

**SHARON SELECTBOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES  
Monday, October 3, 2016**

**Board Members Present:** Kevin Blakeman, Mary Gavin, Luke Pettengill  
**Staff Attending:** Deb Jones, Finance Manager; Selectmen's Assistant, Margy Becker; Tim Higgins, Road Foreman. **Visitors:** Dee Gish (Sharon Energy Committee), Vince Gross (resident), Steve Libby (VT River Conservancy), Rae Barrett (resident); Daniel Dupras, PE via telephone conference.

The Chair convened the meeting at 6:30pm.

1. **Minutes:**

**Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the minutes of September 19 and 22, 2016 as submitted. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Luke Pettengill; Motion carried.**

2. **Warrants:**

Check and payroll warrants were signed.

3. **Announcements:** there were none.

4. **Public Comments:**

Peter Anderson provided a brief update regarding Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission business. The TRORC recent monthly meeting agenda included discussions of NewVista. Towns potentially affected by a development of this type have been encouraged to address the "density" of development in Town Plans.

Mr. Anderson further reported there is a northerly "habitat shift" of approximately 4 miles per year due to climate change. There will be a new chapter in the Regional Plan entitled "Healthy Communities". The TRORC draft Regional Energy Plan prescribes town-by-town participation goals for the development of alternative energy facilities such as wind, solar, or geothermal. TRORC is still taking public comments on the draft plan.

Vince Gross, residing on Harlow Road, inquired why certain road maintenance projects were not getting done, even with the Town subcontracting hauling of winter sand and with 4 full-time crew. Board members acknowledged certain road issues should or could have been addressed sooner. Tim Higgins commented on the challenge of finding the proper fix for certain erosion locations. Margy Becker reported on new grants available to help Towns cope with roadside erosion areas.

Dee Gish announced the Sharon Energy Committee would like to submit an application for participation in the Vital Communities' Weatherization Challenge, which begins in

January 2017. This is an initiative to provide free residential energy assessments, assistance with air sealing, insulating, and ‘buttoning up’ of homes. Sharon Energy Committee hopes to collaborate with Royalton and Bethel as a ‘team’.

Selectmen expressed support for the Energy Committee’s participation in the ‘Challenge’ and **Mary Gavin made the motion that Kevin Blakeman sign the ‘acknowledgement form’ to be submitted as part of the application to Vital Communities. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.**

5. **Highway Business:**

Kevin Blakeman noted that a resident had called about erosion occurring alongside Rte. 132 by Idlewood. He also called attention to a culvert issue on Quimby Mountain Road above Don Lawrence.

Tim Higgins reported the new truck will be delivered at the end of the week. 900 tons of 5,000 tons of winter sand remain to be hauled. NICOM will be on-site Oct. 5 or 6 regarding repairs needed to the west end of the steel truss bridge on River Road.

Winter Sidewalk Maintenance: Countryside Property Maintenance was the sole bidder. Selectmen speculated on why so few bids were received. Luke Pettengill noted the narrow and relatively poor condition of the sidewalks make winter maintenance difficult. The location of certain telephone poles makes it doubly difficult to plow. Mary Gavin stated objections to the 9% increase in the proposed contract cost. Further discussion and action was postponed to the following meeting.

6. **Rte. 132 Water Line break:**

Rae Barrett informed Selectmen that she owns the broken water line. She does not have water, and has enlisted the help of a plumber to help her isolate and repair the leak. She will contact DigSafe and keep Tim Higgins informed of the progress of repairs.

7. **2<sup>nd</sup> Constable/Animal Control Officer:**

Bob Potter expressed continued interest in serving the community as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Constable and Animal Control Officer. The Town of Royalton no longer provides animal control services, as part of its policing contract. It was noted that there might be a need for a portable kennel, if Country Animal Hospital could not impound strays. Selectmen agreed that should there be out-of-pocket expenses, the Town would reimburse Mr. Potter. Otherwise the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Constable/Animal Control Officer is a voluntary appointment until March Town Meeting 2017. Bob Potter would have to decide to submit a petition to be elected as a Constable by late January 2017, since Sharon elects its Constables at Town Meeting for terms of one year.

