



TOWN OF HARTFORD SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, March 18, 2025,

6:00pm

Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge
Street,
White River Junction, VT
05001

This meeting was conducted in person at Town Hall

Present: Chair, Mary Erdei; Vice Chair, Michael Hoyt; Clerk, Ashley Andreas; Miranda Dupre; Ida Griesemer; Erik Krauss; Brandon Smith; John Haverstock; Lori Hirshfield; Scott Hausler; Scott Cooney; Linda Simon Miller; George Miller; Jazmin Guyette; Adam Grounds; Jeff Arnold; Paulette Osborne; David Briggs; Peggy Arnold; Andrew Winter; Mike Copp; Chris Holzwarth;

Participants Present on Zoom: Lana Livingston; Heidi Duto; Kim Souza

JAM LINK:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6skH0wUje_Q&list=PLAdkf9ugxof7FGsvb7b8PHLFaNFkZbq-g

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting by Chair, Mary Erdei at 6:00PM. Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei read a statement that recognized the Selectboard Organizational meeting on March 6, 2025, was in violation of Vermont's Open Meeting Law. The violation was that there was no public comment allowed. This had been the practice for this meeting for several years. However, now recognizing the error, the public comment agenda item will be on all future organizational meeting agendas.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by Mike Hoyt.
- III. Local Liquor Control Board: Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei recessed the Selectboard Meeting and opened the Local Liquor Control Board.
 - a. Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to approve the New Application of Putnam's Vineyard, LLC dba Putnam's Vineyard 188 S. Main Street, White River Jct., VT 05001 for a 3rd Class License. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
 - b. Selectboard Member, Brandon Smith made the motion to approve the Renewal Application for Northern Stage, 76 Gates Street, WRJ, VT 05001 for a 1st Class License. Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- c. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre made the motion to approve the New Application for Rachel Burge & Matthew Burge d/b/a Honey Child, LLC. 139 Hillridge Rd, White River Jct., VT 05001 for an Outside Consumption License. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer seconded the motion. 7 were in favor and the motion passed.

Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei closed the Local Liquor Control Board and reopened the Selectboard Meeting at 6:08PM.

IV. Local Cannabis Control Board: None

V. Order of Agenda – There were no changes to the order of agenda.

VI. Selectboard

1. Public Comment

David Briggs from WRJ updated the Board on the Coolidge Block Redevelopment project.

2. Selectboard Comments and Announcements

Mike Hoyt congratulated the Hartford High School Girl's Hockey Team for winning the State title for the second year in a row.

Erik Krauss thanked Scott Hausler and Dana Clawson for the informative tour of WABA over the weekend.

Mary Erdei reminded the Board about the Hybrid Selectboard Workshop on March 22nd. John Haverstock, Ashley Andreas and Miranda Dupre will be attending in person.

3. Appointments

a. Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to re-appoint Patricia Stark to the Historic Preservation Commission for a three year term beginning March 18, 2025 and ending March 17, 2028. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

b. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre made the motion to re-appoint Jonathan Schechtman to the Design Review Commission for a three year term beginning March 18, 2025 and ending March 17, 2028. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- c. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion to re-appoint Jeff Arnold to the Hartford Tree Board for a three year term beginning March 18, 2025 and ending March 17, 2028. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
 - d. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer made the motion to Appoint Linda Simon Miller to the 250th Commemoration Committee beginning March 18, 2025 and ending September 1, 2027 or before. Selectboard Member, Brandon Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
4. Town Manager's Report
Significant Activity Reports:
<https://www.hartfordvt.org/Archive.aspx?ADID=505>

Town Meeting Cycle Recap

I am pleased to report that the Town's voters approved the Town's proposed FY2026 General Fund budget and added \$13,500 to it in the form of an increase to the BCA per-meeting compensation from \$50 to \$100 for a four-hour shift, or any portion thereof. This extra \$13,500 will be factored in by the Finance Director and the Selectboard in July when tax rates are set.

The voters approved the use of Local Option Tax revenues on hand from the rooms, meals and alcohol taxes to purchase needed replacement vehicles for the Parks & Rec Department, the Department of Public Works and the Police Department and for the purchase of new Jaws of Life vehicle extrication tools for the Fire Department.

