

TOWN OF HARTFORD SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Sunday, June 29, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

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

This meeting was conducted in person at Town Hall Present: Chair, Mary Erdei; Clerk, Ashley Andreas; Miranda Dupre; Ida Griesemer; Erik Krauss; Brandon Smith; John Haverstock. Alex Torpey, Rethink Local. Kathleen Ramsay, Vermont League of Cities & Towns. Nick Arvizu, JAM.

Absent: Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt

JAM LINK: <https://youtu.be/tlC9Bq9t7zU>

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting by Chair, Mary Erdei at 9:00PM.
- II. Public Comment: No Public Comment
- III. Welcome & Introductions

After a brief round of introductions, Alex Torpey, Founder of ReThink Local, opened with kudos to the board for taking the time to prioritize the work of looking ahead at the coming months and years. This session is an early, high-level look at what the Board has on its plate. The outcome of this session will serve as a basis for detailed planning in the future, noting, a quote of Dwight D. Eisenhower, "*Plans are worthless, but planning is essential.*"

Torpey and the Board reviewed the agenda and decided to start with a review and discussion of Selectboard Member Erik Kraus's spreadsheet on projects/discussion matters that are ready for consideration for the Selectboard, which was built off the circulated project list and project worksheets distributed in advance of the meeting, after the Efficient & Effective Board Meetings item.

IV. Efficient & Effective Meetings

Town Manager John Haverstock reviewed Hartford Selectboard's Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct. Based on this background information, the Board discussed ways to make its meetings more efficient, including:

- After initial discussion by the Board, followed by public input on an agenda item, once a motion has been made and seconded, there would be an opportunity for final discussion by Selectboard members, with each member having the opportunity to comment on the motion one more time before the vote.

- Clearly communicating that the Board meeting is a public meeting, not a meeting of the public.
- Increasing public outreach so that the public feels heard.
- Polling the public on different topics using a Google form for yes/no vote. Ashley Andreas will take the lead on preparing a proposal on public polling for the Board's consideration.
- Consistent enforcement of time limits, particularly the strategy of making the timer visible to everyone. Ida Griesemer offered to be the timekeeper.
- Setting the expectation that presentations at the meeting will be brief (5 -10 minutes). More extensive background information can be provided to the Selectboard in its packet.
- Managing agenda time slots. If agenda items are given a total of 20 minutes, with 10 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion, if the discussion is still ongoing at 20 minutes, the Chair can check in with the Board to see if it wants to extend the time spent on the item.
- Developing a Template for Agenda Memorandums, including a bullet list of highlights of the agenda item at the top of the memo.
- Celebrating Big Wins! A template for Department Heads and Committees to share and celebrate achievements with the Selectboard and the community. The template could include a headline, brief summary and photo that is easy to share on social media, the website, etc.
- Public Comment. Some communities manage Public Comment by not commenting on any public comment until the end of the public comment period, so that those addressing the Board are not interrupted and the timing is not confusing/extended. (Also see consistent enforcement of time limits, above).
- Answering Questions. Direct/Invite Inquiries to Town Manager – no need to wait for a meeting – could this help reduce questions under public comments? FAQs, Policies, Flow Charts, Easy Next Steps on the website (with QR codes) could be useful tools as well.

V. What's on Our Plate

The Board reviewed the project list:

Planning & Development

Clifford Park Food Forest Kiosk
Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan Update
Homes for Hartford: Big Little Build
Coolidge Block Redevelopment/Parking
Quechee Main Street Sidewalk
Railroad Row Kiosk Panels
Village History Signs
Historic District Signs
Village Center Designations and Economic
Development
Zoning Bylaw Amendments
Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs (HGMP)
Buyouts
Completion of TIF District Projects
I-91 Exit 11 Interchange Sidewalk
Town Plan Update

Environmental Sustainability Coordinator

Barwood Arena Renovation
Town Hall HVAC Overhaul
WRJ Wastewater Treatment Facility HVAC
Overhaul
EV Level 2 Chargers in South Main Parking
Lot
EV Level 3 Chargers in South Main Parking
Lot
WRJ Geothermal Heating District

Town Manager

Reinvigorate Capital Improvement Plan
(w/Municipal Planning Grant) w/Planning
Department
Bugbee Senior Center Renovations

Department of Public Works

[See DPW CIP]

Parks & Recreation Department

Kilowatt Improvement Plan

Hartford Community Recreation Center

Maxfield Paving Project

Lyman Point Park Improvement Project

Playground Replacement in Parks System

Wrights Reservoir Restoration

Police & Dispatch

Relocate HPD (Needs Assessment Cost
\$75,000)

