



TOWN OF HARTFORD SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, September 30, 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; Tim Fariel; John Haverstock; Scott Cooney; Lana Livingston; Adam Grounds; Nancy Scott; John Haffner; Maggie Burnett; Jessie Pollard; John Reid; Rebecca White; Rick Vincent; Bryan Gazda; Gail Ostrout; Johnathon Schectman; Matt Osborn; Lexi Webster; Peter Zendran

Present on Zoom: Marie Alvin

JAM LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/live/ykmDjpgn9Zg?si=-U0eILThQjK6LcZv>

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting at 6pm by Chair, Mary Erdei
- II. Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by Fire Chief, Scott Cooney
- III. Local Liquor Control Board: None
- IV. Local Cannabis Control Board: None
- V. Order of Agenda: There will be no Executive Session.
- VI. Selectboard

1. Public Comment

Peter Zendran from WRJ spoke to his concerns about residents being surveilled.

Marie Alvin, from WRJ asked if there had been any thoughts what selling water to Norwich would do during a drought. She asked about the reports from the HPD. She also asked why the ordinance for the Park & Ride was not being followed. There is a 7 day limit and a car has now been there for over 30 days.

2. Selectboard Comments and Announcements

Ashley Andreas reminded folks about the invitation for the event called Managing Difficult Conversations with Constituents on October 23rd by Braver Angles.

Tim Fariel commented on watching the Fire event last week. He was really impressed with all the crews that worked on putting it out.

Miranda Dupre announced that there will be mutual aid fund raiser at the First Friday Event at the Filling Station for the folks affected by the Fire.

Also a reminder of the Selectboard Board's Meet and Greet at the Filling Station on First Friday beginning at 5:30pm.

3. Appointments: None

4. Town Manager Report:

1. **Major Incident Response – 3rd Alarm Fire at 40 Barnes Avenue**

On Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 10:56 AM, Hartford Fire Department responded to a third-alarm structure fire at 40 Barnes Avenue, a six-unit residential building in White River Junction. The fire originated on the second floor and caused significant damage to the upper level and roof, with water damage affecting other areas of the building.

- **Casualties:** One firefighter sustained a minor injury. Two dogs perished. Some reptiles and a cat were rescued during operations.
- **Occupants:** All residents were accounted for. The building is currently uninhabitable.

- **Support Services:** LedgeWorks, the property manager, arranged temporary housing for displaced tenants. Red Cross services remain available.
- **Investigation:** The Hartford Fire Marshal, with assistance from the Vermont Fire and Explosives Investigations Unit, will conduct a full investigation. The Fire Department is maintaining custody of the building until the investigation concludes.
- **Mutual Aid Responders:** Lebanon, Hanover, Norwich, Plainfield, Pomfret, Woodstock, Meridian, and Windsor Fire Departments.
- **Coverage Support:** Hartland Volunteer Fire Department (fire coverage) and Lebanon Fire Department (EMS coverage).

2. Hartford Parks & Recreation – National Re-Accreditation

Hartford Parks & Recreation received its **final notice of Re-Accreditation** at the National Recreation and Parks Conference on Wednesday, September 17. The official recognition took place at the *Best of the Best Ceremony* presented by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

CAPRA is the only national accreditation of park and recreation agencies and serves as a valuable measure of operational quality, management, and service to the community. Re-accreditation is required every five years. Hartford remains the **only accredited agency in the State of Vermont**, and one of only **213 accredited agencies nationwide**.

3. Regional Collaboration – New EMS Contract with Pomfret

We are pleased to announce a **new contracted ambulance service agreement** with the **Town of Pomfret, VT**, to provide EMS coverage to designated areas of their community. This agreement not only enhances regional emergency medical response but also represents a **new revenue-generating service** for the Town of Hartford. It reflects our continued commitment to regional partnerships and sustainable service delivery.

4. Emergency Planning – Drought Preparedness

I met with the **Public Works Department** to review current drought conditions and assess emergency preparedness for the **Quechee and White River Junction Water Systems**. While both systems are currently operating without known impacts, we are proactively developing contingency plans to ensure continued service in the event of worsening conditions.

5. Community Safety Collaboration – Situation Table Meeting

On September 26, I attended the **Situation Table meeting**, where I observed the multi-agency process designed to support individuals at **acutely elevated risk**. This collaborative approach brings together law enforcement, health and human services, and community partners to intervene early and provide coordinated support. It was encouraging to see this proactive model in action and the commitment of all involved agencies to improving outcomes for vulnerable individuals in our region.

6. Statewide Burn Ban – Effective September 22

On September 22, 2025, the **Commissioner of Forests, Parks, and Recreation** issued a **statewide burn ban**, effective at 12:00 PM. All Town Forest Fire Wardens and Deputy Wardens have been directed **not to issue any burning permits** until further notice. This order will remain in effect until it is formally revoked, either statewide or on a county-by-county basis, depending on fire danger and weather conditions. The Town is complying fully with this directive and has notified the public accordingly.

7. Quechee Main Street Sidewalk Grant Award

The Town of Hartford has been awarded **\$1.5 million** from the **Vermont Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant Program** to design, engineer, and construct a sidewalk along **Quechee Main Street**,

between the library and the Quechee Bridge, including a connection to the Quechee Green Circle. Grant agreement documents and an implementation schedule will be processed with the state in the coming weeks.

