

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes (draft)
Monday, December 2, 2019**

Board Members Attending: Joe Ronan, Kevin Gish, Mary Gavin
Staff Present: Deb Jones, Frank Rogers
Visitors Present: Tom Lober, Sharon Firemen's Association; Sue Sellew, Baxter Library Trustees; Terry Hyland, Visiting Nurses VT/NH, Ryan Haac, Sharon Energy Committee.

Chair Joe Ronan called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

1. Public Comments: there were no public comments

2. **Review/Approve Agenda:**

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the modified agenda, which reorders business and includes a report on a liquor/tobacco license application. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

3. **Selectboard Member reports:**

Mary Gavin reported the contract with South Royalton Rescue expires at the end of December, and a new contract will be forthcoming for the Board's review.

4. **Review & Approve Minutes:**

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve the minutes of November 19, 2019 as submitted. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the minutes of November 25th, 2019 as submitted. The motion was seconded and carried.

5. **Approve Warrants:**

Payroll and check warrants were approved.

6. **Road Foreman Reports:**

Frank Rogers reported that his truck has mechanical problems yet again. Selectmen commented that early replacement of this truck in the spring may be considered. The starter on Truck 2 needed repairs last week and before the storm. Frank Rogers advised the Selectmen that the Town needs to **consider sheltering the grader**, as new federal emissions standards have resulted in use of a diesel exhaust fluid that could begin to freeze at 0°F and actually freeze at -10°F.

Margy Becker reported she is still awaiting a signed contract from Chase Site Services for plowing and sanding Sharhart Road. Discussions concerning potential subcontracting of any additional plow routes was deferred, pending executive session to consider road crew applicants.

7. **Horizons PE: Baxter Library Drainage Plans:**

Selectmen and Library Trustee agreed with Horizons' Engineering proposal to replace a drainage ditch with a yard drain. Drainage from the backside of the property is to be conveyed to the drop inlet on Rte. 14. Horizons PE will be working with the Town to apply for the VTRANS permit to hook into that drainage system.

Frank Rogers said he thought Horizons' proposed drainage plan will help, but not fully address, the drainage from Sharon Elementary school parcel. Deb Jones noted the Downer Fund is standing by to assist with the sharing of some of the costs of addressing this issue.

8. **Sharon Firemen's Association: FY21 Budget Request**

Tom Lober presented the SFA budget request of \$50,100. This is a \$1,950 increase (or 4%) over last year's budget of \$48,150. The majority of the increase being requested by the Fire Department is due to an increase in dispatch fees being charged by the Town of Hartford. Dispatch fees are increasing from \$11,000 to \$13,500/year, which is a 23% increase. Selectmen discussed the fact that Hartford Dispatch is billing South Royalton and Sharon Fire Departments in addition to South Royalton Rescue.

The FY21 budget reflects a slight increase in building supplies, due to the SFA's intention to construct a training facility out behind the fire station.

Joe Ronan commented on the increased budget for equipment repairs. Tom Lober explained the Fire Department is setting aside \$10,000 per year towards replacement of bunker gear, which was last purchase in 2011. Additionally, the Department has been setting aside \$20,000 per year towards truck purchases. Car 1 is of concern. Engine #1 is to be replaced eventually.

In related discussions it was agreed the Fire Department would like the Town to proceed with ordering replacement E911 numbers. The Fire Department will help with installation. Margy Becker agreed to consult with the Listers to obtain the address listing. She will research the required E911 sign dimensions. Tom Lober will also consult with Jason Flint regarding past intentions for a change in sign colors and appearance.

9. **Visiting Nurse Alliance: FY21 Increased Appropriation Request**

Terry Hyland of the Visiting Nurses NH/VT Chapter presented an appropriation request with a modest increase of \$325, which would bring the total request to \$3,500. Mr. Hyland explained the increase is due to a change in Medicare reimbursement formulas. Across the country home health agencies will see a 4 – 6% loss in revenues. Hence the VNA is asking

area towns to make up a small portion of this anticipated loss. The VNA plans to rely upon its investment portfolio and private donations to make up the major portion of the projected revenue shortfall. Mr. Hyland explained Dartmouth Hitchcock does not fund their budget shortfalls. The VNA serves on average 30 patients per year in Sharon.

Terry Hyland also reported the VNA is providing foot care, due to the high demand for this type of service. The VNA hopes to secure grant funding to enable it to deliver foot care free of charge. The VNA foot clinics take place in conjunction with Senior Center luncheons in Strafford and South Royalton.