Add a Fourth Console for Dispatch Center
(Revenue Source) Form Not Submitted

Fire Department

Purchase of a replacement for 2009 fire
engine

Clerk

Records Digitization in Clerk's Office

Communications & Media Specialist

Town of Hartford Branding Refresh

VI. Prioritize What's on Our Plate: What is Coming Before the Selectboard this Year?

While reviewing the list of What's on Our Plate, the Selectboard received a brief background on the item and discussed whether the item would be coming before the Board for discussion and/or action between in the July 2025 – February 2026 timeframe. Based on discussion, a rough, draft timeline was developed:

Town of Hartford

Draft SB Work Plan (Agenda Items Only from 6-29-25 Workshop Discussion)

		FY26				
		Jul/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec	Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr
Planning & Development	Deadline					
Hazard Mitigation Plan Update	Feb '26		Review	Review	Adopt	
Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan Update	Winter '26		Review	Adopt		
Homes for Hartford: Big Little Build	Budget	Discuss	Discuss			
Coolidge Block Redevelopment/Parking		Discuss x 2	Discuss x 2	Discuss x 2	Discuss x 2	Discuss x 2
Village Center Designations and Economic Development	Budget	Discuss	Discuss			
Completion of TIF District Projects	March '26	More on Content and Timing of Discussion & Action Items to Follow				
Town Plan Update		Information on Town Plan Adoption Process to Follow				

Environmental Sustainability Coordinator

Town Hall HVAC Overhaul

WRJ Wastewater Treatment Facility HVAC Overhaul

	Discuss			
		Discuss		

Town Manager

Reinvigorate Capital Improvement Plan

Bugbee Senior Center Renovations

Welcoming Ord / FIPP

Timeline TBD

Award Contract				
	Discuss	Discuss x2	Discuss	
Discuss/Approve?				

Department of Public Works

Highway

Discussion of Highway CIP

Future of Transfer Station

Curbside Recycling Options

Highway CIP (x2)				
Discuss	Discuss/field trip			
	Discuss			
	W/WW CIP (x2)			

Water & Wastewater

Discussion of Water & Wastewater CIP

Parks & Recreation Department

Wrights Reservoir Restoration

			Discuss	

Fire Department

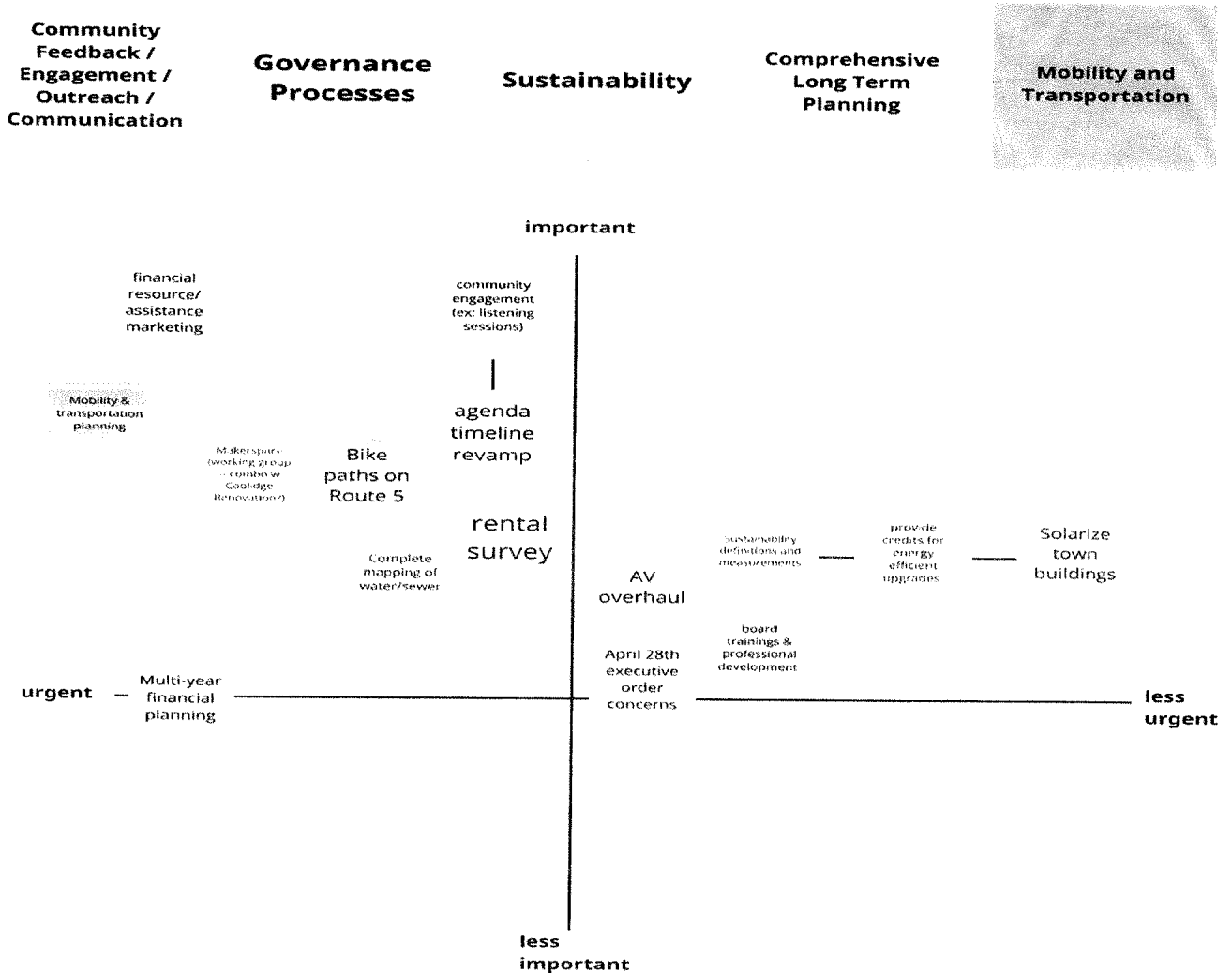
Purchase replacement for 2009 fire engine

