

**SHARON SELECTBOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Minutes (DRAFT)  
Monday, January 20, 2020**

Selectboard Members Attending: Joe Ronan, Kevin Gish, Mary Gavin  
Staff Attending: Deb Jones (Finance Manager), Margy Becker (Selectboard Assistant), Frank Rogers (Road Foreman)  
Public Attending: Otto Hansen (RL Vallee Inc.), Rob Romeo (Sharon Trading Post), Clare Holland (EC Fiber Alt. Representative); Dave Karon (EC Fiber Representative), Ira Clark, Sue Sellew, Paul Kristensen (Planning Commissioners), Ryan Haac (Sharon Energy Committee), Sara Tuthill (resident)

Meeting was called to order by Joe Ronan at 6:30PM.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

**A motion was made by Mary Gavin to approve the agenda without changes. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.**

**2. Selectboard Member Reports:**

Kevin Gish noted an overdose death on Harlow Road has recently been reported.

**3. Approval of Minutes of January 6, 2020:**

**Kevin Gish made the motion to approve the minutes of January 6, 2020 as submitted. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.**

**4. Road Foreman Reports:**

Frank Rogers asked for clarification of the road crew's responsibility to plow parking spaces by the Downer Camp entrance in addition to the pull-off to enable access to Downer Forest. He was directed to have the crew plow those parking spaces in addition to the pull-off.

Frank reported on several locations in town where contractors and/or residents are plowing across town highways and leaving snow in the right-of-way, which is illegal per state law. He suggested the Town adopt a snow removal ordinance to enable enforcement action. Town staff will follow-up again with public notifications.

Frank noted there is a vehicle which is being parked in front of the 21 Fay Brook Road apartments that is impeding proper approach to the intersection, stop sign, and snow removal within the town's right-of-way. Margy Becker will contact Eric Jacobs, dba EPE Corporation, to notify him of this problem.

Frank Rogers reported on concerns expressed by Sharon Fire Department members regarding the poor condition of the dam on Crescent Lake on Downer Road. This is a significant impoundment, and should the dam fail several town highways could be at risk in addition to private property. Mary Gavin noted her inspection of the dam last summer with the prior Fire Chief, due to the Fire Department's concerns at that time. To-date the Town has not received copies on any correspondence sent by the ANR dam inspectors to the landowner. The O'Leary family has listed the property for sale for some time. Frank Rogers will forward to the Selectboard a copy of a recent letter from the State to the O'Leary family concerning the poor condition of the dam, which was obtained by a prospective buyer.

**5. Horizons Engineering: Proposed Amendments to Agreement for Services**

Selectmen directed staff to contact Horizons Engineering to request that the proposed contract amendment be re-submitted as soon as possible as two proposed amendments, one for planning phase services (\$7,000) and the other for construction phase services. Selectmen again expressed concern over the cost of construction phase services as currently estimated.

**6. VTRANS 2020 Certification of Highway Mileage:**

**Kevin Gish made the motion, which was seconded by Mary Gavin, to approve and sign the VTRANS 2020 town highway certification of mileage for the following mileage:**

Class 2 miles	14.52
Class 3 miles	33.09
Class 4 miles	6.62
Legal Trail miles	6.04
State highway miles	16.167
Total highway mileage	63.777

**The motion carried.** The signed certificate will be submitted to the VTRANS prior to February 10<sup>th</sup>.

**7. Planning Services Agreement – Town Plan Revisions:**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the TRORC proposed Planning Services Agreement for technical assistance connected to preparation of Town Plan revisions.**

**Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.** Joe Ronan signed the Agreement in his role as 'authorizing official' consistent with municipal planning grant program guidelines.

**8. Old School House basement window replacements:**

Margy Becker summarized the extent of her efforts to procure a contractor to install seven windows in the Old School House, which had been ordered from Loewen some time ago. The windows were delivered last spring and subsequently found to be incorrectly sized. Loewen would not take the windows back but eventually agreed to ask one of their installers

to assess the work required for installation. An additional window that serves as a secondary fire exit needs to be replaced due to its rotten frame.

Boynton Construction of Hartland has performed a site visit and indicated they do not need to cut concrete in order to install the windows already purchased. Their estimate is for \$6,571 (inclusive of purchase of the new window (\$521.00)). Selectmen discussed this estimate relative to a \$4300 estimate provided to the Town over a year ago by a different person, who is now unavailable to perform the work. After further discussions and some public comments, **Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the Boynton Construction estimate for \$6,571.00. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.** It was noted that the Town will be billed on a time and materials basis. Margy Becker will follow-up with Boynton Construction to confirm installation during spring recess for TSA.

**9. EC Fiber Update:**

David Karon and Clare Holland, town representatives to EC Fiber Board, presented a status report on the build-out of high-speed internet (broadband) within the Town. There have been some unexpected delays, and build-out may not be complete until this summer.

