

**SHARON SELECTBOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES  
Monday, November 21st, 2016**

**Board Members Present:** Mary Gavin, Luke Pettengill, Kevin Blakeman

**Staff Attending:** Deb Jones, Finance Manager; Selectmen's Assistant, Margy Becker;

**Visitors:** Rae Barrett, Planning Commissioners, Bob & Lynn Ferguson, Fritz Weiss, Kit and Allan Hood; Sherri \_\_\_\_\_, George Ostler, Paula DuPrat, Clare Holland, Andrew Lane, Brad Atwood (The Sharon Academy); Steve Libby, Vermont River Conservancy.

The Chair convened the meeting at 6:00pm.

1. **Minutes:**

**Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the minutes of November 7, 2016 with the correction of adjournment time to 6:30pm. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Luke Pettengill; Motion carried 3-0-0.**

**Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the minutes of the special meeting on October 24, 2016 with a correction to the time of adjournment to 6:00pm. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.**

2. **Warrants:** Check and payroll warrants were approved and signed, excluding an invoice from ARC Mechanical for boiler installations at the Old School House. This invoice will be reconsidered at the December 5 meeting.

3. **Announcements/Public Comments:**

Kevin Blakeman announced he had requested and received a flood boundary map via email from Preston Bristow, Flood Hazard Bylaw Administrator for the Town. He spoke of his concern that the purchase and sale of the Rikert property (on River Road) was based on erroneous information, and that the map shows a portion of the property can be developed. Luke Pettengill noted that in the recent past a representative from the Agency of Natural Resources had visited the site, at the Pettengill's request, and had rendered a decision confirming the parcel was located in the fluvial erosion area for the White River. Mary Gavin suggested the discussion be postponed until later in the meeting as warned on the agenda.

4. **Road Foreman Reports:** postponed until December 5<sup>th</sup>.

5. **Highway Business:**

**Bid Review/Award – Paving Capital Improvement Plan:**

Bid results were announced as follows: Hammond Engineering (\$4,800); Horizons, PE (\$9,908), Pathways, PE (\$11,160); Holden, PE (\$14,421). Selectmen agreed to review proposals and award the bid on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Griffin & Griffin Performance Bond: (Downer Culvert Installations)

The Contractor's insurance company has inquired as to the status of this performance bond. Margy Becker explained the Contractor is unhappy about the bond being retained by the Town for one year. However, the Town's project engineer still recommends the Town hold the bond. The Town has relinquished the 2% retainage at the request of the Contractor. Selectmen upheld their prior decision to hold the bond in the amount of \$182,016 until 'final acceptance' of the project on September 15, 2017 – and after the warranty period has expired.

Rte 132 Barrett Water Line:

Rae Barrett informed Selectmen she has identified the location of her water line to be in the road and inside the curb by Barb Donahue's. Only John Vincent's water line crosses the Donahue lawn. Selectmen discussed how repairs could proceed, and they pointed out pavement patching would be required – which is costly. Luke Pettengill suggested Ms. Barrett investigate the costs of a new well vs. repairs to the existing line. Board members were in agreement that the Town would not perform the repairs to the private water line.

Pike Paving Invoice – Beaver Meadow Road:

Luke Pettengill stated the paving job did not seem to be to Pike's usual standard. Deb Jones reported on a conversation with Dick Covey of Pike. Pike had used an emulsifier between base and top coats. Pavement roughness should disappear over time. After brief subsequent discussions Selectmen agreed the Town should pay the \$93,850 invoice in full.

6. **Royalton Police Chief:**

Chief Jim Beraldi met with the Selectboard at their invitation. Selectmen explained the past quarter's invoices have been reviewed. It was suggested a clearer itemization of policing activities would be helpful. The Chief was informed the Town of Sharon should receive approximately 16 hours of policing over the next nine months. Jim Beraldi reported the Department had been conducting traffic patrols. He explained the difference between 'traffic' and 'directed patrols'. Direct patrols focus on patrolling a specific area. He also reported he had checked with the Judicial Bureau to make certain the Town of Sharon would receive credit for fines collected as a result of traffic patrols. Deb Jones confirmed that revenues from civil fines have increased and help offset the cost of policing. Selectmen inquired whether he had any administrative support. Chief Beraldi responded he has approximately 3 hours per week of admin support. He has requested a 2<sup>nd</sup> part-time officer and a second cruiser. He further explained the VSP covers I89 and that his phone now rings when Sharon Fire Department is dispatched.

The lack of lighting at the Sharon Trading Post parking lot was discussed, and the fact that there appears to be suspicious activity on the lot after lights are turned off. The Selectboard agreed to

contact the Act 250 District Administrator to inquire whether a permit amendment could be made to allow the Romeos to leave lights on until 11PM.

