



**TOWN OF HARTFORD
SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

Tuesday, July 13, 2021, 6:00pm

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

Present: Dan Fraser, Chair; Joseph Major, Vice-Chair; Kim Souza, Clerk; Dennis Brown, Member; Ally Tufenkjian, Member; Tracy Yarlott-Davis, Town Manager; Lana Livingston, Administrative Assistant; Colin Butler, Mary Erdei.

CATV Link: <http://catv.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/show/14931?channel=1>

- I. **Selectboard Meeting Call to Order:** Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** was led by Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major.
- III. **Local Liquor Control Board: N/A**
- IV. **Order of Agenda:** There were no changes to the order of agenda. Kim Souza wanted people to know that tonight's agenda was originally advertised as a listening session but had to be changed to a regular meeting due to items that came up and needed to be addressed.
- V. **Selectboard**
 1. **Public Comments**

Mike Morris from Hartford called in to follow up on a previous topic from another resident. To better clarify the Encampment Cleanup Policy, he asked if the policy was a Town Policy or was it an Administrative Policy to be followed internally by the staff. He came to the conclusion that it is an Administrative Policy. Mr. Morris also asked why he had not heard back on how much the recent encampment cleanup cost. The Town Manager said we have not yet been invoiced for the cleanup so she could not tell him at this time.

2. **Selectboard Comments and Announcements**

Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown noted that the interest cost of the recent purchase of new dump trucks was \$21,000. He would like to have a discussion about borrowing vs. saving for town purchases.

Mr. Brown also reported from the Friends of Quechee Falls Bridge that they are making a major donation to have interpretative panels installed.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major also asked the Finance Director if she could provide more information on buying verses leasing and the pros and cons of each.

Mr. Major asked about the progress of hiring a new police chief. The Town Manager said that she is in the process of interviewing search firms. This whole process could take up to six months. We do have an interim, Robert Cormier, to help. Brad Vail.

Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian asked for an update on hiring an Energy Coordinator and the Peer Advocate. The Town Manager has no update at this time.

Dan Fraser reported that Dan & Whit's will have a Vaccination Clinic at the store on Friday, the 16th from 3-6PM.

3. Appointments

Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made the motion to Appoint Colin Butler to a three-year term on the Planning Commission beginning July 13, 2021 and ending July 12, 2024. Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

4. Town Manager's Report and Significant Activity Report

Significant Activity Report:

<https://www.hartford-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/215>

Town Manager Report

Quechee-Hartland and Marsh Family Road Area Microburst

On Wednesday afternoon, a microburst of rain and wind moved through the neighborhood around Quechee-Hartland and Marsh Family Roads. The National Weather Service reported straight winds of between 70 and 80 miles per hour. Within moments, countless numbers of trees both snapped off and were uprooted, dragging live power lines down with them. As we began getting calls in from the area, our first responders acted quickly to secure the area including cutting power to the area to address the downed lines. Our Public Works staff, many of who were finishing work for the day, were immediately on site. They worked with Green Mountain Power to begin securing and clearing roads while Fire went door-to-door to assess residents for injuries or medical needs. By Thursday late morning, most of the roads were passable, and power had been restored to the area. We continue to communicate with residents as private lands are cleared of hazards. Some of you many have seen the article in VT Digger that this area is partially in a blind spot in the radar. This makes it much harder for the National Weather Service to track and predict storms. Using the National Weather Service's Storm Report function: <https://www.weather.gov/btv/stormreport> or being trained as a SKYWARN Spotter: <https://www.weather.gov/btv/skywarn> can help provide the National Weather Service with additional information during weather events. I want to extend my thanks to our Public Works Highway Division. They worked in heat and rain with dangerous conditions to get trees off the road and help facilitate the power getting back on. There were no reported injuries during the event either from residents or staff.

Municipal Leaders Meeting

I met with some of the leadership for Hanover, Lebanon, and Norwich, lightly facilitated by Vital Communities. We had a fruitful conversation about some of the topics affecting each of our communities. This time we discussed hiring challenges for both the public sector and private businesses. Two of the issues that appear to be affecting hiring are housing and quality childcare. Vital Communities has just begun hosting Housing Solutions roundtables to help bring together private and public resources to increase housing throughout the Upper Valley. Planning and Zoning Director Lori Hirshfield is attending as a representative of the Town. Regarding childcare, we discussed both the low wages traditionally paid to childcare providers and the need for high quality childcare so more people who want to enter the workforce can do so. It's always energizing to connect with colleagues in the Upper Valley who are facing similar challenges.

