



**TOWN OF HARTFORD
SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 21, 2020, 6:00pm
Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street
White River Junction, VT 05001

Present on Site: Dan Fraser, Selectboard Chair; Brannon Godfrey, Town Manager; Lana Livingston, Administrative Assistant.

Present on-line: Simon Dennis, Selectboard Vice-Chair; Dennis Brown, Selectboard Clerk; Alan Johnson, Selectboard Member; Joe Major, Selectboard Member; Alicia Barrow, Selectboard Member; Kim Souza, Selectboard Member.

**This meeting will be conducted in compliance with
Vermont Open Meeting Law with electronic participation.**

CATV Link: <http://catv.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/show/11819?channel=1>

- I. Call to Order the Selectboard Meeting:** Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

Mr. Fraser read the following:

As Chair of the Town of Hartford Selectboard I find that, due to the State of Emergency declared by Governor Scott as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and pursuant to Addendum 6 to Executive Order 01-20 and Act 92, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

In accordance with Act 92, there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting. However, in accordance with the temporary amendments to the Open Meeting Law, I confirm that we are:

- a) *Providing public access to the meeting by [telephone/video/other electronic means], with additional access offered through telephone, zoom and youtube.com. We are using Zoom for this remote meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if desired, participate in this meeting by <https://zoom.us/j/549799933> - Please mute your microphone, [youtube.com/catv810](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=810) – click “live now”. If you’re calling in from phone dial: (415) 762-9988 Type in the Room ID: 549-799-933 followed by #. Press # a second time. Press *9 to raise your hand for public comment.*
- b) *Providing public notice of instructions for accessing the meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing this meeting, including how to access the meeting using telephone, zoom and youtube.com in our posted meeting agenda. [Instructions have also been provided on the town website on the “Agendas and Minutes.”*

c) *Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access. If anybody has a problem, please call 802-369-9036 and*

d) *Continuing the meeting if necessary. In the event the public is unable to access this meeting, it will be continued to a time and place certain.*

Please note that all votes taken during this meeting that are not unanimous will be done by roll call vote, in accordance with the law.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance of all Selectboard members participating in the meeting.

II. Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Fraser led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Local Liquor Control Board: Mr. Fraser recessed the Selectboard Meeting and opened the Local Liquor Control Board at 6:08 P.M.

1. Renewals (tabled from April 7, 2020 meeting)

a. Piecemeal, LLC Doing Business As: Piecemeal Pies, 5 South Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001 (1st Class)

The Board had requested a corrected copy of the application and Mr. Barrett did not provide one.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown made the motion to table this item until the next Selectboard Meeting. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. 5 were in favor and 2 abstained (Souza & Fraser) The motion passed.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown asked if the Town form for Liquor Licenses could change the question for past violations. Currently it has no time limit. He proposed to put in a time (past 5 or 3 years.) This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser closed the Liquor Control Board at 6:16 P.M. and reopened the Selectboard Meeting.

IV. Order of Agenda: Selectboard Clerk, Mr. Brown asked to have an item added, "Selectboard Transparency" concerning an email from another Selectboard Member to him. This item will be added after the Town Manager's report.

V. Selectboard

1. **Public, Selectboard Comments and Announcements:**

Lannie Collins from Quechee called in to ask if Mike Morris' name could be removed from the Inclusivity & Equity Strategic Plan Report. He would like it change to "a former Selectboard Member" or "a resident." Later in the meeting, Selectboard Clerk agreed with Mr. Collins and also asked for the change suggested by Mr. Collins.

Allene Swienckowski, Chair of the HCOREI, called in to say that just because one person has asked for a change, she did not agree. She noted that she thought the Town Manager eluded that the change could be made. Mr. Reed, co-editor of the Plan disagreed with any change as the Report was stating the facts as they happened.

2. **Appointments:**

a. Climate Advisory Committee Re-Appointments

- Re-Appointments: Erik Kraus, Jack Spicer
- New Appointments: Courtney Williamson

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Simon Dennis made the motion to re-appoint Erik Krauss and Jack Spice to the Climate Advisory Committee and to appoint Courtney Williamson to the Climate Advisory Committee to a 2-year term, April 21, 2020 to April 20, 2022. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. **Town Manager's Report:** Significant Activity Report ending April 20, 2020.

