



**TOWN OF HARTFORD
SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

Tuesday, February 25, 2020, 6:00pm
Hartford Town Hall
171 Bridge Street
White River Junction, VT 05001

Present: Simon Dennis, Selectboard Chair; Richard Grassi, Selectboard Vice Chair; Dennis Brown, Selectboard Clerk; Jameson Davis, Selectboard Member; Dan Fraser, Selectboard Member; Alan Johnson, Selectboard Member; Kim Souza, Selectboard Member; Brannon Godfrey, Town Manager; Lana Livingston, Administrative Assistant; Lori Hirshfield, Director of Planning and Development; Hannah Tyler, Director of Public Works; Chris Holzwarth, DPW Projects Manager; Marsha K. Autilio; Ken Smith; Denis Backus; Mark Langlois; John Hall; Ann Reynolds; Joseph Krupu; Wayne Elliott; Lannie Collins; Pat and Marsha Autilio; Alicia Barrow; Joe Major.

Please note: Dick Grassi joined the meeting at 6:10 P.M.

CATV Link: <http://catv.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/show/11321?channel=1>

I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting

Selectboard Chair, Simon Dennis called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Citizen, Denis Backus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Selectboard Chair, Simon Dennis reviewed the process for the Town Manager evaluation. The Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the Town Manager on February 26 for the Manager's review. A brief statement will be submitted for the Manager's personnel file. Selectboard Member Alan Johnson did compile the numbers that the Board Members turned in. Mr. Johnson will submit a paper copy to the other Board Members as well as to Mr. Godfrey.

Selectboard Chair, Simon Dennis recessed the Selectboard and opened the Local Liquor Control Board at 6:03 P.M.

III. Local Liquor Control Board

1. Renewals: Appearance Required:

- a. Veterans of Foreign Wars Club #2571. 97 South Main Street
White River Junction, VT 05001 (1st & 3rd)

Selectboard Vice Chair, Dick Grassi made the motion to approve the 1st and 3rd Liquor License for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Club #2571. 97 South Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001. Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis seconded the motion. 4 were in favor, 3 abstained (Brown, Fraser & Souza). The motion passed.

Mr. Backus, from the VFW, announced they had a new function room at the VFW is ready for rentals.

2. Renewal: No Appearance Required:

- a. It's About Thyme, LLC, Doing Business As: Thyme, 85 North Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001 (1st, 3rd, Outside Consumption)
- b. Bradford F. Pirkey, Doing Business As: Chef Brads Crazy Side, 1 Quechee Main Street, Quechee, VT 05059 (1st & Outside Consumption)
- c. Quechee Pizza Chef, 5893 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 (1st & Outside Consumption)
- d. Simon Pearce (US) Inc. Doing Business As: Simon Pearce Restaurant, Main Street, Quechee, VT 05059 (1st & 3rd)
- e. Simon Pearce (US) Inc. Doing Business As: Simon Pearce Glass, Main Street, "The Mill", Quechee, VT 05059 (2nd)
- f. Squeaky Wheel, Inc. Doing Business As: The Filling Station Restaurant & Lounge, 70 Gates Street, White River Junction, VT 05001 (1st & 3rd)
- g. Collaborative Stoke, LLC, Doing Business As: Trail Break Tap & Tacos, 129 South Main Street, Suite 100, White River Junction, VT 05001 (1st, 3rd & Outside Consumption)
- h. Vural Oktay, Inc., Doing Business As: Tucker Box, 1 South Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001 (1st, 3rd & Outside Consumption)

Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis made the motion to approve items: a, b, c, d, f, g and h. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 5 were in favor and 2 abstained (Souza & Fraser) The motion passed.

- i. Little Istanbul, Inc. 27 North Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001 (2nd)

- j. Bob Perkins, Inc., Doing Business As: Bob's Service Center (CKA), 4 Ballardvale Drive, White River Junction, VT 05001 (2nd)
- k. Global Montello Group, Corp, Doing Business As: Jiffy Mart #439, 6800 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 (2nd)
- l. Hanover Consumer Cooperative Society, Inc., Doing Business As: Co-op Food Store, 209 Maple Street, White River Junction, VT 05001 (2nd)
- m. Jake's Quechee Market, 7161 Quechee Market, 7161 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 (2nd)
- n. K-B Ventures, Inc., Doing Business As: Jake's Market & Deli, 1477 Maple Street, Hartford, VT 05047 (2nd)
- o. Pine Valley Inc., 3700 Woodstock Road, White River Junction, VT 05001 (2nd)

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson made the motion to approve items: e, i, j, k, l, m, n and o. Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown seconded the motion. % were in favor and 2 abstained (Souza & Fraser). The motion passed.

