Selectboard

2. Selectboard Comments and Announcements

Kim Souza noted her recent attendance at a Cannabis Control seminar, with the Town Clerk.

Mary Erdei offered kudos to all who volunteered to make this year's Polar Express event a success. She also lamented the lack of civility at Selectboard meetings and asked all to be honorable and respectful.

Rocket echoed positive feedback on the Polar Express event and the call for greater civility in Selectboard meetings.

Lannie Collins expressed displeasure with how Agenda Setting meetings are being conducted and his wish to be included in upcoming meeting(s).

3. Appointments –**Selectboard Member, Rocket made a motion to appoint Maggie Burnett to the Committee on Housing and Homelessness for a two-year term beginning December 12, 2023 and ending on December 11, 2025. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

4. Town Manager's Report/Significant Activities

The Town Manger noted recent meetings with Bugbee Senior Center leadership and the Mascoma Bank CEO. He reported that the School Board meets Wednesday night to discuss its budget and a possible bond vote.

Significant Activity Reports

Link: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/462>

5. Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances

- a. Justice Assistance Grant Opportunity, presented by Police Officer Howell.

Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign off on a Certification in support of the JAG grant.

Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in

favor and the motion passed.

- b. Police K-9 Fundraising Proposal, presented by Police Officers Howell, Clifford and Chief Sheldon. There was extended discussions regarding the current K-9 program and the logistics of fundraising and accounting for donated funds.
Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to approve the proposal to have the Police Department raise funds toward the purchase of a new K-9, related equipment and food and a cruiser dedicated to K-9 services. Selectboard Member Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
- c. Review Revaluation Proposals, presented by Assessor Rick Vincent
The Assessor compared and contrasted the competing proposals from Tyler Technologies (\$269,000) and Vision Government Solutions (\$228,000) and entertained several questions about the revaluation process. Despite Tyler's higher cost, the Assessor recommended Tyler be granted the contract due to better services, better imagery and potential back-end savings on assessment appeals. **Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made the motion to award the Revaluation contract to Tyler in the amount of \$269,000. Selectboard Member, Mary Erdei seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**
- d. Downtown Program Vibrancy Grant, presented by Lori Hirshfield.
Lori Hirshfield updated the Selectboard on this non-competitive \$25,000 grant opportunity and how the funds could be used to hire consultants focused on White River Junction. **Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made the motion to (a) accept the Vibrancy Fund grant and direct the Town Manager to take the necessary actions to execute a grant agreement and fulfill its requirements and (b) have the members of the Selectboard sign the related letter of Attestation. Selectboard Member Mary Erdei seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**
- e. State's Flood Impact Buyout Program, presented by Lori Hirshfield.
Lori Hirshfield provided background on the FEMA and State roles in buying homes at risk of flood damage as a hazard mitigation goal, with the Town serving as a conduit for the landowner. **Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to execute the necessary documents related to a possible buyout of 361 South Street in Wilder and submit them to the State, with the understanding that an additional Selectboard approval would be required to go forward with a reimbursable purchase. Selectboard Member, Mary Erdei seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**
- f. Charter Revision Discussion
There was extended discussion over which provisions of the proposed Charter Revision proposal should be presented to the voters. A draft will be provided by Chair Mike Hoyt and circulated in advance of further discussions to occur at a budget meeting to be held on December 19.

VII. Commission Reports

- Kim Souza:

The Planning Commission met December 4th and reviewed 4 applications all from Black Rock Investment LLC.

- 1. Application #23-22: Preliminary approval was granted for a subdivision involving a boundary line adjustment.
- 2. Application #23-23 : The application for a Site Development Plan for a 48 dwelling unit building was continued until February 5th.

3. Application #23-24: Preliminary approval was granted for a Planned Development under the subdivision regulations of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for 192 dwelling units.

4. Application #23-25: The application for a Site Development Plan Approval for a 192 dwelling units in four multi-unit buildings was continued to February 5th.

The Planning Commission will meet next on December 18th to consider a Site Development Plan for the Town of Hartford School District and to consider a Site Development Plan for a proposed Emergency Shelter at 608 North Main Street.

The commission has no current vacancies, though member terms are expiring in January & March of 2024.

- **Ally Tufenkjian:**

Hartford Committee on Racial Equity & Inclusion (HCOREI):

-Prepared their entry for the Annual Town Report.

-Discussed the possibility of a future Committee retreat to align on strategic goals.

-One Committee vacancy.

Resilient Hartford:

-On December 5th, the Committee hosted a community discussion about the future of the Clifford Park Food Forest & Abenaki Garden with consideration to its floodplain location as well as ways to strengthen the Food Forest and community engagement.

Ideas proposed included increasing biodiversity; re-wilding and re-indigenizing the Food Forest; performing more outreach and educational opportunities; and partnering more with the Conservation Commission, Tree Board, and the Parks & Rec Department.

-One committee vacancy.

Hartford Committee on Housing & Homelessness:

-The Committee brainstormed a structure for the Housing Development Program Pilot Project.

-The Norwich Housing Committee would like to meet with Hartford's Committee to facilitate improved communication between towns with similar goals. They intend to connect in January or February of next year.

-One committee vacancy.

VIII. Consent Agenda: Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Selectboard Member, Mary Erdei seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0-1, with Ally Tufenkjian abstaining.

Approve Payroll Ending: 12/9/2023

Approve A/P Manifest of: 12/8/2023 and 12/14/2023

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 11/28/2023 and 12/5/2023

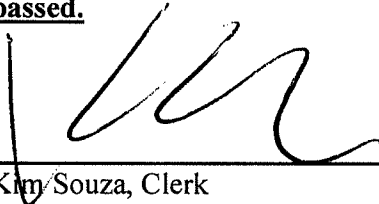
Approve Selectboard Meetings: 12/14/2023 (Budget) and 12/26/2023 (12/19 and 12/21 if needed for Budget)

IX. Executive Session: 6:50 PM.

Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made a motion to (a) find that there is a legal matter involving the Town of Hartford and premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Town and/or persons at a substantial disadvantage and (b) that we go into executive session to discuss pending civil litigation and attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services, as set forth in V.S.A. Sec, 313 (a)(1) € and (F). Selectboard Member, Mary Erdei seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. Selectboard Member Lannie Collins made the motion to close the executive session. Selectboard Member Rocket

seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed at 7:15 PM.

- X. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting
Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 PM.
Selectboard Member, Rocket seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion
passed.



Kim Souza, Clerk
December 12, 2023 Meeting.