

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
Monday, December 5, 2016**

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

Staff Attending: Deb Jones, Finance Manager; Selectmen's Assistant, Margy Becker; Road Foreman Tim Higgins;

Visitors: Preston Bristow, Flood Hazard Bylaw Administrator; Planning Commissioners, Bob & Lynn Ferguson, Fritz Weiss, Mike Zwickelmaier, Sherri Lorette, Clare Holland, Mike Clark, P.E., Dennis & Laura Tatro, Bruce Weatherell, Suzanne Jones, Mary Russ, White River Partnership.

The Chair convened the meeting at 6:30pm. It was noted the Road Foreman could not join the meeting until after 7:30pm. Board members agreed to re-order agenda items exclusive of scheduled discussions.

1. **Minutes:**

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the minutes of November 21, 2016 as presented. 2nd by Luke Pettengill; Motion carried 3-0-0.

2. **Warrants:**

Check and payroll warrants were approved. Deb Jones reported the premium cost for workers' compensation coverage through the VLCT PACIF has increased by \$6,500.

3. **Announcements/Public Comments:**

There were no public comments.

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

Selectmen reported on their assessment of 4 proposals ranging in bid amounts of \$4,800 (submitted by an independent engineer) to \$14,421. The major difference between proposals is the number of hours proposed and costs of overhead. Mary Gavin expressed concern that the low bid did not reflect enough hours on the project. In further discussions, however, it was agreed that the Selectboard's familiarity with the professional quality of work by Hammond Engineering outweighed this concern.

Motion was made by Mary Gavin to accept Hammond Engineering's bid for preparation of a paving CIP in the amount of \$4,800. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting attendee Mike Clark asked for, and received, clarification of the need to obtain engineering services.

5. Proposed Lease Amendment – Old School House:

Selectmen reviewed a one page lease amendment that increases rent during 6 winter months in the amount of \$100 per month for the purposes of partially covering snow removal expense.

Motion by Mary Gavin to accept and sign the proposed lease amendment. 2nd by Luke Pettengill. The motion carried unanimously.

The Selectboard Assistant will forward the lease amendment to Brad Atwood, Esq. for consideration by The Sharon Academy.

6. FY18 Budget Preparations:

Deb Jones and Selectmen discussed information to be available for the upcoming Saturday budget meeting. This December 10th meeting will begin at 8:30AM.

7. Budget Request – The Sprouty:

Suzanne Jones reported on the 2016 Sprouty, which was a great success. Over 200 runners registered. The Sprouty is now a recognized event throughout the region, and the majority of runners are from out-of-town. \$2,000 in proceeds from the September event were donated to the Farm-to-Table program at Sharon Elementary School.

Suzanne Jones asked that the Town once again contribute \$500 to the event, plus the cost of port-a-potty rental in FY18. **Motion by Mary Gavin that the Town provide \$500 plus the cost of port-a-potty rentals to The Sprouty Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.**

8. Rikert Property – Consideration of Acceptance of Property as Conserved Land

The Chair announced discussions would be postponed. The Town's attorney had not sent his opinion on liability issues until that day. Not all Board members had read the letter.

9. Discussion of Flood Mapping Discrepancies; Possible Amendment, Repeal of Flood Hazard Bylaw:

Preston Bristow introduced himself as Flood Hazard Bylaw Administrator for the Town of Sharon, and explained he is moving away from this type of work and focusing most on Selectboard administrative work for the Town of Barnard. But he had received formal training in flood plain administration in the past.

He noted that Kevin Blakeman had called him to ask for the flood maps showing the boundaries of the fluvial erosion area in the location of the Rikert Property. He explained he downloaded mapping information from the Vermont "Flood Ready" site. The map did not match a map previously in his possession. The State of Vermont then advised him the Flood Ready site was not up-to-date with the Phase II Study conducted of the White River in Sharon. The flood maps adopted with the Sharon 2010 Flood Hazard Bylaw are the result of the Phase II Study of the White River. The flood map data from the Phase II Study are available via the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission's website.

