



TOWN OF HARTFORD SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, April 15, 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; Chris Holzwarth; Lori Hirshfield; Matt Osborn; Alexis Webster; Peter Zendran; Jeremy Warren; Dennis Brown; Marie Alvin; Laura Simon; Anna Guenther; Jenevra Wetmore; Mingwen Huang; Tim Fariel; Sarah Koppelkam; Kim Souza; Colin Butler; Peter Raymond; Adam Morse

Present on Zoom: Lana Livingston; Heidi Duto; Michael Redmond;

JAM LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj84PjVskAU>

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting by Chair, Mary Erdei at 6:00 PM.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by Dennis Brown.
- III. Local Liquor Control Board: None
- IV. Local Cannabis Control Board: None
- V. Order of Agenda: Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion to request to add an agenda item to reconsider the request for a special meeting to discuss the resolution on the cease fire in Gaza on April 22, 2025. Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt seconded the motion. 6 in favor and 1 (Smith) not in favor. The motion passed. This will be between item 5.c. and 5.d.

Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre made the motion to add an item for a Selectboard statement to address the abduction, in a resolution, of a Hartford Resident. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. This will be at the end of the agenda items.

VI. Selectboard

1. Public Comment – please note that all public comments can be heard in their entirety on the JAM Link provided above.

Laura Simon is in support of the Gaza Resolution.

Marie Alvin of WRJ updates on Hartford Avenue. She noted that The Haven has grown to serve a wider area around Hartford. She also said that the Park & Ride is doing better but still is an issue.

Tim Fariel of WRJ noted that tonight's agenda is a very busy agenda with 174 pages to review. Trying to get citizens involved. We must approach the items with humanity and civility. He supports the Pride Flag being flown at Town Hall.

Colin Butler from Wilder said it is not the Selectboard's job to create a resolution on International Politics. He urges the Board to not take action on Gaza. There would be a better forum than Town meetings.

Micheal Redmond, Director of the Upper Valley Haven, said that the Haven is not a drug addiction facility. When EMTs come to the Haven it is for chronic health problems, not overdoses.

2. Selectboard Comments and Announcements

Ashley Andreas supports a statement from the Selectboard concerning the detention of a WRJ resident.

Miranda Dupre mentions the Arbor Day Tree Sale.

3. Appointments
 - a. Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to Re-Appoint Tom Franklin to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a three year term beginning April 15, 2025 and ending April 14, 2028. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
 - b. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer made the motion to Re-Appoint Scott Cooney as the Vermont Town Forest Fire Warden for Hartford to commence on April 18, 2025 and terminate on June 30, 2030. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

4. Town Manager's Report:
<https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/12321/Town-Manager-Report-for-4152025>

Significant Activity Reports Link: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/Archive.aspx?ADID=507>

5. Board Report, Motions & Ordinances
 - a. Consider a Selectboard Liaison Appointment for the 250th Commemoration Committee. The liaison to the 250th Commemoration Committee will be Mike Hoyt.
 - b. Consider Request to Fly Pride Flag at Town Hall
Erk Krauss asked if the policy had been reviewed by VLCT and thinks it would be a good step to take to look into. John Haverstock mentioned that maybe VLCT would review our policy – however, maybe town council would be a better direction to take.

Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion that the Selectboard approve the request to fly the Pride flag at Town Hall July 20 – 27, 2025. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
 - c. Update on Economic Development Chapter of the Town Plan
Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei recessed the Selectboard meeting at 6:50pm and opened the Public Hearing.

Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei closed the Public Hearing at 7:27pm and reopened the Selectboard Meeting.

Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer made the motion that the Selectboard notify Staff that the Selectboard approves the petition to realign and discontinue two-way traffic along a portion of Hickory Ridge Road to Sykes Mountain Avenue because the changes: (a) result in greater safety or efficiency of the Town's transportation system, pursuant to Section 75-39 of the Hartford Transportation Ordinance; and (b) are in the public good, necessity and convenience of the inhabitants of the community, pursuant to Section 75-40 of the Hartford Transportation Ordinance and further move that Staff prepare a decision resolution to alter and discontinue a portion of the highway for Selectboard adoption, utilizing a template to be provided by the Town's consulting attorney for this matter, at the next warned meeting/hearing, pursuant to 19 V.S.A. Section 711(a). Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

** Added Item: Discussion about the added special meeting on August 22, 2025 that would support a resolution on Gaza .

Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to cancel the 4/22/2025 special meeting. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. 6 were in favor and 1 (Smith) was not in favor. The motion passed.

