

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, March 18, 2019
Minutes (Draft)**

Board Members Attending: Mary Gavin, Kevin Gish
Board Members Absent: Joe Ronan
Staff Present: Margy Becker, Deb Jones, Frank Rogers

Members of the public: Joe Ronan , (via phone – as citizen); Robert Harrington, Jon Harrington (Horizons Engineers); Nicole Antal, Michael Sacca (Alliance for VT Communities), David Paganelli (County Forester), Mary Stoddard, Peter Anderson, Dick Rubin (Sharon Conservation Commission)

Kevin Gish convened the meeting at 6:30PM. Joe Ronan connected to the meeting via phone.

Election of Temporary Chair:

Mary Gavin made the motion to nominate Kevin Gish as temporary chair, Kevin Gish seconded, and the motion carried 2-0-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the minutes of March 4, 2019 as submitted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

Road Foreman Reports:

Frank Rogers reports the crew has had to apply approximately 882 tons of hardpack, due to the sudden thaw. This equates to approximately 50+ loads hauled to Quimby, Carpenter, Harlow, Moore, White Brook, and Eastman roads. The crew accrued overtime over the weekend. The grader was active where feasible, and the belly scraper was also applied where needed. Frank Rogers reported District 4 Transportation Administrator Chris Bump says the towns can post Rte. 132, and both Strafford and Norwich are taking action to do so. The only town highway not posted in Sharon will be TH3 (River Road).

Frank Rogers reports the chloride contract expires at the end of March; he will proceed to research alternative suppliers and consider purchasing magnesium chloride, a more environmentally-friendly compound.

The 4-year old F550 1-ton has a broken right front frame. The warranty has expired. The truck is scheduled to be replaced in 2020. Selectmen rejected the idea of incurring expenses to weld the frame (estimated at \$1500 - \$2000). Frank will conduct preliminary research concerning replacement and provide additional information at the March 25th meeting.

Dion Subdivision – Driveway Permit:

Margy Becker reported Bob and Joyce Dion have asked whether or not they need to obtain a driveway permit for their existing (grandfathered) driveway. The Dion's have recently received approval of a 3-lot subdivision. Their existing driveway will become a shared driveway to Lot 3.

The Town Attorney was consulted by the Planning Commission, when the Dion's asked for a variance of the subdivision regulation requirement for a 50-foot right-of-way to Lot 3. The Town Attorney provided an opinion as to the SPC's ability to grant a variance (it could not). And his opinion included a comment that though the existing driveway to Joyce and Bob's house is grandfathered, a driveway permit should be required since subdivision approval has changed the use of the driveway (from singled to shared driveway).

The Planning Commission has stated it prefers shared driveways. Commissioners have stated that though the SPC does not have purview over issuance of driveway permits, it appears that in this case the existing driveway is grandfathered.

The Selectboard issues driveway permits. Selectmen stated agreement with the Planning Commission's and Town Plan's policy of promoting shared driveways. Yet Selectmen also noted it is to the Dion's benefit to obtain a driveway permit.

Margy Becker noted the existing driveway would not conform to the Town's Highway Policies requirements for driveway alignment. This matter will be further discussed after snow melts and the driveway can be inspected by the road crew.

Horizons Engineering – Paving CIP Implementation:

Robert Harrington and Jon Harrington presented their preliminary recommendations for modifications to the Paving CIP. Horizons plans to conduct field visits with Frank Rogers as soon as conditions permit. They will make recommendations for additional borings. Horizons will also rework final cost projections for the CIP and collaborate with Deb Jones in order to assure the Selectmen have technical and cost information required for potential bond vote. Horizons suggests collaboration with the Town of Pomfret, in order to reduce the actual costs of construction on Howe Hill.

Ashley Community Forest

Michael Sacca of the Alliance of Vermont Communities met with Selectmen to further discuss a more refined proposal for management of a large parcel that straddles the Sharon-Strafford line as a jointly-owned community forest. AVC is currently attempting to procure a surveyor to survey the entire parcel. The AVC is against splitting the parcel, noting several benefits to keeping the property intact. If the parcel remains intact, the towns can avoid the issue of having to agree upon the actual location of the town and county line. There is access from Strafford to the parcel. Access to the parcel from the Sharon side has been questionable. Yet information in the Sharon Selectboard files indicates Blake Hill Road (TH42) exists as a class 3 and class 4 road.

Vermont Land Trust has been identified as potential steward of the property. No conservation easement has been prepared as of yet. It is envisioned the towns and members of the public would prepare a final management plan. AVC has prepared an interim plan for consideration by the towns. Dick Rubin noted the plans discourage trail use by ATV's and horses.