LINK: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/183>

4. **Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances:**

New agenda item: Selectboard Clerk was very concerned about the Selectboards transparency after receiving an email from Selectboard Vice Chair, Simon Dennis. The email read "FYI this just in from the Valley News. I am not going to give any information. The less the story she can put together the better. Signed Simon." Discussion followed.

a. Inclusivity & Equity Strategic Plan Presentation (Motion Required)

In July 2019, the Hartford School Board and Selectboard approved a contract with the Vermont Partnership to prepare the Inclusivity & Equity Strategic Plan. The contract cost was \$30,000 and has been equally split between the Town and the Hartford School District (HSD) and funded in their respective FY20 Budgets. VP principals Curtiss Reed and Mary Gannon spent several months interviewing and surveying Town and HSD staff, interviewing key community stakeholders, reviewing operational documents, practices and policies, and analyzing data in their fact-finding process. The Strategic Plan summarizes their general observations, findings and recommendations in the areas of training, data collection and analysis and community engagement.

The goals of the Plan:

- Institutionalize inclusive and equitable practices,
- Promote strategies to eliminate race-based disparities, and
- Promote inclusion and engagement of all, particularly marginalized, community members.

Some of the recommendations are specific to the Town, some are specific to HSD, and some are for both entities. Not all the Plan recommendations will require an expenditure of funds. However, the FY21 Town General Fund Budget includes \$15,000 for Plan implementation.

Mr. Reed suggested that The HCOREI would be the ones to monitor and recommend implementation the Plan.

Changes by Curtiss Reed: Page 9, Time line for HCOREI - April for March and September for August.

Selectboard Member, Alicia Barrow made the motion to receive the report with the changes recommended by Curtiss Reed and Mary Gannon. Selectboard Vice Chair, Simon Dennis seconded the motion. 6 were in favor and 1 (Brown) was in favor with reservations. The motion passed.

- b. Proposed Letter to Granting Agencies Giving Notice of Welcoming Hartford Ordinance and Requesting Determination of Compliance (Motion Required)

The Welcoming Hartford Ordinance (WHO) will become effective on May 10, 2020, after which the Town will need to certify compliance with granting agencies of grant-funded projects prior to seeking reimbursement. The Town Manager consulted with the Town Attorney on a process that formally notifies granting agencies of our Ordinance and also requests their determination of compliance. Determination by the granting agencies may reduce some of the additional time and expense of legal review by the Town.

As the chief executive officer of the Town, it is a fiduciary responsibility of the Town Manager to notify our grantors and creditors of the WHO.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Simon Dennis made the motion that the Town Manager not release the letter to grant agencies to secure their information and to seek different council to review the matter of certifications of compliance and authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign certifications to grants if the Staff, Town Manager, does not feel comfortable signing. Selectboard Member, Kim Souza seconded the motion. 6 were in favor and 1 (Brown) not in favor. The motion passed.

- c. Construction Line of Credit Resolution (Motion Required)

The Town will commence construction on several critical infrastructure projects in 2020, including: the Sykes Mountain Ave/Rt. 5 Roundabouts; the Upper Sykes Mountain Ave. bike/pedestrian project; the South Main St./N. Main St./Gates St. infrastructure improvements; Currier Street improvements; and the Quechee Main St. Culvert replacement. The Sykes Mountain projects contract is recommended for award later on this agenda for a total of \$6,529,016. Other project

projects are still in the bid phase, and the engineers have provided the Town with estimated drawdown schedules for construction billing.

While these projects are funded by sources other than the Town General Fund, the Town is responsible for the initial payment of construction bills and then seeking reimbursement from the ultimate funding source, such as the Vermont Agency of Transportation or the Tax Increment Financing Fund. The estimated financing cost is dependent on the proposal to be approved by the Selectboard at a future date. The actual financing costs will depend on the amounts borrowed and the speed of reimbursements.

Selectboard Member, Kim Souza made the motion to Approve the one-year Line of Credit of up to \$3,000,000 with Mascoma Bank at a fixed interest rate of 2.8% for a 12-month period. Selectboard Vice-Chair, Simon Dennis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- d. Sykes Mountain Avenue Roundabouts and Bike-Pedestrian Project Contract Award (Motion Required)

On April 3, 2020, two bids were received for the Sykes Mountain Project, which is the combination of the Sykes Mountain Roundabouts and the Upper Sykes Mountain Sidewalk Project. Both projects have been years in the making, with the Roundabout planning starting nearly three decades ago.