- d. Consider Adoption of Public-Private Partnership Policy
The Planning and Development Department is seeking feedback on these document, and requests that the Selectboard adopt the criteria document as what the Town will use to consider specific PPP proposals that may come forth.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion that the Selectboard adopt the criteria document as what the Town will use to consider specific PPP proposals that may come forth. Selectboard Member, Brandon Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- e. Review Bid on Curbside Recycling Program Contract
Presentation only by Bryan Gazda.
- f. Consider Future of Town's Curbside Recycling Program
Presentation from Bryan Gazda. The timeline dictates that a decision needs to be made by May 29, 2025.

**** Added Item: presented by Miranda Dupre.**

Legal Review from VLCT: "Good morning Miranda,

Thank you for reaching out to us. In response to your question, a resolution is defined by Black's Law Dictionary as a "formal expression of an opinion, intention, or decision by an official body or assembly" (e.g. the selectboard). The power of legislative bodies in Vermont to adopt resolutions as a means of expressing their opinion as a political body has been formally recognized by the Vermont Supreme Court which held that "A resolution 'is not law but merely a form in which the legislative body expresses an opinion.' Baker v. City of Milwaukie, 271 Or. 500, 510, 533 P.2d 772, 777 (1975). It 'is a very different thing' from an ordinance ... and will not suffice when action on the part of a municipality is required to be taken by ordinance....' City of Salisbury v. Nagel, 420 S.W.2d 37, 43 (Mo.Ct.App.1967) (citations omitted). It ordinarily concerns matters that are ministerial and that relate to the administrative business of the municipality. See 5 E. McQuillin, Municipal Corporations § 15.02 (3d ed. 1982 & Supp.1991). It also concerns matters that are special or temporary. Id. at 55. Finally, it is customarily passed without the forms and delays that constitutions and municipal charters generally require for the enactment of valid laws or ordinances. City of Salisbury, 420 S.W.2d at 42." Herbert v. Town of Mendon, 159 Vt. 255 at 259 (1992). Furthermore, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution limits government regulation of private speech, but not what the government itself can say, so local governments, as represented by their selectboards, may formally express their opinions on any matter it deems appropriate. The voters recourse for disagreeing with that political opinion is at the ballot box.

There is no law or guidance as to what resolutions a town's selectboard should consider or not consider. It's purely a political decision made by a majority of the total membership of the selectboard.

I hope this helps. All the best.

*Sincerely, Garrett A. Baxter
Garrett Baxter, Esq. Senior Staff Attorney, Municipal Assistance Center Vermont League of Cities & Towns
89 Main St. Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602(802) 229-9111
gbaxter@vlct.org Pronouns: he, him, his VLCT.ORG"*

Selectboard Statement motion by Miranda Dupre and seconded by Ashley Andreas. All members voted yes and the motion was passed.

April 15, 2025

HARTFORD, Vt.— Mary Erdei (Chair), Mike Hoyt (Vice Chair), Ashley Andreas, Miranda Dupre, Ida Griesemer, Erik Kraus, Brandon Smith

On April 14th, Mohsen Mahdawi, a resident of Hartford, Vermont for the last 10 years, walked into an immigration office for what he was led to believe would be the final step in his citizenship process. Instead, he was arrested and removed in handcuffs by plainclothes, armed, individuals with their faces covered. These individuals refused to provide any information as to where he was being taken or what would happen to him. It is clear that Mohsen has been targeted for deportation because he spoke up on Columbia's campus in defense of Palestinians. This is immoral, inhumane, and illegal. Mr. Mahdawi, a legal resident of the United States, must be afforded due process under the law and the Hartford Selectboard demands that Mohsen remains in Vermont until his timely release from detention. Mohsen is a member of our community, a neighbor, and a friend to many. He has added value as an educator, mediator, and relationship builder and has an outpouring of support from his home of Hartford.

VII. Commission Reports:

Erik Krauss:

The Hartford Conservation Commission is working with Vermont Law and Graduate School student lawyers on developing a toolkit to assist landowners with navigating the land conservation process. This effort is aligned with the state-wide goal of conserving 30% of Vermont land by 2030 and 50% by 2050. It is also aligned with goals in the Town's Climate Action Plan (CAP, GT 1, GT 4). An in-depth paper on land conservation goals, strategies and risks was presented to the HCC by student lawyers during the April 7 meeting. The next phase of toolkit development will involve producing a pamphlet to assist landowners interested in conserving land.

The HCC has a lot of educational opportunities coming up including a Vernal Pool Walk at the Town Forest (Sunday, April 20th at 10:00 a.m) and a Wildflower Walk at Maanawaka Conservation Area (Saturday, April 26th at 10:00 a.m).

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

Approve Payroll Ending: 4/12/2025

Approve A/P Manifest: 4/11/2025 & 4/17/2025

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 4/1/2025

Future Meetings: 4/29/2025; 5/13/2025 and 5/27/2025

IX. Executive Session - None

X. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting: Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:50pm. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.



Ashley Andreas, Clerk
April 15, 2025 Selectboard Meeting

*Approved with correction to spelling
of name in VI.-1.