Joe Ronan inquired why it is important to form a nonprofit 501 (C) 3, and why consider the towns as 'tenants-in-common'? Mr. Sacca pointed to AVC's recommendation to keep the parcel intact. Mary Gavin asked for greater details concerning AVC's proposal for town treasurers and trustees of public funds to be custodians of the funds in support of the community forest. Mr. Sacca explained this is a joint-venture for which there is little guidance. The towns are 'charting new territory'. He reminded Selectmen the proposal is for the towns to be in control of expenses incurred for management of the parcel.

David Paganelli, County Forester, explained forest management options available to the towns in greater detail. He noted that much like a stock portfolio, management of forest assets can yield a greater return on investment if actively rather passively managed.

Mary Gavin asked AVC to consider an oversight committee of 7 members rather 5 members. Joe Ronan inquired as to what a worst case scenario for unanticipated future expenses could be – i.e. another Hurricane Sandy or Tropical Storm Irene resulting in major 'blow downs' of trees. Mr. Paganelli noted there would still be residual salvage value to timber in such an event.

Discussions concluded with Selectmen again expressing support for the overall project. Parties will continue to meet and refine the details for ownership and stewardship of the parcel.

Appointments to Boards & Commissions:

EC Fiber:

Mary Gavin made the motion to appoint David Karon as Representative and Clare Holland as Alternate to the board of the East Central Telecommunications District (EC Fiber). Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

Sharon Planning Commission:

Mary Gavin made the motion to appoint Peter Anderson to the Planning Commission for a term of 3 years. The motion was seconded by Kevin Gish and carried.

Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission:

Mary Gavin made the motion to appoint Peter Anderson as representative and Deb Jones as alternate representative to the board of commissioners of TRORC.

Liquor License Renewal – Inn at Idlewood:

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the application for renewal of the Inn at Idlewood's First Class Hotel liquor license. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the renewal application for the Inn at Idlewood's Outdoor Consumption Permit. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

Town Meeting Follow-Up – Security Cameras:

Selectmen discussed requests made by residents at Town Meeting for installation of security cameras on all town buildings. One resident has also requested security cameras be installed on the Town Offices for surveillance of activities at the Park & Ride facility.

Selectmen are of the opinion that installation of cameras on town buildings for security purposes is a different matter than surveillance of the Park & Ride for potentially criminal activities. Selectmen discussed their reservations about surveillance cameras on the Town Office building for the purpose of monitoring activities of the Park & Ride facility. Selectmen questioned the legality of such surveillance and expressed concerns regarding the potential involvement of town staff.

Margy Becker read an anonymous written public comment into the record. The person requests lighting be installed at the Park & Ride. Margy Becker noted the Sharon Academy has also requested lighting at the Park & Ride, since students now ride public transit busses which load and unload at Exit 2 Park & Ride. Selectmen stated agreement that the lack of lighting is a problem. Nicole Antal said she interpreted the comments regarding lighting in a broader context. Residents were putting in a plea with the Selectboard to acknowledge the drug crisis in town.

Selectmen discussed the fact that security cameras were installed at the Town Garage some years ago. Kevin Gish reported TSA's interest in installing security cameras on the Old School House Building, which is located on Rte. 132 across from the Park & Ride.

The Selectboard asked Deb Jones to contact the Town's insurance carrier to discuss whether the VLCT has any concerns or recommendations concerning installation of security cameras. Margy Becker will follow-up a) with TSA concerning lease provisions that may apply to installation of cameras on the Old School House building, and b) with law enforcement and VTRANS officials concerning surveillance of the Park & Ride. Joe Ronan commented that he had emailed the Selectboard Office a copy of the UVM's policy on security cameras. Margy Becker agreed to circulate this policy among Selectmen. This topic will remain on future meeting agendas.

Other business:

Baxter Library Basement Flooding: Deb Jones reported on the circumstances contributing to flooding of the basement at Baxter Library on Friday. Water was seeping in at multiple locations. The road crew had been alerted that a new ditch needed to be established to encourage water on the driveway to reach the drainage inlet at Rte. 14. Allen Wight did re-establish the ditch Friday. Yet water shedding from the elementary school property is thought to be the major cause of the flooding. This matter will be further discussed.

Dog bite: Deb Jones informed Selectmen that Leon Sheldon reported he was bitten by a dog, after getting out of his truck in the driveway to The Lighthouse. The Selectmen's Assistant will continue to gather the facts pertaining to the incident. The dog owner will be contacted pursuant to the animal control ordinance, and this matter will be discussed again on March 25.

Margy Becker informed the Selectboard she has also received complaints regarding a dog owned by Walter Radicioni, Jr. at 189 Turnpike Road. The dog is allegedly running-at-large. The Selectmen's Assistant is in the process of following-up on this complaint.

The Town is in need of an Animal Control Officer who can be available during the day. Any resident interested in serving in this capacity should contact the Selectboard Office.

Approval of Warrants:

Check and payroll warrants were reviewed and approved.

Adjournment:

Mary Gavin made the motion to adjourn at 9:15PM. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

Submitted by, Margy Becker