8. Personnel Achievements – Fire Department

- **Deputy Fire Marshal Amy Jerome** has successfully completed her probationary period and is now fully certified as both a **Fire Inspector** and **Firefighter/EMT**. This marks a significant professional milestone, and we commend her dedication and growth.
- **Senior Firefighter Promotion:** Ian Duffy has been promoted to **Senior Firefighter** as of September 22, 2025. Ian has demonstrated strong leadership and commitment to service excellence. Congratulations to both Amy and Ian on their achievements.

Significant Activity Reports Link: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/Archive.aspx?ADID=523>

5. Board Report, Motions & Ordinances

- a. Update from the Historic Preservation Commission presented by Jonathan Schechtman. Presentation: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/12928/Historic-Preservation-Selectboard-Presentation-093025>
- b. Update From the Housing and Homelessness Committee/Housing Survey Update by John Haffner. Presentation: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/12930/Hartford-Committee-on-Housing-and-homelessness-2025-update>
- c. Public Meeting 2 of 2 on Town's Solid Waste Implementation Plan presented by Bryan Gazda. Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei opened the Public Meeting at 7:10 PM. Presentation: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/12931/SWIP--Pre-Approved-Final-Draft>
Citizen Comments: None
Selectboard Chair, Mary Erdei closed the Public Meeting at 7:12PM.
- d. Purchase of New 2026 Ford F250 Pickup Truck presented by Bryan Gazda.
Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion to accept the bid in the amount of \$70,853.00 from Formula Ford Lincoln, Rutland, VT, for a 2026 Ford F250 4X4 Extended Cab Flatbed Pickup with snowplow and York Rake and authorize the Town Manager to sign all documents associated with the purchase of the vehicle. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
- e. Update on Coolidge Block Redevelopment Efforts presented by Adam Grounds and Lexi Webster. Presentation: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/12932/20250930-White-River-Junction-Parking-Feasibility-Study>

Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to direct the Town Manager to pursue submission of a VMPP application for \$30,000 to fund approximately half of the feasibility study with the understanding that the VMPP application will be approved at a future Selectboard meeting prior to submittal. Selectboard Member, Ida Griesemer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion to have a member of the staff submit a letter of support for the project's Catalyst Grant Feasibility application if the project scope for the application will focus primarily on reducing car dependency in downtown WRJ by assessing enhancements to alternative modes of mobility including but not limited to active mobility (e.g. walking, biking), transit

(e.g. conventional route-based transit and micro transit, shuttle service), and car sharing, and secondarily, the project scope will include assessing options for increasing surface level parking capacity. Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas seconded the motion. 4 were in favor, 3 not in favor (Fariel, Hoyt & Erdei) and the motion passed.

- f. Consider Encumbrance of FY25 Funds for Open Purchase Orders presented by Gail Ostrout
Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre made the motion to approve the 2025 Encumbrance Request as modified totaling \$661,157.67 which includes reducing the Selectboard training by \$8,858.77. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
- g. Review and Accept Assessor Error and Omission Report
Selectboard Clerk, Ashley Andreas made the motion to Approve an additional adjustment in assessed value for 235 Fairbanks Turn, SPAN number 285-90-15255, so that the assessed value is reduced from the original 2025 value of \$2,292,200 to \$420,600. Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VII. Commission Reports

Ida Griesemer: Report from the Energy Commission:

- The electric vehicle expo was a success. At least two attendees purchased EVs. The Commission discussed ideas for how to use the surplus funds from sponsorships for the event, including possibly putting it toward bike parking infrastructure in downtown WRJ.
- Window Dressers workshop is Oct. 2-8. [Click here for info about Window Dressers](#). If interested in volunteering: [sign up here](#)
- Styrofoam recycling event is Saturday, Oct. 4, 9-11 am in the Mascoma Bank parking lot, 243 Sykes Mountain Ave, WRJ

Mary Edei: Report from the Bugbee Committee:

Mark Bradley reviewed the tour taken at the last meeting and ended with thoughts that we are lacking a Capital Improvement Plan and that the Feasibility Study did not include an architectural rendering as well as programs at Bugbee.

“How do we prioritize “is where we began then:

Small group #1 (made up of Mark, Sean, Tom, Linda) to answer the following questions:

A) What do we need to do first?

B) What needs to happen now regarding compliance and decommissioning?

They will meet once in the next week (Oct 1, 2025) and bring to next full meeting.

Small Group #2 (made up of Mark, Sue, Emily, Scott F) to answer the following:

A) How do we link the Feasibility Study to the needs of Bugbee’s building programs?

B) How will “site” impact the operating budget of Bugbee?

Meeting tentatively on Oct 7 at 5 pm

The next meeting will be on October 9th at 4:30 at Bugbee

VIII. Consent Agenda: Selectboard Vice Chair, Mike Hoyt made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Selectboard Member, Tim Fariel seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Approve Payroll Ending: 9/27/2025

Approve A/P Manifest: 9/26/2025 & 10/2/2025

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 9/16/2025

Future Meetings Approved: 10/3/2025 (Outreach Event); 10/14/2025; 10/28/2025

IX. Executive Session: None

X. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting: **Selectboard Member, Erik Krauss made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55PM. Selectboard Member, Miranda Dupre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

Ashley Andreas, Selectboard Clerk
September 30, 2025 Meeting