	Approvals			
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- Ashley Andreas suggested that hyperlinks should be added to these items to give the Board and the public easy access to background information.
- John Haverstock will follow up with Director of Planning and Development Services, Laurie Hirshfield, on the details of the completion of TIF district projects and the Town Plan update to see when Selectboard discussion and action is needed.
- John Haverstock will check with the Vermont League of Cities & Towns Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF), the Town's insurer, for an update on insurance coverage for the dam.
- John Haverstock will circulate this timeline to department heads, asking them if they have anything to add before budget season.

VII. Review/Revise/Augment Work Draft Annual Workplan

With the review/revise draft workplan completed in the previous section, facilitator Alex Torpey asked the Board to write down topics/issues/projects missing from the list which should be considered for addition to the Board's workplan. The Board then reviewed each member's submission and added them to an Eisenhower Matrix:



Using the Matrix as a guide, a “Selectboard” section was added to the Workplan:

	FY26				
	Jul/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec	Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr
Selectboard					
Tax Bill Insert on Social & Financial Resources	In Process				
Community Engagement Strategies & Activities	Discuss	Discuss	Discuss	Discuss	Discuss
Working Group on Makers Space	Discuss				
Working Group on Mobility/Sidewalks	Discuss				
Task Force to Review Downtown Parking	Discuss				
Add Multi-year Forecast to Budget	Discuss				
Executive Order on Immigration: Report on	Discuss				
VLCT & State Research. Contingency Planning.		Discuss			
Sustainability Definition, Goals & Metrics		Discuss			
Solarize Current, Renovated and Future Town		Discuss			
Buildings		Discuss			
Town Financing of Residential Energy Efficiency		Discuss			
Improvements		Discuss			

- The discussion of multi-year budget planning included ideas such as adding charts and graphs to the budget presentation, and a short video overview of the budget process. John Haverstock added that after the difficult budget year last year, it would be helpful for the Board to consider adding a budget target to the instructions to department heads this year.
- John Haverstock will follow up with Environmental Sustainability Coordinator Dana Clawson for background on the definition, goals and metrics (if any) for Hartford’s Sustainability Program, as well as the results of any previous studies on solarizing town properties.
- It was suggested that a new microphone for the public to use may help with the AV for the meeting room, and that AV improvements could be considered as part of the budget process.
- Executive Order: John Haverstock will contact Chief Kelly and VLCT PACIF to inquire further about any developments/trends/things to look out for with the enforcement of the President’s Executive Order on Immigration, including embedding federal agents in municipal departments and/or federal agents directing municipal staff.
- The need for holistic planning on transportation and parking was discussed.

VIII. Next Steps

- The work plan will be added to an upcoming agenda, once Department Heads have had an opportunity to review it.
- There should be check-ins a couple of times per year.
- The work plan should be updated in January/February as it could be a useful tool for onboarding new members.

- IX. Adjourn: At 2:05 p.m., Ida Griesemer moved that the Board adjourn. Ashley Andreas seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously by the Board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Andreas', written over a horizontal line.

Ashley Andreas, Selectboard Clerk
June 29, 2025 Work Session