Tour of Hawthorn Street

Thank you to Carolyn Hooper, a member of the Climate Action Team, and her neighbors for allowing Public Works Director Hannah Tyler and I to see what they are doing with small scale permaculture of their properties. Carolyn's work to show the small, every day changes we can make to help support our climate action initiatives is inspiring. She has packed a lot into her half acre property including bioswales, fruits, vegetables, herbs, and chicken. We were able to connect on some of the ways we can support each other through community-led engagement and connection. This is another area where I can see our robust new website helping to engage the residents of Hartford in reinventing their spaces.

Amtrak is back

Downtown White River Junction will again (finally) see Amtrak coming through. On Monday, July 19th both the Vermonter and the Ethan Allen Express will be back in service. Hartford will be hosting a welcome event at the train station between 11:00am and noon. There will be music courtesy of Rob Oxford and general fanfare. Thanks to Joe Major for raising a hand to provide some welcoming remarks. On the 19th, you can also ride the train for a dollar. Details can be found at: <https://www.amtrak.com/promotions/vermont-return>

5. Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances:

a. Budget Calendar

Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major made the motion That the Selectboard approve the fiscal year 2023 budget cycle calendar. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting Type</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Tuesday, August 17, 2021	Regular Selectboard Meeting	Focus on budget guidance to Town Manager and Departments
Tuesday, August 24, 2021	Regular Selectboard Meeting	Budget guidance must be approved
Tuesday, October 5, 2021	Regular Selectboard Meeting	Presentation of budget
Tuesday, October 12, 2021	Special Budget Meeting	Finance, Planning/Zoning, and Parks and Recreation budgets
Tuesday, October 26, 2021	Special Budget Meeting	Clerk, Town Manager, Assessor, and IT budgets
Tuesday, November 9, 2021	Special Budget Meeting	Police and Fire budgets
Tuesday, November 23, 2021	Special Budget Meeting	Public Works and Enterprise funds budgets
Tuesday, December 7, 2021	Special Budget Meeting	Focus on wrapping up questions and concerns
Tuesday, December 14, 2021	Special Budget Meeting	If needed to wrap up questions and concerns
Tuesday, January 11, 2022	Regular Selectboard Meeting	Focus on adopting budget
Tuesday, March 1, 2022	Town Meeting Day	Voters approve or reject budget

b. American Rescue Plan

Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown made the motion that

The Selectboard of the Town of Hartford accept its allocation of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding from the US Treasury, along with the Award Terms & Conditions and Assurances of Compliance with the Civil Rights Requirements that are requirements of accepting these funds.

and

The Selectboard of the Town of Hartford appoint Board Chair Dan Fraser to serve as the Town's Authorized Representative as required by the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery

Funding from the US Treasury, to sign the Award Terms & Conditions and Assurances of Compliance with the Civil Rights Requirements by July 15, 2021.

and

The Selectboard of the Town of Hartford name Finance Director Gail Ostrout to be the Primary Contact Person for the Town of Hartford's Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Award from U.S. Treasury.

and

The Selectboard of the Town of Hartford name Town Manager Tracy Yarlott to be the Secondary Contact Person for the Town of Hartford's Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Award from U.S. Treasury.

Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- c. Capital Improvements – presentation by the Town Manager. This was for information only; no motions were made.

What has been done:

Communications Center Console and Flooring
Maxfield Safety Netting
Maxfield Lighting
Bugbee Senior Center Improvements
Outdoor Pool
Fire Radio System Upgrade
Police Patrol Vehicles
Parks and Recreation Van Municipal Lease

What is Next:

South Main Street Phase 2 – funded, 2022 start
South Main Street Parking Lot – funded, 2022 start
Town Square Lot – funded, 2022 start
Quechee Main Street Box Culvert – funded, 2022 start
WABA Indoor Turf – funded, 2022 start
North Hartland Road Sidewalk – funded, 2022/23 start
VA Cutoff Bridge – funded, 2024 start
Annual Paving – funded, ongoing

What is After that?

Nutt Lane Waterline – designed, not funded
South and James Street Waterline – designed, not funded
Quechee Main Waterline Redundancy – designed, not funded
Maxfield Paving – designed, not funded
Abby Road water and wastewater lines – designed, partially funded
Mapping and Asset Management – old methods, out of date

What is on the Radar?