7. **The Sharon Academy Lease**

Brad Atwood (Trustee) and Andrew Lane (middle school faculty) discussed how The Sharon Academy would pay for the cost of snow removal at the Old School House. This is currently a responsibility of tenant. The Town has sub-contracted for snow removal from town buildings and sidewalks. The result of discussions was an agreement that TSA would make a partial contribution through increased rent during the winter months. It was also agreed that ADA access issues, and ramp maintenance, could be addressed during upcoming lease renewal negotiations.

**Motion by Mary Gavin to amend the lease with TSA to change the rental amount to reflect an additional \$100/month for six months commencing January 1, 2017 through June 2017. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried 3-0-0.**

8. **Conservation of former Rikert Parcel (at Broad Brook Cemetery):**

Steve Libby, VT River Conservancy, presented a revised proposed Management Plan for the parcel. He stressed the VT River Conservancy would meet once a year with the Town to review the Management Plan. Mr. Libby assured Selectmen the Town would have no responsibility to manage the parcel. There will be a Volunteer Steward. The VRC will raise funds for site improvements. He reported the farmer who is mowing the fields will continue to do so next year. A very simple footpath will be constructed to access the river, including use of a landscape fabric to prevent poison ivy from intruding onto the path. Steps will be constructed for water access. Parking will be limited. A conservation easement exists on the property.

Bob Ferguson, abutter to the property, stated he was in favor of the conservation project and had been following the discussions for some time. Kevin Blakeman expressed objections to outright ownership of the land by the Town, as is the plan. He reported concerns regarding liability. He further questioned "why deed the property to the Town, if you take back management of the parcel?"

Brad Atwood noted that "we", the people, will own the parcel, further noting that everyone attending the discussion was in favor of the Town accepting ownership of the parcel. In attendance were Planning Commissioners, Conservation Commission members, and several other residents.

Sherri \_\_\_\_\_ asked what would happen in the future, if there were no 'Volunteer Steward'. Steve Libby assured Selectmen that the VRC would meet with the Selectboard and the Management Plan would be changed.

Clare Holland stated her opinion that more river access enhances the experience of living in Sharon.

Brad Atwood suggested the Town put out to bid leasing the hayfield. George Ostler suggested the Town get an opinion on the liabilities of owning the land, noting that Vermont statutes allow recreational use of land at no liability to the land owner under most conditions.

Discussions concluded with an agreement among Selectboard members that the Town's attorney should 1) be asked to review the revised Management Plan, and 2) render an opinion on liabilities associated with public ownership.

**9. Management of Former Julich Property:**

Kevin Blakeman suggests the Town manage this shoreline parcel off Rte. 14 south for recreational use. It does provide access to the River. He suggested removal of the 'private – do not enter' sign and cables. Luke Pettengill reported the District 4 VTrans Administrator, Trevor Starr, agrees the Town may block off entrances to the parcel as long as materials are outside the State's right-of-way. The State will not extend Rte. 14 guardrail to block the northerly access, which coincides with a 'pull off' location.

**10. Old School House Fire Alarm System Upgrade:**

Margy Becker reported Countryside Lock & Alarms had made emergency repairs to the alarm system earlier in the day. She had been notified by The Sharon Academy that the alarm bells did not work during last week's fire drill.

**Motion by Mary Gavin to approve alarm system repairs as presented in Option 1, in the amount of \$859.00, in Countryside Lock & Alarms' proposal dated November 6, 2016. Luke Pettengill seconded. Motion carried.**

**11. Town Report Dedication:**

Selectmen briefly discussed and then agreed on a town report dedication.

**12. FY18 Budget Preparation:**

Deb Jones and Selectmen reviewed and agreed upon a budget preparation schedule. This will include a budget-only special meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup>, and a Saturday morning meeting December 10<sup>th</sup>. Selectmen agreed on the importance of updating tax maps. Mary Gavin suggested the Listers investigate the possibility of obtaining partial funding from the State Center for GIS.

**13. Other Business:**

Ken Wright noted work items that still needed to be completed by ARC Mechanical before boiler installations are completed. Selectmen agreed to withhold approval of ARC's current invoice, pending completion of the punch list. Ken Wright expressed some disagreement with the project Engineer's recommendation for replacement of 10 valves. He explained that gate

valves are in place now. Selectmen noted the bid alternate has been approved, due to the fact that certain valves were corroded.

Selectmen asked for an update at their next meeting on the PSB review of the Rte. 132 Solar project (Norwich Technologies). Selectmen agreed to postpone a meeting with VTrans personnel concerning Exit 2 Park & Ride until January.

14. **Executive Session – Personnel Matter**

Mary Gavin made the motion to enter Executive Session at 8:55pm with the Finance Manager to discuss a personnel matter. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

The Board exited from Executive Session at 9:05pm. No formal action was taken.

**Adjournment: Motion by Mary Gavin to adjourn at 9:05pm. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.**

Submitted by,  
Margy Becker, Selectboard Assistant