Although the actual construction of the project is on hold until the Governor's orders are lifted, a bid award means that the 'behind the scenes' work such as traffic plans and materials submittals can start to take place immediately. The project team estimates that the construction schedule will be relatively close to what it would have been without COVID-19 impacts.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown made the motion to Award the bid for the Sykes Mountain Avenue Project to BUR Construction in the amount of \$6,529,016.05. Selectboard Member, Joe Major seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- e. Bugbee Senior Center Roof Funding Options and Contract Award (Motion Required)

The Town received three proposals in response to the Bugbee Senior Center Roof Replacement Request for Proposal (RFP). The proposals came from Louis Baker Construction, JB Roofing Systems, and HP Roofing. A bid tabulation including pricing proposals and whether each requirement of the RFP was met. HP Roofing was the only responsive and responsible bidder. HP Roofing's base bid is \$54,900 (\$52,155 with the 5% local contractor allowance). The Town Attorney has advised staff that

it cannot certify compliance on the USDA grant source for this project because of the specific conflict in the grant agreement with the Welcoming Hartford Ordinance. The Town Manager and Department Heads reviewed priority projects for the balance of the fiscal year and identified expenditure savings to replace the USDA grant funding. Staff recommends proceeding with the contract award and commencing with this critical asset project.

The base bid (\$54,900) plus contingency (\$13,725) for a total amount of up to \$68,625 will be funded from the FY20 General Fund and encumbered funds from prior years. This will need to be approved by the Selectboard.

Selectboard Vice Chair made the motion to table this issue regarding the source of the Bugbee Funding to the next meeting. Selectboard Member, Joe Major seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

f. Hartford Ad Hoc Committee on Coronavirus Response:

On April 14, the Selectboard approved the first set of recommendations from the Committee. These included approving the recommended mask program, directing the Town Manager to advertise and appoint a Deputy Town Health Officer, and amending the Committee charge.

Selectboard Vice-Chair, Simon Dennis made the motion to direct the Town Manager to send out a letter to all out of state property owners regarding Vermont's practices in response to the Coronavirus Outbreak. Selectboard Member, Kim Souza seconded the motion. 6 were in favor and 1 (Brown) was not in favor. The motion passed.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Simon Dennis made the motion to direct the Town Manager to standardized the process and compile a list for communicating urgent messages from the Town Administration to the citizens of Hartford and working from the list of methods and listservs that had been brainstormed by the committee. Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

g. Amendment to Approved Amount of 2019 Ambulance Fee Write-Off

The fire department currently bills for patient transports. The current rates are: ALS 1 \$650.00, ALS 2 \$850.00, BLS \$575.00, Loaded miles \$14.50 per mile, Paramedic Intercepts \$375.00 plus procedures. Uncollected debt accrues annually, from Medicaid and Medicare mandatory write-offs and uncollectable debt from untraceable patients or refusal/inability to pay.

On December 3, 2019 the Board authorized to write-off \$72,145.56 as uncollectable debt. During the electronic write-off process an additional \$2, 947.94 of uncollectable debt was written off that was projected for the 2020 year write-off. The total amount of uncollectable debt removed from

the billing system was \$75,093.50.

Selectboard Member, Joe Major made the motion to move to amend the amount of the ambulance debt write-off presented December 3, 2019 as item 4b from \$72,145.56 to \$75,093.50. Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

h. Extension of Dog Licensing Late Fee to June 1, 2020 (Motion Required)

By State Statute, dogs must be licensed by April 1st; a valid rabies certificate must be presented or on file for us to issue a license. The Town Clerk's Office is currently encouraging residents to mail their dog license renewal fee to us with a current rabies certificate, if we do not have one on file. The licensing fee is \$9 for dogs spayed/neutered; \$13.00 if unaltered. After April 1st, the following late fees are assessed in Hartford: \$2 if dog is spayed/neutered; \$4 if unaltered.

On March 24, the Selectboard authorized the postponement of late fees for dog licenses until May 1. Some dog owners will be unable to obtain rabies certificates due to limited access to Veterinarian Offices or due to their own circumstances related to COVID-19 recommended protocols.

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown made the motion to Authorize the Town Clerk's Office to delay the assessment of late fees for dog licensing until June 1, 2020. Selectboard Member, Kim Souza seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. Commission Meeting Reports:

Selectboard Clerk, Dennis Brown reported that the Historic Preservation Commission met virtually last week by phone. Mr. Brown hopes that they can do a Zoom meeting next time. All programs are on hold.

Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson reported that the Energy Commission met using msteams. Only a limited number of people can participate and he hopes to use perhaps google meets or Zoom for their next virtual meeting.

VII. **Consent Agenda: Selectboard Member, Alan Johnson made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as Presented. Selectboard Member, Joe Major seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

Approve Payroll Ending: 4/18/2020

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 4/7/2020 & 4/14/2020

Approve A/P Manifest of: 4/17/2020 & 4/21/2020

Selectboard Meeting Dates of:

Already Approved: 4/28/2020, 5/5/2020 & 5/19/2020

VIII. Executive Session: N/A

IX. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting (Motion Required): Selectboard Member, Alicia Barrow made the motion to close the meeting. Selectboard Member, Joe Major seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed at 10:30 P.M.

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.