The voters also voted to adopt a one-percent Local Option Sales Tax, which the State's Department of taxes has confirmed will be implemented to start on July 1, 2025. For anyone with questions about how this new local sales tax might affect your Hartford business, please contact the Vermont Department of Taxes. Their number for sales tax related matters is (802) 828-2551. On the Department of Taxes website, there is a helpful three-page document explaining how the State administers local option sales taxes. There is also helpful information posted on the Finance page of the Town website.

Selectboard Meeting Schedule

The last full meeting of the Selectboard was on Tuesday, February 25.

There was a Selectboard Organizational meeting on Thursday, March 6, at which Mary Erdei was elected to serve as Chair, Mike Hoyt as Vice Chair and Ashley Andreas as Clerk.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the Selectboard. I plan to reach out to each of you to invite you to meet with me over coffee or lunch to get better acquainted and to give us a chance to discuss your priorities for your service on the Selectboard.

Clerical Workers' Union

There was an introductory meeting between the Clerical Worker's Union and the Town's management team on Wednesday, February 26. A business meeting at which the Union laid out some of its proposals took place on Friday, March 7. The next meeting will take place on March 28. The Town Manager will inform the Selectboard about these negotiations in Executive Session periodically.

Police Chief Reception

The Town will celebrate the elevation of Connie Kelley to Hartford's Police Chief at a reception to be held in her honor on Tuesday, March 25, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Public Safety Complex. All residents and well-wishers are welcome to attend!

Highway Foreman Retirement

Chip Haley, who served the Town, the DPW and Town residents well for 33+ years, has retired. We will miss him and wish him a healthy and happy retirement. The DPW is working hard to recruit a successor as Highway Foreman.

Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance

The Town's Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance, adopted by the Selectboard on January 7, 2025 has become law, as the 60-day period for any petitions to the contrary has elapsed without action.

5. Board Report, Motions & Ordinances

- a. Tree Board Update – presented by Jazmin Guyette, Chair.

<https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/12155/Hartford-Tree-Board-2025-Presentation-to-Selectboard-by-Chair>

- b. Approve Banking Signature Authority: Mascoma Bank and US Bank

Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion that the Selectboard authorize Mascoma Bank to remove Michael Hoyt from all depository accounts and to add Board Chair -Mary Erdei. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion that the Selectboard authorize the following individuals for Vermont Bond Bank and US Bank reimbursement requests and call backs:

For Signatory on Reimbursements:

Mary Erdei - Board Chair,

Michael Hoyt - Vice Board Chair,

Joseph Major - Town Treasurer,

John Haverstock - Town Manager

For Call Backs: Gail Ostrout - Finance Director, Florentina

Rollins - AP & Payroll Manager and Kerri Thebodo - Finance

Specialist. Selectboard Member, Brandon Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- c. Approve Fire Department Strategic Plan and Standards of Cover/Community Risk Assessment.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion that the Selectboard adopt the 2024-2029 Hartford Fire Department Strategic Plan and the 2024 Hartford Fire Department Standards of Cover/Community Risk Assessment. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- d. Approval of Country Lane Erosion Repair

Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion that the Selectboard waive section 3.6 of the purchasing policy and authorize the Town Manager to execute a scope of services agreement with Pathways Consulting LLC utilizing up to \$43,489.70 of existing FEMA funds received for this project and \$978.30 from FY26 GL 10-325-318-0000. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- e. Approval of Better Roads Grant

Selectboard Member, Brandon Smith made the motion that the Selectboard waive section 3.5 of the purchasing policy and authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with the Two Rivers Regional Commission utilizing up to \$16,000 from Highway Engineering Reserves GL #25-985-100-0300 to be reimbursed and \$4,000 from FY26 GL 10-325-318-0000. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

f./g. Public Hearing on Whether to Apply for a VCDP Affordable Housing Grant.

Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei recessed the Selectboard meeting and opening a Public Hearing on Whether to Apply for a VCDP Affordable Housing Grant at 7:30PM.

Public Comment: Heidi Duto of WRJ questioned the management of this property where there seems to be problems at other existing properties managed by Twin Pines. She asked how are they going to managed these properties safely. She also asked about the proposed parking spaces. She questioned if there would be enough spaces The parking spaces will be decided when the plan goes before the Planning Commission.

Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei closed the Public Hearing at 8:10PM and reopened the Selectboard Meeting.

Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer made the motion that the Selectboard approve submittal of a VCDP grant application for the 444 Sykes Mt. Avenue Multifamily Housing Project and authorize the Town Manager to take all necessary actions to complete and submit the application and implement the grant and that the Selectboard pass the attached Resolution for VCDP Grant Application Authority. Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 1 (Andreas) recused. The motion passed.

- h. Consider Submitting Application for Municipal Planning Grant

Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion that the Selectboard approve the submission of a VMPPG application for \$30,000, and adopt and sign the "FY25 Municipal Resolution for Municipal Planning Grant" form designating Town Manager John Haverstock as the Municipal Authorizing Official, Selectboard Chair Mary Erdei as the Alternate Municipal Authorizing Official, and Lori Hirshfield as the Grant Administrator. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- i. Code of Ethics/Designate Complaint Recipient

Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas made the motion to appoint the Selectboard Chair as the Town's Designated Ethics Complaint Recipient, with the Chair authorized to delegate some or all of their authority and responsibility in this role to the Vice Chair or the HR Director. Selectboard Member Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- j. Consider Re-Adoption of Selectboard Rules of Procedure

Selectboard Member, Erik Kraus made the motion to add wording to two items. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley seconded the motion. 5 were in favor and 2 (Erdei/Hoyt) were not in favor. The motion passed.

Amendments:

36. At the beginning of each meeting, there will be an **optimally** ten-minute public comment period for items not on the agenda. Public comment is limited to the business of the body (i.e., the public body's governmental functions, including any matter over which the body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power).

38. Public comment is an opportunity for the public to comment. It is not the place for dialogue. **(This language will appear on Selectboard agendas.)**

Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre made the motion to re-adopt the amended Rules of Procedure. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- k. Consider Re-Adoption of Selectboard Code of Conduct
Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas made the motion that the Selectboard re-adopt the Code of Conduct. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- l. Discuss and Agree on Committee Liaison Assignments

Results:

Mary Erdei: Design Review Comm., School Board Alternate (2)

Mike Hoyt: CAST, School Board, Sister Cities (3)

Ashley Andreas: Parks & Rec Resilient Hartford, Zoning Board (3)

Miranda Dupre: HBRLF; HCOREI, Tree Board (3)

Ida Griesemer: Energy Comm., Hartford Community Coalition (2)

Erik Krauss: Conservation Comm., Historic Preservation Comm. (2)

Brandon Smith: Comm. on Housing & Homelessness, Planning (2)

VII. Commission Reports - None

- VIII. Consent Agenda: Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Selectboard member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

Approve Payroll Ending: 3/15/2025

Approve A/P Manifest: 3/14/2025 & 3/20/2025

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 2/25/2025 and 3/6/2025

Future Meetings Approved: April 1, 2025; April 15, 2025; April 29, 2025

IX. Executive Session: Contracts/Legal

Selectboard Member, Brandon Smith made the motion that to find that premature general public knowledge would clearly place this body or person involved at a substantial disadvantage, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (a) (1)

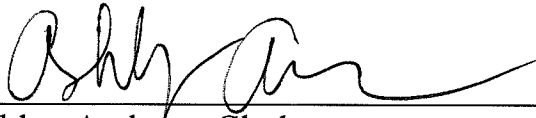
And to discuss an existing and/or potential contract, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Sections 313 (a)(1)(A) and 313 (a)(1)(F). Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to close the Executive Session meeting at 9:35PM. Selectboard Member,

Brandon Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Motion: Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre made the motion that due to an unforeseen increase in the purchase price for its new ambulance (which has been re-negotiated), the Hartford Fire Department now be authorized to purchase a 2023 ambulance from Specialty Vehicles, inc. for \$352,844. The Town Manager may utilize voter-approved LOT funds in the amount of \$200,000, the Fire/Ambulance reserve account and the proceeds from the planned sale of the 2-16 ambulance to purchase the new ambulance. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- X. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting
Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36pm. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.



Ashley Andreas, Clerk

March 18, 2025 Selectboard Meeting