Selectboard Chair, Simon Dennis Closed the Local Liquor Board and reopened the Selectboard Meeting at 6:14 P.M.

IV. Order of Agenda: Selectboard Member, Kim Souza asked to add items to the agenda. The items are: Frequently Asked Questions on the Town's Website and the Candidates Round table at the Town Meeting. Selectboard Chair, Simon Dennis added to also look at the ballot questions for Saturday. Mr. Dennis agreed to add these items before the 3.d item.

V. Selectboard

1. Public, Selectboard Comments and Announcements

Citizen Comments: Lannie Collins, Quechee, asked where he could find the information that was referenced at the Candidate night concerning the Welcoming Hartford Ordinance. Specifically, from the VT Attorneys Guild and the ACLU Attorney. He also asked about the document from the Chicago Attorneys.

Selectboard Member, Kim Souza reported that one could be found on the June 4, 2019 agenda under the Fair and Impartial Policing item.

Note: the January 9, 2020 Selectboard Meeting Agenda Item 4.g, where the legal memo dated January 6, 2020 on the Welcoming Hartford Ordinance from the Chicago Attorneys may be found.

Selectboard Comments: Alan Johnson reported that his child is part of the HHS Robotics team that will be competing this weekend in a regional meet.

Dick Grassi thanked Brannon for his Budget Presentation at the Budget/Candidates Night.

Simon Dennis thought the Budget/Candidates Night went well and was a good meeting.

2. Appointments:

- a. Consider the Appointment of Marsha K. Autilio to a three - year term to the Resilient Hartford Committee beginning on February 25,2020 and ending on February 24, 2023.

Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis made the motion to appoint Marsha B. Autilio to a three-year term to the Resilient Hartford Committee beginning on February 25,2020 and ending on February 24, 2023. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Town Manager's Report: This Significant Activity Report ending February 24, 2020.

Link: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/179>

3. Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances:

- a. Clean Water State Revolving Fund and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Applications for South Main Street Infrastructure Projects. (Motion Required)

During the 2019 Town approval process for the South Main Street, Gates Street and North Main Street TIF project, use of the State's low interest rate revolving loan fund programs was discussed as a financing option to reduce the overall cost of the project. Last year the Selectboard approved using the state's Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) program for the engineering portion of the stormwater/wastewater improvements for this TIF project, which was approved by the state. We are now coming before the Selectboard for approval to use the State revolving loan fund for the construction phase of the TIF Project.

Currently, the State CWSRF and DWSRF loan terms are: 2% admin fee, 20-year loan. Loan repayment begins a year after the improvements are completed which helps with cash flow. These loan terms are more favorable than the VT Bond Bank, which currently is around 2.5% net interest rate for 20-years, with bond payments that begin within a few months of floating the bond, well before improvements are completed and downtown property owners, businesses and residents can benefit.

\$1,050,000 for the CWSRF loan and \$1,350,000 DWSRF loan.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown hopes that any new light poles will have the capacity to hold a flag.

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson made the motion to Authorize the Town Manager to sign all necessary documents to apply for and administer the construction of the South Main Street segment 1 of the TIF Project. Selectboard Member, Dan Fraser seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- b. Clean Water State Revolving Fund Application for Long-Term Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Plan. (Motion Required)

The Town of Hartford is required to have a Long Term CSO Plan developed to comply with the 1272 Order Permit #3-1225 issued to the Town. The Town completed an RFQ process for water resource engineers in preparation of employing a firm to complete the plan. This process allows the Town to apply for loans under the Vermont Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The fund offers 100% reimbursement on equipment required for CSO studies, 100% reimbursement on some CSO planning studies (\$100,000 limit), and 5-15 year planning loans at 0%.

Aldrich and Elliott (A&E) prepared an application for a Step 1 Clean Water Loan (Feasibility & Planning) to develop the plan. The loan currently requests \$67,500 of which \$10,000 is for rain gauges that are to be 100% reimbursed by the loan fund. The State is currently reviewing the services agreement prepared by A&E and while not expected, the State may require additional services. Further the study may identify additional equipment to be purchased in support of the CSO plan.