Dennis Tatro stated his house appears to be almost entirely in the no-build zone, and he asked how that could be justified. It was further noted that there are versions of flood maps which illustrate the boundary of the 'fluvial erosion area' stops at Rte. 14 – when it is known that the Fire Department building flooded during Irene.

Sue Sellew and Fritz Weiss produced copies of the Phase II Geomorphologic Assessment of the White River and its tributaries dating back to 2010. The Study was conducted by Fitzgerald Environmental Associates, LLC for the Agency of Natural Resources. They explained the Town's fluvial erosion areas are based on this study. There was a public hearing process which proceeded adoption of the bylaw.

Margy Becker reported on difficulties an average person would face if they tried to obtain mapping information from the State of Vermont Flood Ready website and the Two Rivers Ottauquechee RPC website.

Bob Ferguson presented the positive aspects of flood bylaws and the protections. The bylaw is necessary to enable homeowners to purchase flood insurance. The Town's 2010 Flood Hazard Bylaw is meant to address exactly the type of flooding that occurred with Tropical Storm Irene. There was flooding all along minor streams and tributaries.

Kevin Blakeman stated his objection that the boundaries of the fluvial erosion hazard area are way too broad. Dennis Tatro inquired which map applied to his property, which is along a stream. One map shows his house in the no build zone.

Mary Gavin explained the Town receives an additional FEMA reimbursement (7.5%) to be applied to the costs of flood recovery as a result of having adopted the fluvial erosion area regulation.

Kevin Blakeman questioned the validity of flood maps pertaining to the Rikert Property. He stated his opinion that the land will not wash away.

Mary Gavin inquired what the next steps should be to address the issues raised in discussions. Ira Clark suggested one possibility might be to work on the accessibility of maps.

Fritz Weiss explained the Conservation Commission's concerns about the need to upsize culverts spurred the Phase II study. Proven methodology was used in the assessment.

Information gathered in the 2010 public hearings showed a broad extent of fluvial erosion zones.

Sue Sellev provided information on the underlying geology of the area as an influence on flooding patterns observed today.

Preston Bristow briefly reported on what a community standard is, as related to defining a base flood elevation. Sharon does not have BFE information, since it did not participate in the flood insurance program in the 1970's.

Kevin Blakeman expressed frustration that of approximately 20 acres he owns, only 4 acres may be buildable due to mapped fluvial erosion area boundaries. He stated his opinion that this raises the 'taking' issue. Many people farm near the White River and yet the State of Vermont says the land is unbuildable, when they come to retire and need to sell the land.

It was suggested that the State's Regional Flood Plain Administrator, John-Broker Campbell, should be invited to attend a meeting. Posting a link on the Town's website to the TRORC maps was suggested.

Bruce Weatherell expressed concerns that his property on Fay Brook Road also appears to be in an area mapped for potential flooding.

An inquiry was made about how many people are living in areas at risk for flooding. It was suggested the Regional Planning Commission could generate a list of E911 numbers that fall within the flood plain and fluvial erosion area.

Discussions concluded with tentative consensus among meeting attendees and Selectmen that future discussions on the flood hazard bylaw were warranted, and that there was a role for the Planning Commission in those future discussions. But no formal Selectboard action was taken to direct the Planning Commission to take any specific action.

10. Highway Matters- Road Foreman Reports:

Tim Higgins provided brief reports on the status of roads, crew members, and the status of the new truck. The new 4 x 4 is expected to be ready for pick-up in two weeks. Brief discussions followed concerning FY18 highway maintenance projects to be budgeted for separately from regular maintenance. It was noted the Town should budget funds for closure of the existing floor drain in the Town Garage, and replacement with another type of drainage system.

11. Adjournment: Motion by Mary Gavin to adjourn at 8:50pm. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.

Submitted by,
Margo Becker, Selectboard Assistant