Public Safety Building
Grand List Full Reappraisal
Fire Station #2
Quechee Sand and Salt Shed

Kilowatt Park Master Plan Implementation

What is Next?

Refresh and the old CIP, including costs

Evaluate current reserve funds balances and targets

Ensure we have updated asset management plans and reserve plans in place

Reassess ongoing projects for additional areas of efficiency or changes due to factors outside of our control

How Do We Do That?

Continue to fund reserves as part of FY23 budget process.

Staff update the current CIP model for FY23 budget process.

Develop FY23-FY28 CIP during FY23.

- d. Gates Street Update – presented by Hannah Tyler, Director of Public Works.

Background: The Town of Hartford has a decades long history of addressing the settling roadway and deterioration of Gates Street and Fairview Terrace. During that time, various iterations of street closures have occurred and a professional investigative and scoping study.

Recent timeline:

- 2017: Gates Street hill closed completely based on then current information
- September 2018: Selectboard approved re-opening to one-way downhill traffic (current configuration)
- 2018-2019: One calendar year monitoring of Fairview Terrace retaining wall shows no movement that could not be attributed to human or mechanical error
- 2019/2020: Board approved \$200,000 for final planning, engineering, and development of construction documents based on prioritization of capital planning projects
- October 2020: Interim Town Manager MacQueen proposed to the Board that due to board and community division regarding project finality, project is removed from CIP and \$200,000 is reallocated to begin funding the Town's match of the VA Cutoff Bridge with \$30,000 reserved for low level improvements (paving, etc.). That decision is unanimously approved.
- June 2021:
 - DPW begins to utilize the allocated \$30,000 to implement surface treatments (i.e. hand applied asphalt) to improve surface conditions for all road users and seal the road as much as possible to prevent water from entering the road bed
 - Town resumes contracted monitoring of the wall for movement which does demonstrate that there is movement that could not be attributed to human or mechanical error

Discussion:

The condition of Gates Street from Fairview Terrace to Maplewood Terrace has deteriorated to a point that asphalt patches to address holes won't get the road surface to a point that we would consider it a safe walking (tripping hazards) or driving path. The

road surface near the wall (what we currently have designated as the pedestrian portion) has become so uneven that DPW staff is concerned that our sidewalk plowing equipment will overturn during snow removal. At this time, the railing is a significant safety hazard that is impossible for the Town to bring even close to current safety standards. It is deteriorated, broken in many places, and structurally unstable. At no time would it prevent a vehicle or pedestrian from falling over the wall. We are concerned that utilizing the remainder of the \$30,000 to improve the road surface, is 'investing' in a road that will still be unsafe for all of our road users and a poor use of tax dollars. Town staff believes at this time that we need to consider closing the roadway to vehicular traffic in the interest of public safety, shifting the pedestrian path to the other side of the street, and re-start the conversation about the future of Gates Street.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major asked Public Works Director, Hannah Tyler if she could come back to the Board with her recommendations to the way forward on this topic.

VI. Strategic Equity and Inclusion Plan

Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major reported that the next step that needs to happen is the Town Manager to meet with the authors of the plan. This will happen next week. After that meeting the Town Manager and Mr. Major will meet with the HCOREI chair and Vice Chair who will then meet with the Selectboard and department heads.

VII. Commission Meetings Reports

Dennis Brown reported from the Hartford Historic Preservation Commission. They are still working on the demolition plan. It is now moving towards a demolition delay. This should have less opposition and lower fees. There will be 30-45 days to implement. This should be coming to the Selectboard soon. They are also looking at grants. Mr. Brown also reported from the Conservation Commission. They are still working on the logging of the Town Forest. Also, there is a pull off near the White River that needs clean up that they are working on. They are also working on a Commission logo as well.

Joe Major reported from HCOREI. They had a farewell for Allene Swienckowski and welcomed John Hall as the new chair to that committee. HCOREI is also reaching out to Lebanon, NH to support their charge to create an Equity and Inclusion committee.

VIII. Consent Agenda: Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Approve Payroll Ending: 7/10/2021

Approve Meeting Minutes of: 6/15/2021, 6/29/2021 & 7/6/2021

Approve A/P Manifest of: 7/9/2021 & 7/13/2021

Selectboard Meeting Dates of: Already Approved: 7/27/2021 & 8/17/2021

Needs Approval: 8/24/2021

IX. Executive Session: N/A

X. **Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting: Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 P.M. Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza 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.



~~Kim Souza, Clerk~~

DAN FRASER, CHAIR