Selectboard Member, Dan Fraser made the motion to Authorize the Application to the State of Vermont for Clean Water State Revolving Funds to Advance development of the Long Term CSO Plan with flexibility to amend the loan however should additional services or equipment be identified at later date. Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- c. Roundabout/Sykes Mountain Avenue Bike/Ped Projects Construction Inspection Services Contract Award. (Motion Required)

The Town of Hartford has worked closely with VTrans and our Municipal Project Manager, Ken Robie, P.E. (Dubois & King), to utilize the State of Vermont's 'At-The-Ready' Consultant list to secure a construction inspection firm for the Sykes Mountain Avenue Projects. This is a process that is nearly identical to the recent RFQ the Town has issued with the intent of streamlining the consultant procurement process. We are required to have a construction inspection firm under contract for the projects per the funding requirements. VTrans staff strongly recommended the use of the At-The Ready program for consultant selection for this project due to its size, complexity, and funding sources.

Brannon Godfrey, Ken Robie, and I (Hannah Tyler) reviewed the Statements of Qualifications for four firms (VHB, Turner, Hamelin, and GPI) which have been preapproved for this type of work. Although all four firms provided excellent proposals, GPI was the clearly the most qualified firm. Construction inspection services falls under the construction phase of the project, which is 100% reimbursable by the State of Vermont.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown made the motion to Award the contract for Construction Inspection Services be awarded to GPI for the Sykes Mountain Avenue Projects. Selectboard Member, Kim Souza seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Please note: these next items were added at the beginning of this meeting and were not on the “warned agenda.”

- Concerning the Agenda for the Saturday Floor meeting it was decided by the Board to have a presentation from the Energy Commission Chair, Erik Krauss, on the Climate initiative. It was also decided to not have a WHO presentation.
 - **Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis made the motion to not hold a Candidates Roundtable this year on the Saturday, February 29th Floor Meeting. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 5 were in favor and 2 abstained (Grassi & Souza)**
 - **Selectboard Member, Kim Souza Kim Souza made the motion to have the FAQ Document, re: Welcoming Hartford Ordinance, removed from the Town Website. Jameson Davis seconded the motion. 5 voted Yes, 2 voted No (Grassi & Brown). The motion passed.**
 - **Kim Souza made the motion that at the Town Manager’s discretion, put up the new document from John Hall (in place of the current one now voted to be taken down). Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 4 voted yes, 2 voted no (Grassi & Brown), 1 abstained (Davis). The motion passed.**
- d. Disposition of Marquee Sign at Rte 5 and Sykes Mountain Avenue.
(Motion Required)

The former 'drive-in' marquee sign located on Sykes Mountain Avenue has been used for some period of time to advertise community events. It is a wooden structure with two separate signs (one facing north, one facing south), with a 'shed' which stores the letters, and an elevated 2" x 12" plank on each side for mounting the letters. The signs are approximately seven feet high by 21 feet long and mounted four feet from ground with metal I-Beams. The location of the sign conflicts with the approved Roundabout project. As the Town has acquired the parcel that the sign is located on, we believe it is now our property.

Although the future of the sign has been discussed at multiple times during the lengthy project planning process, nobody has ever stepped forward to offer a place to relocate the sign. Thus, it is currently slated to be demolished.

Town of Hartford staff and the VTrans project team ask that the Selectboard consider the following concerns associated with preserving the sign: lack of historic context, safety, MUTCD compliance, future plans/length of storage, appropriate storage, lead paint, asbestos, non-compliance with current Town Ordinances, guarantee that the sign will be able to be preserved during construction, and the potential insurance liability.

VTrans has included demolition and disposal in the current bid documents. Dismantling, with the intent to preserve (with no guarantee on condition) and delivery to a new location would require an amendment to the bid and contract, but will be a participating expense in the grant. VTrans would not be including any costs associated with storing or reassembling.

Currently the sign is slated to be demolished and the Town will hang onto the letters.

Selectboard Member, Dan Fraser made the motion to: Save the letters under the Town Manager's care and ask VTRANS to include demolition and disposal. Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown seconded the motion. 5 voted Yes, 2 voted No (Johnson & Brown). The motion passed.

e. Budget Validation Vote Special Town Meeting. (Motion Required)

Due to an administrative error, Article #2 on the March 3, 2020 Australian ballot, which pertains to authorization of fund expenditures, was initially incorrect, but corrected on Wednesday, February 19. The budget item was initially warned, recorded, and printed for the ballot with an incorrect total of \$17,249,353 and non-tax revenue amount of \$2,329,750. The correct number for total General Fund expenditures net of appropriations is \$17,378,103 and non-tax revenue \$2,713,680, as approved by the Selectboard on January 24, 2020. There are no errors to any other articles on the ballot. The correct total was published in the Town Report.

