



**TOWN OF HARTFORD
SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 20, 2021

6:00pm Hartford Town Hall

171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, VT 05001

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

Present via Zoom: Joe Major, Selectboard Vice Chair; Kim Souza, Selectboard Clerk; Ally Tufenkjian, Selectboard Member; Dennis Brown, Selectboard Member; Julia Dalphin, Selectboard Member.

Present at Town Hall: Dan Fraser, Selectboard Chair; Tracy Yarlott-Davis, Town Manager; Lana Livingston, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: Rachel Edens, Selectboard Member.

CATV LINK: <http://catv.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/show/14346?channel=1>

The Chair read this script:

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=catv810) – 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.

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.

I. Call to Order of the Selectboard Meeting: The Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser called the meeting to order at 5:58 P.M.

II. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Order of Agenda: there were no changes to the agenda.

IV. Selectboard

1. Public:

Lannie Collins from Hartford called to follow up on some past topics. First, he would like to know the current status for a Police Chief. Town Manager, Tracy Yarlott-Davis said that the position is currently under review and the next step will be to do a National search for a new Police Chief. Mr. Collins also asked for a follow-up on the vehicles that were towed from the South Main Street parking lot for snow removal. He would like to know the cost of the reimbursements paid to the individual owners. He has made this also in a public records request and has not heard back yet. He would like the answer in a public format. Town Manager Yarlott-Davis did not have the cost and will get back to him at a later time.

Jack Peisch from South Royalton and a teacher at Hartford Middle School wanted to know the status on the contract of the Community Wellness position and encourages the process to move along. Town Manager, Yarlott-Davis responded that we have a contract through HCRS and Whitney Hussong. We are also doing a needs and GAP assessment to see what the community needs.

Marcy Bartlett from Wilder called in to report that Norwich posted a summary for needs and recommendations for sewer connections. She recommends to let them expedite their process we would let them know that Hartford is not interested in doing the connection. Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser responded that the last communication with the Norwich School Board was for them to ask Norwich Selectboard to contact Hartford Selectboard directly with any plans or requests. This has not happened. Still at the discussion stage and he realizes many Hartford residents do not want this to happen.

Marcy also asked if the Town was going to do the 4th of July Fireworks and celebration. Right now, there has been no decision. Parks & Rec will be making that decision closer to the date.

Selectboard Comments:

Ally Tufenkjian read a statement denouncing violence against Black, Latinx and Asian people that is supported by some of the Selectboard members.

Link to the Statement: [Statement Denouncing Violence Against Black, Latinx and Asian People \(2\).pdf](#).

Dennis Brown said he could not support the letter read. It was a tragedy for the Asian people in Georgia but he feels the Selectboard should focus on Hartford town business.

Julia Dalphin thanked the group that worked on the letter that was put forward and supports it.

Kim Souza spoke about the Northern Stage housing issues. It shows that Hartford is desperate for affordable housing in Town. Hopefully we can capitalize on available funding. Kim also commented on the Norwich School hookup. Comments made in prior meetings by some citizens do not necessarily represent what the residents want or prefer.

2. Appointments:

- a. Consider the re-appointment of Denise Welch-May to the Design Review Committee for a three-year term beginning April 20, 2021 and ending April 21, 2024.

Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to re-appoint Denise Welch-May to the Design Review Committee for a three-year term beginning April 20, 2021 and ending April 19, 2024. Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- b. Consider the re-appointment of Dave Sherman to the Planning Commission for a three-year term beginning April 20, 2021 and ending April 19, 2024.

Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to re-appoint Dave Sherman to the Planning Commission for a three-year term beginning April 20, 2021 and ending April 19, 2024. Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. Town Manager's Report:

Significant Activity Report link:

<https://www.hartford-vt.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/209>

Town Manager Report:

Town Hall Re-Opening

As part of Vermont Forward, the re-opening plan, I have developed a plan for a phased re-opening of Town Hall. It's currently under final review with the Department Directors. It allows for staff to ensure that we have enough signage and processes to comply with the core four universal guidelines of reopening: masks, distance, handwashing/sanitizing, and Covid-19 symptoms checks. I'm remaining in contact with our Health Officer to ensure that I can execute our plan within the guidelines of the Vermont Forward plan, which requires specific vaccination percentages for each phase. Please follow the Town on Facebook, join the Hartford listserv, and look out for other methods of communication on how we're reopening to serve the community.

Town of Hartford Cemeteries

Thank you to Henry Hazen for spending a lovely morning with me at the Christian Street Cemetery. Henry is retiring from his role leading the cemetery as of June 30th. At that time, the Town will become responsible for the cemetery. I've been working with several department directors to prepare for managing the cemetery which is still active. We are also determining how we can ensure that all Town managed cemeteries have accurate records, a regular maintenance plan, and a restoration plan. This is a long-term project. I anticipate that it will take time and outside help to ensure that the plot data for the historic cemeteries is complete as an accurate as possible.

