



**TOWN OF HARTFORD
LOCAL LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD
& SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 11, 2016 at 6:00 pm

Hartford Town Hall

171 Bridge Street

White River Junction, Vermont 05001

Present: Richard Grassi, Selectboard Chair; Rebecca White, Selectboard Vice-Chair; Sandra Mariotti, Selectboard Clerk; Simon Dennis, Selectboard Member; Dennis Brown, Selectboard Member; Alan Johnson, Selectboard Member; Mike Morris, Selectboard Member; Leo Pullar, Town Manager; Eliza LeBrun, Executive Assistant; Lori Dickerson, School Board of Directors Chair; Dawn Pullar, Kevin "Sarge" Christie

I. Call to Order Liquor Control Board/Selectboard Meeting and Pledge of Allegiance

Selectboard Chair, Richard Grassi opened the Town of Hartford Selectboard meeting at 6:00pm. Alan Johnson led the pledge of allegiance.

II. Order of Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

III. Liquor Control Board: N/A

IV. Selectboard

1. Citizen, Selectboard Comments and Announcements: TBD

There were no citizen comments.

Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown stated that he attended the Community Police Relations meeting last night. Mr. Brown heard from Chief Kasten about training cuts within the department as well as that UVM is the only accredited police department in Vermont. Mr. Brown believes that Towns which are accredited may receive a discount on insurances. Selectboard Member, Brown also learned how traffic stops are generated. The sum of the evening was that it was all about trust.

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White informed the Board that she and Town Manager Pullar attended the Vermont League of Cities and Towns Town Fair to vote on Legislative Policy. The second day of the meeting was workshops and an introduction from the head of the head of the National League of Cities and Towns. It was good to hear about what other Towns are going thru.

Selectboard Member, Simon Dennis reminded the Board that this weekend is the conference for Deep Change for Climate Justice Conference, which is a 2 full days event. This event will be in the Briggs Opera House, the Cartoon Studio and in Newberry Market.

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson will be running in the CHAD marathon this weekend. The Renewable Energy Vermont conference will be held on Thursday and Friday October, 20 and 21, 2016.

2. Appointments/Reappointments:

- a. Interview & Consider Bob Vahey for a 3-Year Term on the Hartford Zoning Board of Adjustment, Term 10/11/16 to 10/10/19. Candidate withdrew his application.
- b. Consider the Reappointment of Alice Maleski to a 3-Year Term on the Hartford Zoning Board of Adjustment, Term 3/15/16 to 3/15/16. Candidate was reappointed in May 2016.
- c. Consider the Reappointment of Peter Merrill to a 4-Year Term on the Hartford Planning Commission, Term 3/15/16 to 3/15/20. **Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White made a motion to reappointment Peter Merrill to a 4-Year Term on the Hartford Planning Commission, Term 3/15/16 to 3/15/20. Selectboard Clerk, Sandra Mariotti seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.**

Selectboard member, Dennis Brown stated that he felt that Peter Merrill was a valuable part of the Planning Commission.

3. Town Manager's Report: Mr. Pullar shared the Town Manager's Highlights in his significant activity report for the week of October 11, 2016.

<http://www.hartford-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/71>

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson asked Town Manager, Mr. Pullar what his intention was with the properties certified by Norwich Technologies. Town Manager Pullar explained that he and Planning Director Hirshfield would be meeting with Joel Stettenheim in the coming week. Selectboard Member Johnson noted that a joint Town and School bid may drive the bidding opportunity.

Selectboard Member, Simon Dennis asked if during the Regional Manager's Meeting they discussed how far along they were with Composting Household Hazardous Waste. Town Manager Pullar explained that they are not that far along yet. Selectboard Chair, Richard Grassi stated that the Regional Managers group feels that they need to start doing things rather than just talking. Mr. Grassi felt that the group just needed to pick a project and start moving on it and agreed that the Household Hazardous Waste project is a good one.

4. Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances:

- a. Transportation Alternatives Grant Application for Supplemental Funds for Sykes Mt. Ave. Sidewalk (Butternut Ln to USPS). **Selectboard Member, Simon Dennis made a motion to approve submittal of a grant application to the 2016 Vermont Transportation Alternatives Program for \$74,995 of additional funds for the Upper Sykes Mountain Avenue sidewalk and bike lane project, and \$18,749 of Town matching funds in the FY 2017-2018 Town budget contingent upon future voter approval. The Selectboard also accepts maintenance responsibility for the improvements after construction, and authorizes the Town Manager to sign all necessary grant documents on behalf of the Selectboard. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.**

Selectboard Chair, Richard Grassi introduced Planner, Matt Osborn to discuss the VTrans Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Application. Mr. Osborn explained that this is an annual VT grant program for local bicycle/pedestrian improvements. The grant would address a shortfall identified with recent cost estimate updates for the Town's sidewalk and bike lane project on Upper Sykes Mountain Avenue between Upper Butternut Road and the Post Office. Planning for sidewalks and bike lanes for Sykes Mountain Avenue and Route 5 goes back many years. In 2000, the *Sykes Mountain Avenue Study* recommended sidewalks for Sykes Mt Ave and several side streets in the area. The 2004 bicycle/pedestrian scoping study recommended sidewalks and bike lanes the entire length of Sykes Mt Ave, and ½ mile of Route 5 from Sykes Mt Ave to VA Cut-off Road.

The project was divided into five segments to better fit VTrans maximum funding limits for grants. To date, the Town has received VTrans grants and allocated local funding for sidewalks and bike lanes for the entire corridor, including extending the Route 5 segment from VA Cutoff Road to Arboretum Lane.

One of these segments is Upper Sykes Mt. Ave, from Butternut Lane to US Post Office, current funding for this segment:

\$588,900 VTrans grants (2009 & 2014)
\$107,100 Town required match
<u>\$ 83,000 Property owner contributions</u>
\$779,000 TOTAL

Recent construction cost estimate from Town's engineer, Stantec, showed a \$309,000 shortfall, primarily due to two retaining walls. Staff has worked with Stantec to reduce the budget shortfall to \$93,744 by eliminating curbing in front of the Post Office and one retaining wall in front of the Toyota car dealership. This option requires regrading on Toyota's property, and staff is reviewing this with Toyota.

The TA grant would significantly reduce the need for Town funds for the shortfall. The following is the project budget for the additional grant:

Grant Request	\$74,995
<u>Required 20% Local Match (cash)</u>	<u>\$18,749</u>
Total Grant Request Budget	\$93,744

Grant application, and Town commitment to 20% local match and local maintenance of completed improvements due October 20th. Notification of grant awards are in January, 2017.

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White asked what the additional sidewalks will add to the cost of upkeep for the Town of Hartford. Public Works Director, Rich Menge explained that this project will add an additional 1.5 miles to 10 miles that are currently being taken care of by the Town. This may create approximately 10-15% increase in cost. Mr. Menge stated that these sidewalks will be concrete and therefore more durable.

Selectboard member, Simon Dennis asked if there were any other costs that we should be anticipating with this project. Mr. Menge explained that he did not believe that there would be any additional costs, however, until the contractors bid on the project, the Town will not know the exact cost. Mr. Dennis confirmed that the \$107,000 does include all of the Town matches.

There was a discussion regarding the curve at Acorn Street as it is a very sharp corner and may be dangerous for foot traffic. Selectboard member Brown pointed out the corner across from the VA hospital in front of the Super 8 Motel as also being a dangerous corner for foot traffic. Mr. Brown would prefer to see the sidewalk planned behind the Super 8 Motel and thru the Jasmin Autobody parking lot.

Selectboard member Brown asked if the Mascoma Bank and White River Toyota would be sharing the cost of these sidewalks. Mr. Osborn confirmed that they would and that the scope of work had been scaled back in front of White River Toyota per our request to save the Town money as White River Toyota will only be paying for the sidewalk.

Selectboard Member Brown asked when we would be “turning off the spigot,” and not doing any more projects until the projects that have been started are finished. Town Manager Pullar agreed as this project has been going on for 14 years. Mr. Brown asked for a list of other projects that are still ongoing as this project has been.