We have reprinted the March 3 ballots with the correct numbers, replaced the posted warnings, and re-sent corrected ballots to absentee ballot requestors. The March 3, 2020 Town Meeting vote on Article #2 will proceed, and, in accordance with 17 VSA §2662, we will hold a Special Town Meeting election in April on a date to be determined to validate Article 2 with the correct General Fund total.

The cost of a Special Town Meeting for the validation vote is approximately \$7,000.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown made the motion to Authorize the Setting of the Special Town Meeting on Saturday, April 25th and warning in accordance with the Town Charter and Vermont Statutes. Selectboard Member, Kim Souza seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

f. Selectboard Self Evaluation. (Information Only)

In early 2019, the Selectboard adopted a Work Plan for the term that recommended a Selectboard self-assessment during the period of January 28 – February 25. On January 28, the Selectboard discussed developing a rubric or workshop in the future.

February 25, 2020

Selectboard Self Evaluation Comments by the Board Members:

1. Some items come before the Board too early (WHO)
2. Respecting Town Staff boundaries (asking questions in public that shouldn't be asked)
3. Respecting employees' expertise.
4. WHO came premature to Town → led to too many meetings
Ultimately disrupted budget setting process
5. CIP Rubric didn't work (not sure why)
6. WHO was too much work in open session and disrupted our work flow. Impacted CIP
7. We need better ways to communicate intent and understanding

8. Meetings are too long
9. Potential Bd. Eval Rubric for next year
10. A need for clearer communication with the Town Manager (motions)
Request for information. Better formula for motions?
11. Did a good job of respecting each other
12. Last minute action (emergency) lead to less informed decision
13. Developed strong process for prioritization and complex problem solving
And need to do a better job sticking to them under duress (honoring process)
14. We can continue to improve our listening to other bd. Members skills (better digestion of packets)
15. No more reinventing the budget wheel (discard rubric)
16. Too much time off topic.

g. Recognition of Selectboard Transition and Discussion of Post-Election Selectboard Dinner. (Information Only)

Selectboard Chair, Simon Dennis would like to discuss the transition of the outgoing and incoming Selectboard and setting a date for a social gathering of Selectboard members after Town Meeting.

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson will send a doodle poll to the new Board Members.

h. Waiver of Competitive Bid Requirements for Interim Assessor Services Agreement (Motion Required)

Town Assessor Michelle Wilson resigned from her position on January 30, 2020. The vacancy was advertised and applicants are currently under review in the selection process. There are 226 properties that need to be physically inspected prior to April 1, with valuations entered into the assessment software thereafter. With Assessor interviews planned for early March, it is unrealistic to expect that we would have a new Assessor on board in time to complete this essential work in the preparation of the 2020 Grand List. On short notice, only one qualified firm is available and has offered a contract proposal on an hourly basis. Landin & Associates has offered an hourly rate of \$85 plus travel expenses to complete the inspections, valuation and data entry. Based on the estimate of time, the cost will exceed the \$20,000 Purchasing Policy limit (Sec. 3.6) threshold for competitive sealed bids. Under Sec. 3.7 of the Policy, the Selectboard has the authority to waive the competitive sealed bid requirement. In the interest of time, the Administration requests a waiver of the policy for procurement of these services. The total project cost is variable based on actual hours. Based on an estimate time and expenses, the total cost will be between \$35,000 and \$40,000. The Assistant Assessor will be able to perform most of the data entry which will reduce some of the billable time. There are sufficient funds in the FY21 Assessor's budget from salary savings and in the Reassessment Reserves for this engagement.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Dick Grassi made the motion to Approve a waiver of the competitive sealed bid and proposal requirement in the Purchasing Policy as provided in Section 3.7. Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. Commission Meeting Reports:

Kim Souza: HCOREI will meet tomorrow.

Jameson Davis read a letter:

To the Town of Hartford, I say, "THANK YOU!!"

Two years ago, I traveled all across the Upper Valley looking for a community I could call home while I pursued my Master's and Juris Doctorate degrees at Vermont Law School. When I first reached the Town of Hartford, I was taken aback by all the beauty that one place could possess. There was a sense of community pouring out of every mom and pop store I visited and every restaurant I had the pleasure of enjoying. Almost immediately I found myself having conversations that would lead to discussions about inclusiveness and diversity, something the citizens of this town have been wanting to improve upon in all aspects of their community for quite some time. Uncertain of whether I could bring something to the table to assist this community in their quest towards change and community education, I was heavily encouraged by a small but fearless group of individuals to offer myself to the Town of Hartford. Without hesitation, I was willing to do so. As I continued to get to know the community, the decision for

me to run became even clearer. I wanted to take my experiences and hopefully use them to help this community reach their goals of becoming a place known for its inclusiveness, diversity, and acceptance of all people and cultures regardless of religion, race, or ethnicity.

