

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, December 4, 2017**

MINUTES (Draft)

Selectboard Members present: Mary Gavin (Chair), Kevin Gish

Selectboard Members absent: Luke Pettengill

Staff Attending: Deb Jones, Margy Becker, Tim Higgins

Visitors Attending: Peter Holden, Holden Engineering; Rob Romeo (Sharon Trading Post), Tom Lober (Sharon Firemen's Association), Representative Tim Briglin, Sharon DRB Chair Ira Clark, Flood Hazard Bylaw Administrator Geo Honigford.

Mary Gavin convened the regular meeting at 6:34pm.

1. Road Crew Report:

Road crew member Jonathon Blakeney spoke to Board members about being pulled over on I89 under suspicion of texting while driving. Mr. Blakeney reported he explained to the officer he had been vaping not texting, but he received a citation regardless. Selectboard members thanked Jonathon for being forthright.

2. Executive Session – Employee Performance Review:

Kevin Gish made the motion to enter executive session at 6:30PM to conduct an employee performance review. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

The Board exited executive session at 7:02pm.

3. Holden Engineering – Plans for Broad Brook Bank Stabilization

Peter Holden of Holden Engineering spoke to the Selectboard at its request regarding design alternatives for bank stabilization at a location on Broad Brook just beyond the right hand fork onto Harlow Road. There is a newly-installed culvert at a segment of guardrail that has been an erosion site for the past two years. Peter Holden presented 4 options for repairs, representing cost estimates ranging from \$51,000 to \$69,000. Mr. Holden stated his opinion that the road will continue to move over time. The Selectboard and Tim Higgins expressed support for a variation of the least cost project approach. The idea of a paved segment was rejected as was the concept of more elaborate in-ground drainage components.

Motion by Mary Gavin that Holden Engineering prepare plans and bid documents for a variation on Alternative 1A including a. a headwall, b. road realignment of 2 feet away from brook, c. move and reset guardrail 2 feet inward. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Peter Holden recommended, and Board members and Tim Higgins agreed, to request lump sum bids. The line item estimates prepared by Holden, based on VTRANS' weighted averages, will be offered in the bid document only as a guide. The Board did not endorse the suggestion by Peter Holden of pursuing bid alternates for further improvements, to be negotiated with the lowest bidder. The Selectboard will not require either a bid bond or performance bond, since construction estimates are well below \$80,000.

Peter Holden stated his firm could have final plans ready within 10 days; the project will be bid in early January. Holden will assist the Town with bid preparation and dissemination, bid analyses, and construction inspections. The road will need to be closed for 3 – 4 days of construction in Spring 2018.

4. **Highways:**

a. Personnel Policy Revision:

Selectmen directed Finance Manager Deb Jones to prepare an amendment to the personnel policy to prohibit vaping on town premises and in town-owned vehicles. The Town has an anti-smoking policy in place.

b. Plowing at the intersection of Rte. 132/Rte. 14:

Rob Romeo summarized, briefly, his manner of plowing his lot and sidewalks in the vicinity of the Trading Post. Road Foreman Tim Higgins expressed agreement with long-standing practices. Rob Romeo noted that the pile of snow which accumulates at the corner is often due to the State of Vermont plowing.

c. Chloride Use in Winter:

Mary Gavin explained she had received an inquiry regarding use of chloride during winter months. Tim Higgins explained the road crew will not apply chloride for dust control during winter, because this practice encourages the top layer of gravel to thaw. The result is uneven road conditions that present difficulty for plowing and for drivers.

d. Truck 1 Repairs/Status of New Truck:

Tim Higgins explained Truck 1, due to be traded later this winter for the new truck, is under repair for a broken bed chain. The truck is up at Wyatt Stulz' on Harlow Road. Tim Higgins commented the Town should replace trucks sooner than 7 years. The new truck has been delivered to Fairfield for body installation. Anticipated delivery is scheduled for late January. Deb Jones commented that she will provide Selectmen more information on loan amounts and terms prior to that time.

e. Culvert bids:

Margy Becker relayed Luke Pettengill's suggestion that a box culvert at the lower end of Quimby Mountain Road above Isenor be added to the list of culvert work to be bid in the near future. This box culvert needs to be extended. Road Foreman Tim Higgins stated the box culvert extension should be bid separately, and that a hydraulic study needs to be conducted. He confirmed his willingness to collaborate with the Selectmen's Assistant to prepare bid specifications for a January bid solicitation to make improvements to 2 culverts on Broad Brook at Old Stage Road and by Stulz on Harlow Road. These will be current year (FY18) projects.