**10. Energy Committee Purchase of Thermal Imaging Camera:**

Ryan Haac reported Library trustees and staff are enthusiastic about being the repository for a thermal imaging camera to be made available to residents. Residents can use the imagery from the camera to document where home weatherization improvements should occur. Ryan has prepared a draft lending agreement, which Selectboard member Joe Ronan agreed to review. The camera costs \$500. Sharon Energy Committee will apply \$250.00 from its budget towards the camera purchase. Ryan requested the Town provide an additional \$250.00 towards the purchase. After discussing a few other details of how the lending process would work, **Mary Gavin made the motion to authorize the Energy Committee to purchase a thermal imaging camera for an amount not to exceed \$500. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.**

**11. RL Vallee, Inc./Romeo Minor Act 250 Application:**

Margy Becker reported the Selectboard and Planning Commission were both notified of the RL Vallee, Inc./Romeo Minor Act 250 Application. The application is a request to extend operating hours for Sharon Trading Post from 5:00am to 10:00pm seven days per week and to replace certain lights with LED lights. A proposed permit in response to the application has been prepared. Parties have until January 27 to request a hearing.

Ira Clark explained the Planning Commission's concern the additional evening hour of operation may be an imposition on neighbors. He noted a second concern regarding the brightness and color of proposed LED lighting. The Planning Commission is uncertain whether to request a hearing. Abutters have been sent copies of the application and proposed permit.

Rob Romeo stated Brooksies used to be open until 10:00PM. Otto Hansen, representing RL Vallee, Inc., stated most of their stores situated near the Interstate are open 24 hours. They are only requesting hours be extended to 5:00am and to 10:00pm. The pumps and canopy lights will be turned off outside of these hours. Diesel is currently available all night.

Mr. Hansen explained diesel island lights will be replaced with down-shielded LED lights. The State has requested lower lumens and a 'softer' LED light than proposed in the application. Exterior building lights will also be replaced with downcast and shielded LED lights.

Selectmen Mary Gavin inquired about the traffic coming off the interstate at 10:00pm. Rob Romeo stated there are always people exiting at that hour and later who are looking for gas and services. Sara Tuthill expressed support for Maplefields stores and asked Otto Hansen to reconsider limiting the hours of operation for the diesel island. Selectboard Chair Joe Ronan noted he had not heard a lot of dissent about the proposed application. The Selectboard agreed it would not submit a request for a hearing.

#### **12. Approval of Town Meeting Warning:**

Selectmen reviewed a proposed warning and agreed to sign the final version on Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, during an upcoming special meeting.

#### **13. Town Reports - status**

Joe Ronan agreed to undertake final modifications to the Selectboard report and submit it as soon as possible.

#### **14. Ashley Community Forest;**

Selectmen discussed how to proceed with further consideration of plans for a new community forest. Joe Ronan has already spoken with Strafford Selectboard Chair about hiring common counsel to review the proposed inter-local agreement, which lays out the framework for management of the forest with the Town of Strafford. The Ashley Forest Committee is now considering requesting special town meetings in Sharon and Strafford for the vote to accept the donated parcels from The Alliance for Vermont Communities.

Mary Gavin inquired whether the Towns are expected to split the cost of the legal review, and Kevin Gish agreed this commitment from Strafford should be obtained prior to legal review. **Mary Gavin made the motion to split the cost of outside counsel's review of the proposed inter-local agreement. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.**

Kevin Gish agreed to consult Michael Sacca regarding the Ashley Forest Committee's presence at Town Meeting. Mary Gavin suggested a joint meeting with Strafford Selectboard be scheduled.

#### **15. Finance Manager Reports:**

Selectmen briefly reviewed and approved a budget for the Recreation Committee. Deb Jones reported she has informed employees about the new short and long-term disability insurance benefit. The upcoming schedule for employee “stay” interviews was discussed.

**16. Selectboard Assistant Reports:**

Margy Becker informed Selectmen of the results of the Fire Marshall’s December 23<sup>rd</sup> inspection of the Old School House fire alarm system. Bruce Martin sent the report to the Town via email Friday January 17<sup>th</sup>. A course of action to address the inspection findings was agreed to. Margy Becker reported the Town has been put on notice by the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission (“TRORC”) that Sharon is not being represented at meetings of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (“LEPC 12”). These meetings are usually attended by local emergency management directors or coordinators. Selectmen agreed the letter should be shared with Sharon Fire Department and Rebecca Owens or Susan Root, as Emergency Coordinators, should be asked to attend if their schedules permit.

**17. Public Comments:**

Sara Tuthill, resident on Harlow Road, spoke to Selectmen about her concerns pertaining to activities occurring on a neighboring property in Royalton.

**18. Approval of Warrants:**

Check and payroll warrants were reviewed and approved.

**19. Executive Session:**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to enter executive session at 9:10PM with Deb Jones to review employee wages. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. The Selectboard exited from executive session at 9:25PM.**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the wage increases for hired staff as outlined on the wage table provided by Deb Jones. Kevin Gish seconded the motion, which carried 3-0-0.**

**20. Adjournment:**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to adjourn at 9:53PM. Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Submitted by,  
Margy Becker