Over the last two years the Town of Hartford, lead by its Selectboard members, has completed and participated in several initiatives that have and will continue to increase the quality of life for all citizens. We have led the Upper Valley in several environmental and energy-related items. As a Board, we passed a Transition to Renewable Energy Resolution and a Climate Emergency Resolution in 2018. We hired the town's first Energy Coordinator and created a Climate Advisory Committee. We passed ballot language that, if approved in the upcoming March 3rd elections, would require the town's municipal infrastructure and equipment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2027. We completed the Wilder Well Solar Project, a community solar project that helps low-income community members receive sustainable energy at a low rate. The Board has also approved numerous electric vehicles charging stations using federal grants. These accomplishments all show just what the Town of Hartford can accomplish when we have meaningful conversations followed by intentional actions.

As I praise and acknowledge these accomplishments, I must also take time to articulate the areas in which I feel we as a town could do more to make our community whole. While people of color and marginalized communities make up a small portion of our population, the ways in which we accept all members of our Town reflects whether we have earned the ability to call Hartford inclusive. To paraphrase Martin Luther King, "the ultimate measure of a [town] is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where [they] stand at times of challenge and controversy."

As we continue to grow economically, with the help of WRJ being designated as a TIF district, we must also emphasize the importance of our cultural growth. If we are going to call ourselves an inclusive community, we must be inclusive and have practices throughout our community that align with the values we want to embody. Jesse Jackson once said, "Inclusion is not a matter of political correctness. It is the key to growth." As a junction, we are in an optimal location to foster a collection of opportunities— entrepreneurial and otherwise – for diverse populations to coalesce and thrive. As a town, we must continue to remove the barriers hindering the improvements needed in order to continue generating avenues that will positively impact the quality of life for Hartford residents as a whole.

The decision to not run again was one I did not make lightly; I had many conversations with my peers and family. With my last year of law school approaching and my need to prepare to take the Bar exam while also preparing for the beginning of my new career, I felt I that it would be best for the Town of Hartford to have an Selectboard member who would able to dedicate the time needed to effectively represent and lead such an important community in the Upper Valley.

In closing, I would like to take this time and thank Simon Dennis, Kim Souza, Dennis Brown, Alan Johnson, Richard Grassi, Dan Fraser, Becca White, Leo Pullar, and Brannon Godfrey for allowing me to share the honor of being a Selectboard member for the Town of Hartford with them. Additionally, I would like to thank all of the department heads and town employees for their continued work in making the Town of Hartford, hands down, the best place to live in the state of Vermont! I would also like to give a special thank you to the Sister City and HCoreI committee members whose work in both arenas has elevated the Town of Hartford in ways that can be respected by all. While my term may be ending on March 3rd my work as a citizen begins. I look forward to continuing to work with so many of you all in continuing to make this community a more inclusive and accepting community for all!

THANK YOU TO THE TOWN OF HARTFORD VERMONT FOR ALLOWING ME TO SERVE AS YOUR SELECTBOARD MEMBER. THIS COMMUNITY WILL FOREVER BE HOME TO ME!

Jameson C. Davis

Consent Agenda (Motion Required): Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as listed. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- VII.** Approve Payroll Ending: 2/22/2020
Approve Meeting Minutes of: 2/11/2020
Approve A/P Manifest of: 2/21/2020 and 2/25/2020
Selectboard Meeting Dates of: Already Approved: 3/5/2020 (organizational meeting), 3/10/2020 and 3/24/2020 and Floor Meeting on February 29, 2020

VIII. Executive Session: N/A

- IX. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting (Motion Required): Selectboard Vice Chair, Dick Grassi made the motion to Adjourn the meeting at 10:30 P.M. Selectboard Member, Jameson Davis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

**All Meetings of the Hartford Selectboard are open to the public. Persons who are seeking action by the Selectboard are asked to submit their request and/or materials to the Selectboard Chair or Town Manager's office no later than noon on the Wednesday preceding the scheduled meeting date.
Requests received after that date will be addressed at the discretion of the Chair.
Citizens wishing to address the board should do so during the Citizen Comments period.**