5. Enforcement of Flood Hazard Bylaw:

Sharon Development Review Board Chair Ira Clark and Flood Hazard Bylaw Administrator Geo Honigford met with Selectmen to discuss the process for enforcing flood hazard permit violations. Violators can potentially accrue civil penalties of \$100/day. The Town has the authority to place a lien on a property, and - in an extreme case - to put a property up for tax sale. Geo Honigford stated his administrative role is to prepare and issue notices of violations, and to assess fines. The Selectboard agreed it would collaborate with the Town Attorney on subsequent enforcement actions as needed.

6. Request for Windsor County Sheriff Patrols:

Ira Clark indicated the need for increased patrols of Quimby Mountain Road. Margy Becker will follow-up with Sheriff Chamberlain.

7. FY19 Budget Preparations:

Tom Lober, Treasurer for the Sharon Firemen's Association, presented the SFA's FY19 budget proposal of \$47,400 – which is a slight decrease over the prior year. The FY19 budget includes a proposed \$30,000 set-aside into the New Equipment Reserve. This fund provides funds for future truck and turnout gear purchases. Deb Jones provided suggestions for budget formatting in the Town Report to better illustrate revenue versus expenditures.

The SFA's concern over the rising cost of dispatch services was discussed. Mary Gavin reported South Royalton Rescue has similar concerns. Tom Lober and Selectmen acknowledged Hartford provides excellent dispatch services. However, South Royalton Rescue and Fire Department, in addition to Sharon Fire Department, appear to each pay in excess of \$10,000/year for dispatching. Mary Gavin volunteered to contact Hartford Fire Chief Scott Cooney to discuss what could be redundant billing practices.

Selectmen briefly reviewed another preliminary draft of a general fund operating budget. Deb Jones reported she has factored in the 2% wage increase for full-time town employees and elected officials as the Board had requested. The general fund and highway budgets will be further discussed at two upcoming meetings – 1PM Sunday, December 10th and 6:30PM Monday, December 11th.

8. Sick Time Policy:

Deb Jones called attention to state law now in effect that mandates sick time for employees working in excess of 18 hours per week. There are road crew who now fall into this category who are not full-time employees. The Selectboard agreed she should prepare a sick leave policy compliant with state law that identifies an accumulation rate of 1 hour for every 52 hours worked. The Selectboard did not endorse the concept of enabling employees to claim sick time retroactively. Other potential components to the new sick time policy were discussed briefly. The Selectboard directed Deb Jones to begin tracking sick time accrual for a seasonal employee in anticipation that he will soon be over the threshold of 18 hours per week.

9. **Selectboard Assistant Report:**

Margy Becker reported the statutory requirement for a 30-day public notice period in order to reclassify or discontinue town highways implies the **public hearing on Town Highway 26 (Ogden Lane) discontinuance will be January 8th**. She will prepare legal notices to be issued this week. Ogden Lane is a Class 3 road which intersections with the lower portion of Rte. 132. It serves primarily the Ward property.

In keeping with the Board's wishes **bid specifications for plowing and sanding Sharhart Road have been posted. Bids are due December 14th**. Nott's Excavating is in the process of reviewing quantities to be invoiced on FHWA-eligible emergency repairs to Rte. 132. Chris Bump, District 4 Transportation Administrator, will review the Nott's final invoice prior to Town payment.

Margy Becker indicated she has prepared brief bid specifications for assistance in preparation of a capital improvement plan for town buildings. And she is researching the costs of a generator for the Town Offices and, potentially, the Old School House. Fairpoint has indicated it will not remove the piles of dirt at the base of poles along Rte. 14 in the Village, though the Line Foreman will be asked to conduct a visual assessment. Selectmen expressed total dissatisfaction with the condition of Village sidewalks as a result of utility pole replacements. GMP personnel have agreed to re-set rocks in the River Road gravel pit that serve the purpose of preventing people from driving through onto private land. GMP personnel also indicated a willingness to clean up debris from tree removal on Rte. 132.

10. **Visit with Representative Tim Briglin:**

Tim Briglin spoke to the Selectboard about concerns expressed by fellow legislators at recent meetings held in preparation for the upcoming session. Legislators are concerned about the impacts of a new tax bill under consideration in Washington and discontinuance of federal support for CHIP/Dr. Dinosaur insurance program for children. They are also concerned about the state of the Education Fund. Legislators expect more school budget increases due to increases in health insurance. The Education Fund is already paying \$10 million in incentives to school districts who have already consolidated. Lastly, legislators are concerned about the need to raise funds needed for mental health and opioid addiction treatment programs. Tim Briglin sits on the House Committee on Healthcare.

11. Approval of Minutes:

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the minutes of November 20, 2017 with two corrections. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

12. Review & Approval of Warrants:

Check warrants were reviewed and approved. It was noted the Board of Listers has begun the process of creating digital parcel maps using MapInfo software. Jeff Barcelow of Royalton is providing training and consulting services for this project.

13. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Kevin Gish at 9:10PM. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Submitted by Margy Becker