Summer Construction

While it snowed on Friday, Town staff is preparing for our summer construction, both local- and state-managed projects. Thank you to our Public Works staff for a recent downtown walk so I could better visualize the projects. Kim Souza joined us and we all learned a lot. Stay tuned for the release of a multiple stream communications plan as staff take care of some vital infrastructure projects.

Outdoor Downtown WRJ Dining

I, along with several Departments, are working to assist downtown business with outdoor dining requirements, including permitting and safety inspections. We know that our local businesses are balancing the Vermont Forward capacity guidelines, our vital summer construction projects, and their past reduced revenue. Thank you to everyone for their flexibility and patience as we balance several considerations.

End of Fiscal Year Financials

As we move into the final two months of fiscal year 2021, our Finance team is ensuring that we're managing cash flow, executing projects, and wrapping up items. We're also preparing for our annual audit and I look forward to the feedback the auditors provide.

Upcoming Projects

In the next few weeks, I'll be finalizing plans for diversity, equity, and inclusion workshops during the rest of calendar year 2021. We're also working on a contract to provide additional community wellness staff and a needs assessment for Hartford, so we know where to focus our efforts. Finally, we've identified funding for a new Town website and will be developing a public request for proposals for the project.

4. Board Reports, Motions & Ordinances:

a. Climate Action Plan – Planning and Development and The Climate Action Committee

Background: In December of 2019, the Selectboard and School Board voted unanimously to pass a Joint Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency (“the Resolution”). By declaring an emergency, the Resolution makes climate change a defining focus for Town planning, funding, and action, and resolves the Town to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions town-wide by 2030, while ensuring the response is “just and equitable, especially with respect to the most vulnerable and impacted members of society.” The Resolution led to pursuing development of a plan that “identifies action steps in response to the climate emergency and explains how progress will be tracked and measured”. In March of 2020, Hartford voters passed Article 25, requiring the development, operation, and maintenance of the Town’s municipal infrastructure and equipment achieve carbon neutrality by 2027. The Town budgeted \$30,000 in FY 2021 to hire a consultant to develop an action plan for achieving these goals. In September of 2020, the Selectboard contracted with paleBLUEdot (pBd) to assist the Town in the plan development.

What’s Next:

- Wrap up the collaborative stakeholder planning process
- Create a full draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Implementation Matrix
- Bring draft CAP to Selectboard for review and input
- Finalize the CAP including a project summary and prioritization for implementation through the Climate Action Reserve Fund

b. US Route 4/5 Intersection Scoping Study Alternatives Presentation – Public Works and VTrans

Presentation Link: [4.b. US Rte 45\Hartford NH 020-2\(44\) Preferred Alternative Presentation.pdf](#)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop intersection improvements that will enhance safety at the intersection of US Route 5 & US Route 4 for all users, reduce the number of vehicle lanes on US Route 5, and improve accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists.

Needs

Enhance Safety for All Users
Retain Mobility
Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Short-Term Preferred Alternative: Road Diet with Ramp Removal

Long-Term Preferred Alternative: Roundabout

Motion: Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to endorse the conceptual design as presented by VTrans so that the project can move further into the design process. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. 5 were in favor and 1 (Brown) was not in favor. The motion passed.

c. VA Cut-off Road Bridge Update – Public Works and VTrans

Presentation Link: [4.c.VA Cut-off Road\Hartford Bridge 7 Informational Meeting 4-20-21.pdf](#)

The project team for the VA Cutoff Bridge has been busy preparing the VA Cutoff Bridge Replacement Project for construction in 2024.

Currently, the project is in the design, permitting, and property owner meeting phase. As part of this process, the team asked to hold a public presentation to update the community.

d. Local Emergency Management Plan Adoption – Fire

Background: In accordance with 20 V.S.A § 6 and the 2013 State Emergency Operations Plan, "each Vermont jurisdiction is expected to develop and maintain a Local Emergency Operations Plan". A current local emergency plan is also required for municipalities to receive federal preparedness funds and increased state reimbursement through the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF).

Discussion: Municipalities should review and update their emergency plans annually and readopt them between Town Meeting and May 1 every year. Municipalities report adoption of LEMPs through their Regional Planning Commission with the LEMP adoption form.