Selectboard Member Morris asked if new businesses will be paying for sidewalks, and if perhaps this should be included as a condition of approval for permits? Mr. Morris also asked about the responsibility for installing and upkeep of more crosswalks. Public Works Director Menge stated that in the past the state has required the Town to paint the crosswalks.

Selectboard Member Brown asked if the new sidewalks from Ralph Lehman Drive to Sykes Mountain Avenue will be a problem for the round-about planned. Mr. Menge explained that the sidewalk designs have taken the round-about construction in to consideration.

This grant application is due by October 20, 2016 therefore the Selectboard does not have enough time to gather further information. However, if this grant is awarded, the Selectboard has the ability to delay execution of this grant until such time as they are comfortable with the details. The Selectboard would then assess the project to ensure that it has not become more expensive than beneficial.

- b. Review and Discuss Hartford Ambulance Billing and Write-Offs.

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White made a motion that the Selectboard Authorize the Write-Off of \$800,628.46 in Uncollectable Ambulance Bills. Selectboard Member, Mike Morris seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

Fire Chief, Scott Cooney introduced background information regarding Ambulance billing in Hartford. Currently the Fire Department bills for patient transports and paramedic intercepts. Rates/fees are determined annually and approved by the Selectboard. All billing is completed by the Fire Department Administrative Assistant. The Fire Department owns the ambulance billing software and maintains a maintenance contract with Tri-Tech. The Fire Department utilizes Credit Associates, Inc. to provide collection services for accounts over 120 days delinquent.

Medicare billing pays only 80% of fees, then coinsurance from patients are applied, and the remainder is a mandatory write-off.

Medicaid billing pays only 51% of fees, the remaining fee is mandatory write-off.

VA billing is approximately 68% of fees, the remaining fee is mandatory write-off.

All commercial insurance companies are required to pay in full. The Fire Department does not accept assignment; which means the Fire Department can bill the patient for the remaining balance after insurance payment. Patients are required to pay in full. They do not write off fees for any reason. They do set up payment arrangements. The Fire Department allows minimum payments of at least \$5.00 per month.

Receivables are reviewed and posted weekly. They are verified for correct payments, a deposit form is created for finance. After payments are posted and a credit report is run; all mandatory write-offs are posted. Any remaining balance after payment is posted will be the patient's responsibility invoice and/or insurance invoice is created and mailed. If double or over payments are received; refund correct patient/payer. Monthly and annually aging report sent to finance.

Current recommendations are to leave 2 years of debt on the books. The Fire Department has now developed a process with finance to produce a write-off at the end of each fiscal year in order to maintain only 2 years of debt.

Selectboard Member Brown clarified that the Fire Department can only charge patients if they are transported, not for response only. Mr. Brown asked what private ambulance companies do in this regard.

- c. Review and Discuss Delinquent Taxes and Utility Payments. (Info Only)
- Town Manager, Leo Pullar gave a presentation showing 232 instances of delinquent taxes from 2009 to 2016 totaling \$596,101.04.
- 2009, 1 Instance, \$2,402.27
 - 2010, 1 Instance, \$2,385.69
 - 2011, 2 Instances, \$7,399.12
 - 2012, 2 Instances, \$7,534.47
 - 2013, 9 Instances, \$12,108.55
 - 2014, 31 Instances, \$79,246.93
 - 2015, 47 Instances, \$133,228.19
 - 2016, 139 Instances, \$351,795.82
 - 34 Individuals = 138 Instances = \$385,469.08
 - 12 Individuals = 12 Instances = \$574.33
 - 82 Individuals = 82 Instances = \$210,057.63

The total late taxes for 2017 is as follows:

- 321 Instances Totaling \$436,666.13
 - 192 > \$100.00 w/No Payment
 - 92 > \$100.00 w/Partial Payment
 - 32 <= \$100.00
 - 5 <= \$5
- 140 Instances Also On Delinquent List
- 181 Instances Late Only

Mr. Pullar recommends the following steps to reduce the number of delinquent and late taxes;

- Thorough Review/Scrub of Lists
 - Bankruptcy
 - Deceased

- Bad Addresses
- Reinvigorate Payment Plans
- Reinitiate Tax Sales
- Review Other Possible Options
- Additionally, \$28,260.82 in Delinquent Utilities

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson would like to review the new instances of delinquent taxes and see why our tax payers are not paying. Town Manager Pullar explained that at this this time we do not have the data in our systems as it just rolls the past due forward.

Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown would like to know why the 8% penalty was reduced on delinquent taxes. Selectboard Chair, Richard Grassi responded that the Board had felt that a lot of the people who were late a very little bit were charged for circumstances that were beyond their control.

5. Commission Meeting Reports:

Selectboard Member, Simon Dennis informed everyone that Town Surveys are now available at all libraries in Hartford, the Town Clerks Office, Public Safety, Public Works and the Landfill. The Crater Committee did not meet this week, but will meet on October 19, 2016.

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson wanted to share several things he learned at the Budget Seminar he attended. The first thing he learned was that articles for ballot need to be re-written to be up to standard. The Budget itself could be broken out into 2 articles; Highway and Other. Deviating from the budget is not usually allowed, but our Charter does allow it. Borrowing requires voter approval and may be something that the Board should look into.

Selectboard Member, Mike Morris attended the Veterans Council Meeting. The Veterans Parade will be held on November 5, 2016. The council seems to be having some trouble with getting detour signs and would like some assistance from the Town. The council believes that there may be twelve hundred scouts attending. Currently the Veterans Council is looking for Volunteers to help out with the Parade.

6. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approve Payroll Ending 10/8/2016
Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White made a motion to approve payroll ending 10/8/2016. Selectboard Clerk, Sandra Mariotti seconded the motion.7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

- b. Approve Meeting Minutes of 9/20/2016 & 9/27/2016 & 10/4/2016
Selectboard Clerk, Sandra Mariotti made a motion to approve meeting minutes of 9/20/16 (amended) and 9/27/16. Selectboard Member, Simon Dennis seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown pointed out two spelling errors in the Minutes of 9/20/16.
Selectboard Member, Simon Dennis made a motion to approve meeting minutes of 10/4/16. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 6 Selectboard members voted e in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, Selectboard Clerk Mariotti abstained.

- c. Approve A/P Manifest of 10/7/2016

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson made a motion to approve the A/P manifest of 10/7/2016. Selectboard Member Simon Dennis seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

Point of clarification:

- pg. 10, Town of Hartford transfer to Town Clerk – the Town Clerk charges for copies, these are the funds received by the Town of Hartford and credited to the Town Clerk.
- Pg. 6, First Defense Supply – 24 different vests in various sizes, these were purchased with a grant for all officers within the Police Department.

- d. Selectboard Meeting Dates of 10/25/2016 (2nd Public Hearing for Proposal Charter Amendments,) 11/15/2016 (Budget Workshop), 11/22/2016, 11/29/2016 (Budget Workshop) & 12/6/2016

Selectboard member, Dennis Brown read the coming meeting dates for the Selectboard as Monday, 11/7/16, 11/15/16 as a Budget Workshop, 11/20/16, 11/29/16 as a Budget Workshop and 12/6/16. Selectboard member, Mike Morris seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

Selectboard member, Alan Johnson asked that all of these dates be added to the Town Calendar.

7. Executive Session (1 VSA 313):

- a. **Labor Relations Agreements with Employees: Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White made a motion to enter executive session at 8:42pm. In accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law requirements, Selectboard Vice-Chair White moves that the Board find that premature general public knowledge of the discussion of Labor Relations Agreements would clearly place the Selectboard at a substantial disadvantage, because the Selectboard risks disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses Labor Relations Agreements in public. Further be it moved that the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss Labor Relations Agreements with Employees, under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1) of the Vermont Statutes. Selectboard Clerk, Sandra Mariotti seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.**

Selectboard member, Simon Dennis made a motion to close executive session at 10:18pm. Selectboard member, Mike Morris seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

V. Adjournment (Mot. Req.)

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Rebecca White made a motion to adjourn the Hartford Selectboard Meeting at 10:19pm. Selectboard member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 7 Selectboard members voted in favor, 0 Selectboard members voted nay, 0 Selectboard members abstained.

Selectboard Clerk