**Motion by Luke Pettengill to appoint Robert Potter as 2<sup>nd</sup> Constable and Animal Control Officer through March 2017 Town Meeting. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried.**

**8. Rikert Property – Conservation – Conveyance to Town:**

Steve Libby, representing the VT River Conservancy (“VRC”), visited with the Selectboard to hear comments and answer questions regarding conveyance of a 10-acre<sup>±</sup> parcel on River Road to the Town. Broad Brook Cemetery is surrounded by this parcel, which includes White River shoreline.

Mary Gavin informed Mr. Libby that the Town’s attorney had reviewed and commented on documents pertaining to the proposed conveyance of the property to the Town. The proposed documents need to be modified to address the Attorney’s concerns.

The Town’s attorney has commented on VRC’s proposed Management Plan, Warranty Deed for conveyance to the Town, and Grant of Development Rights, Restrictions, and Public Access Easement from the VRC to the VT Housing and Conservation Board.

Steve Libby said the VRC has purchased the parcel from the Rikerts, with the assistance of VT Housing and Conservation Board grant funds and private donations.

Kevin Blakeman expressed several concerns related to potential Town ownership of the parcel, including liabilities for property management, public safety, and continued haying. He noted there were dead trees along the property that would need to be cut. But would the Town have to do this?

Vince Gross inquired whether ownership of the parcel could entitle the Town to an ‘Endowment’ for future management of the parcel.

The conveyance of the property to the Town also requires periodic updates of a ‘Management Plan’. Steve Libby stated the VRC would help prepare the plans. He noted that a suggested primitive campsite on the land was only a future possibility. The real intent of preserving the parcel is to add a link to the ‘Paddlers Trail’ on the White River and to provide river access for fishing.

Mary Gavin stated a preference that the Town not be responsible for control of invasive species.

Kevin Blakeman stated his opposition to the Town owning the property. Luke Pettengill concurred.

Steve Libby expressed concern at the news, and he reminded current Board members that the former Selectboard had agreed to a plan for conservation of the parcel over the long-term. Town ownership of the property was a key factor in VHCB’s consideration of the project’s eligibility for grant funds.

He pointed out the Management Plan does not have to be ‘approved’ by other boards. He suggested that he begin to draft the changes to the Plan to address the Town Attorney and Selectboard concerns. He stated the VRC would fund the development of a parking area near the Broad Brook Cemetery. He agreed to collaborate with the Broad Brook Cemetery Association.

Kevin Blakeman said he favored keeping the land available for haying.

Selectmen asked Deb Jones to inquire whether the Town’s insurance provider had any issues with the Town owning the property. Further discussions were postponed to a future meeting.

9. **Old School House Boilers:**

Selectmen noted only one bid for boiler replacements had been submitted, even though several contractors had attended the pre-bid meeting. Selectmen conducted a telephone consultation with engineer Daniel Dupras, P.E. It was agreed that Mr. Dupras would meet with the Contractor to inspect fuel supply lines – particularly at the foundation – and then conduct a final inspection.

**Motion by Luke Pettengill to accept the bid proposal from ARC Mechanical as follows:**

- **Base bid for boilers: \$14,645 for 2 Buderus model G215-4, 4 section hot water boilers and other system components as specified by the Town.**
- **Bid Alternate: \$3,144 for replacement of main isolation ball valves on each zone supply and return lines.**
- **Chimney Liner: \$7.23/liner foot.**

**Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

10. **Emergency Health Order:**

It was agreed that Kevin Blakeman, as Acting Health Officer, would inspect the property again unless the Engineer has verified the septic system at Dee Haven has been installed.

11. **Gazebo Repairs:**

Repairs should be happening at the end of next week. The bid specs called for a green standing seam roof.

12. **Health Officer Vacancy:**

Margy Becker was asked to contact David Palmer, the new Royalton Health Officer. He works independently of the Town, and he may be able to serve as Health Officer to more than one town.

13. **Norwich Technologies PSB Review:**

The Town is waiting for the Applicant to file the amended application which reflects a newly-configured solar array on Rte. 132.

14. **Dayco, Inc. – Residential Use of Commercial Building:**

The Town is awaiting response from Mr. Geno as to whether the Act 250 permit needs to be amended to reflect residential use of the commercial building owned by Dayco, Inc. in Commerce Park.

15. **IT Services:**

Margy Becker reported Mike Tisdale has completed the conversion from Joomla to Wordpress. She is in the process of ordering a computer for the Selectboard office.

**Adjournment: Motion by Mary Gavin to adjourn at 10:15pm. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.**

Submitted by,  
Margy Becker, Selectboard Assistant