Motion: Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown made the motion to adopt the 101 Local Emergency Management Plan. Selectboard Member, Julia Dalphin seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

e. Arbor Day Proclamation – Parks & Rec

TOWN OF HARTFORD, VERMONT ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION 2021

WHEREAS ~ Vermonters have long recognized the contributions forests provide to the ecological, social and economic sustainability of the state; and

WHEREAS ~ Trees in our cities and towns increases property values, enhances economic vitality of business areas and beautify our community; and

WHEREAS ~ Vermonters are encouraged to become stewards of their own environment by managing forest land, and planting and maintaining trees to improve the quality of life that we all enjoy;

NOW THEREFORE ~ We, the Selectboard, and on behalf of the citizens of the Town of Hartford, do hereby proclaim May 1, 2021 as Arbor Day in the Town of Hartford and we urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day, to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, and to support our community forestry program.

Signed this 20th day of April, 2021

Selectboard Member, Julia Dalphin made to motion to accept the Proclamation as read. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

f. Town of Hartford Encampment Response Policy – Town Manager

Link to the Policy: [4.f. Emerg. Shelters\042021 Agenda Memo Encampment Response Policy.pdf](#)

Information:

On April 15, 2021 I, Town Manager, activated the Town of Hartford Encampment Response Policy. This goal of the policy is to manage the adverse impacts of homeless encampments by balancing the interests of all residents and focusing encampment actions on mitigating negative outcomes as they pertain to public safety and public health.

The policy aims to create clear criteria for designated high-sensitivity areas, findings that will prompt intervention, and guidance on addressing those findings. This includes promoting voluntary compliance and strategies to address non-compliance by the individuals residing in the encampment.

Financial Impact: The complete financial impact of an encampment response will change depending on the specifics of an encampment. However, there may be costs associated with providing services to the unhoused people, cleaning the encampment or debris, or mitigating health hazards that require specialized attention such as vermin or biological hazards.

g. Strategic Equity and Inclusion Plan - Selectboard

Joe Major has met with the authors of the Strategic Plan to get insight into its history as it is now 2 years old. He is looking at it from the 10,000-foot view and to see how we have progressed. Currently there has been no data collected except from the Police Department. To find a starting point we need to begin to start a process with all departments for both employment and services for data collection.

V. Local Liquor Control Board: Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser recessed the Selectboard meeting and opened the Local Liquor Control Board at 9:28 PM.

New: 1. Consider the Approval of the Nostalgia Café LLC, 5945 Woodstock Road, White River Junction, VT 05001 for 1st, 2nd and Outside Consumption Liquor Licenses.

Selectboard Member, Dennis Brown made the motion to Approve Nostalgia Café LLC, 5945 Woodstock Road, White River Junction, VT 05001 for a 1st, 2nd and Outside Consumption liquor license. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. 4 approved, 1 abstained (Fraser) and 1 recused (Souza). The motion passed.

- Renewals:** 1. Consider the Approval of the Public House at Quechee Gorge, LLC, 5813 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 for 1st, 3rd and Outside Consumption Liquor Licenses.

Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major made the motion to approve the Public House at Quechee Gorge, LLC, 5813 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 for 1st, 3rd and Outside Consumption Liquor Licenses. Selectboard Member, Julia Dalphin seconded the motion. 4 approved, 1 abstained (Fraser) and 1 recused (Souza). The motion passed.

2. Consider the Approval of the Public House Diner, Inc. 5573 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 for a 1st Class Liquor License.

Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian made the motion to approve the Public House Diner, Inc. 5573 Woodstock Road, Quechee, VT 05059 for a 1st Class Liquor License. Selectboard Vice Chair, Joe Major seconded the motion. 4 approved, 1 abstained (Fraser) and 1 recused (Souza). The motion passed.

Selectboard Chair, Dan Fraser closed the Local Liquor Control Board at 9:35 PM and reopened the Selectboard Meeting.

VI. Commission Meetings Reports

Joe Major reported from HCOEI. They had a good presentation by Laura Perez on race and disabilities actions with police in general and HPD that has actually had more training in this than the State has done. Still work to be done so making sure that training continues. Mr. Major also reported on the joint School Board and Selectboard and HCOEI community engagement meeting to try to make it better. This needs to be advertised more to have the community participate more.

Dennis Brown reported from the Historic Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission joint meeting in regards to the Hartford Historic Demolition Ordinance. They are still working on it and will meet again. Remember Green Up day on May 1st.

- VII. Consent Agenda:** Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian.

**Approve Payroll Ending: 4/17/2021
Approve Meeting Minutes of: 4/6/2021
Approve A/P Manifest of: 4/6/2021 & 4/16/2021 & 4/20/2021**

Selectboard Meeting Dates of: Approved: 5/4/2021 & 5/18/2021

IX. Adjourn the Selectboard Meeting: Selectboard Clerk, Kim Souza made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 PM. Selectboard Member, Ally Tufenkjian seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.