10. Baxter Library Trustees: Renewal of Letter of Agreement

In 2011 Library Trustees and the Town forged a Letter of Agreement (“LOA”) which outlines responsibilities for operations of the library as a town library. The Town owns the building and land. There is a well on the property, which provides potable water to the library and the house and apartments at 5144 VT Rte. 14. The Trustees are charged with overseeing operations of the library.

The LOA has been revised from time to time since 2011. The latest revisions and legal review occurred in 2016. The agreement is to be revisited every three years and readopted by Selectmen and Trustees. Sue Sellew, a current Trustee, stated there are no changes proposed by the Trustees at this time. **After brief discussions Selectmen and Sue Sellew agreed to have the Selectboard minutes reflect the intention of the Selectboard and Trustees to renew the LOA without changes for three years.**

11. Sharon Energy Committee: FY21 Budget

Ryan Haac presented a modest budget request of \$450. The Sharon Energy Committee (“SEC”) would like to purchase a thermal imaging camera to be loaned to residents. Thermal imagery provides important information for home weatherization. Selectmen were supportive of the idea of the camera purchase. It was agreed, however, that the SEC should further research elements of a rental/loan agreement and how the SEC intends to oversee rentals. Meanwhile, the SEC has a \$250/year budget it may rely upon to offset the cost of this camera purchase.

12. Selectboard Budget Meeting Schedule:

Selectmen agreed to hold a special meeting on December 9 which is to be dedicated solely to budget preparation. The meeting will begin at 6:00PM.

13. Bond Application:

Deb Jones reports she is working on submitting the bond application online. It is a lengthy process. She hopes to have a copy of the application available at the December 9th special meeting.

14. **Approval of FY19 Independent Audit Report:**

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the FY19 Independent Audit Report as submitted to the Selectboard by the Town's independent auditors Mudgett Jennett & Krogh-Wisner PC. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

15. **Long and Short-Term Disability Insurance:**

Mary Gavin made the motion that the Town provide short and long-term disability insurance to employees commencing January 1, 2020. Coverage will be through VLCT's arrangement with Lincoln National Life as follows:

- A. Basic Life Accidental Death and Dismemberment - \$10,000**
- B. Short-Term Disability Option 1.02 Plan B**
- C. Long-Term Disability Advantage Plan C**

Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The Town will pay 100% of the cost of premiums. The projected budget impacts of this new benefit are minor. Participation by employees must be 100%.

16. **Employee "Stay" Interview Schedule**

Selectmen agreed to schedule interviews with employees to solicit feedback aimed at retention. These employee interviews will not be performance evaluations. Interviews with the road crew are tentatively scheduled to begin at 4PM on January 22nd. Administrative staff will be interviewed beginning at 4:30PM on January 23rd.

17. **Liquor/Tobacco License: RL Vallee, Inc. (Sharon Trading Post)**

Margy Becker reported the Selectboard Office has just received an application for a tobacco and liquor license for Sharon Trading Post. The applicant is RL Vallee, Inc., which states on the application that it is owner of Sharon Trading Post.

The Selectboard has received liquor license applications over many years from STP. However, the VT Department of Liquor Control's license application form has changed this year. It now includes the application to sell tobacco and non-tobacco products with the application for a class 1, 2 or 3 liquor license. If the Board decides to reject an application, both licenses are affected. The Board has historically had authority to review and approve liquor licenses. Tobacco license applications were submitted directly to the State.

The RL Vallee, Inc. application includes application for a tobacco rider. It includes disclosure of DMV violations associated with principals of the corporation. The tobacco rider enables sale of non-tobacco products which could include paraphernalia related to vaping.

Margy Becker further explained she had contacted the Department of Liquor Control to inquire about the license review process. The Department conducts criminal background checks. The Department will consider DMV records. Department staff will conduct a 'meet and greet' with applicants, and it will also conduct a site visit. After a license is issued, the Department staff will meet again with applicants to conduct training regarding state rules and regulations.

Selectmen agreed to warn discussions and action on the application for the next regular meeting, which will be held December 16th. The Selectboard assistant was directed to further research the Selectboard's jurisdiction over sale of tobacco and non-tobacco products as implied by this new combined license application form.

18. Selectboard Assistant Reports:

Margy Becker provide brief status reports pertaining to unfinished Selectboard business.

19. Executive Session: Personnel

Kevin Gish made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:30PM for the purpose of evaluating prospective road crew personnel. The motion was seconded by Mary Gavin and the motion carried 3-0-0.

The Selectboard exited the executive session at 8:55PM.

A motion was made by Mary Gavin to extend an offer of employment for a position on the Road Crew. Kevin Gish seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-0.

20. Adjournment:

Mary Gavin then made the motion to adjourn at 9:00PM which was seconded by Kevin Gish. The motion carried.

Submitted by,
Margy Becker