

SHARON SELECTBOARD REGULAR MEETING

Monday, July 6, 2020
Minutes (DRAFT)

*This meeting was held in compliance
With the Vermont Open Meeting Law with electronic participation.*

Attendance confirmed via roll call:

Selectboard Members: Joe Ronan, Kevin Gish, Mary Gavin;
Staff: Deb Jones (Finance Manager), Margy Becker (Selectboard
Assistant), Frank Rogers (Road Foreman)
Town Officials: Galen Mudgett, Lister; Margaret Raymond, Treasurer
Public: Peter Gregory, Director Two Rivers Regional RPC;
Representatives Jim Masland and Tim Briglin.

Chair Joe Ronan convened the meeting at 6:30PM via roll call.

1. Review/Approve Agenda:

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

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments apart from those received regarding the business at hand.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2020 special meeting as submitted. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the minutes of the June 30, 2020 special meeting as submitted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

4. Road Foreman Reports:

Frank Rogers reports the crew has been performing summer maintenance on gravel roads. The crew is installing water bars and ditching. PIKE is due back to finish paving on Howe Hill, River Road, and Fay Brook Road the week of July 13th.

Frank noted the shared access road to the Town Garage and Sharon Academy needs to be named. Kevin Gish will follow-up with Galen Mudgett, who is the Town's E911 Coordinator. Mary Gavin will follow-up with Galen regarding a Rte. 14 address plate that is in the wrong location.

Selectmen considered a written request from a resident for tire damage during the period Pike was installing new base materials. Selectmen concurred it was not the policy of the Town to reimburse residents for tire damages occurring on town roads. This resident may choose to follow-up with Pike directly.

5. **Bid Review - Winter Sand:**

Deb Jones presented three bids to supply the Town winter sand as follows:

<u>Bidder:</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Price/Ton</u>
D&D Excavating:	Winter Sand	\$5.67/ton (\$7.65/yd)
Twin State S&G	Winter Sand	\$8.20/ton
Twin State S&G	Super Grit	\$9.00/ton
Pike Industries	Winter Sand	\$9.95/ton
Pike Industries	3/8" stone	\$8.50/ton

This bid does not include trucking. Last year the road crew hauled "super grit" material, while the Town contracted separately for sand hauling. The Town is seeking to purchase approximately 4,000 tons of sand; the FY21 budget is \$70,000.

In light of an anticipated drop in tax revenues, Selectmen considered an 8% reduction in the sand budget (\$64,600), which would be the equivalent of purchasing 500 fewer tons. It was noted that if property tax collections are on target for September's first payment, the Town could always purchase the additional 500 tons.

Frank Rogers stated satisfaction with D&D's sand and TSS&G's super grit, which were both applied to the roads last winter. Though Pike's 3/8" stone is similar to 'super grit', it does not have the fines he desires.

Motion by Kevin Gish to purchase 3,500 – 4,000 tons of winter sand from D&D Excavating of Hartland at \$5.67/ton and 3,000 tons of super grit from Twin State Sand & Gravel at \$9.00/ton. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

6. **Consideration of Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator Service Agreement (IRESCA)**

Peter Gregory, Executive Director of Two Rivers Ottawaquechee RPC, and Ryan Haac, Chair of Sharon's Energy Committee (SEC), joined Selectmen for final review of a proposed services agreement for oversight and procurement of a regional energy coordinator. Sharon is one of seven (7) towns in the consortium.

Selectboard member Joe Ronan concern expressed some concern over last minute revisions addressing personnel management. TRORC is allocated the sole responsibility for hiring and

overseeing the regional energy coordinator. Peter Gregory explained the hiring process needs to move along, and the position is clearly a TRORC employee. Consortium towns will not have input on “employment-related” matters. He added that it appears the TRORC will have to contribute its own funds to help the towns finance the position, since the salaries being requested by potential candidates are above the range projected by the towns.

Joe Ronan continued to advocate for allowing towns to have input on HR matters, noting it would be appropriate that towns have representation in the interview process. Peter Gregory presented several reasons that justify TRORC’s role as “employer” in this situation, further noting he has been consistent in this position. He noted some consortium towns have already approved the IRESCA as revised. Discussions concluded with Mary Gavin inquiring as to TRORC’s definition of a “full-time” position. Peter Gregory reported 37.5 hours/week is considered full-time.

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve the revised Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator Services Agreement (IRESCA) dated June 29, 2020. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

7. **Appointment to Sharon Conservation Commission:**

Mike Zwickelmaier has asked that Sam Brakely be appointed to the Conservation Commission. Sam Brakely has bought a home on Clifford Farm Road. He is interested in conservation and management of trails. **Mary Gavin made the motion to appoint Sam Brakely to the Conservation Commission. The motion was seconded by Kevin Gish and carried unanimously.**

8. **Request to Limit Access to legal trail (Whitney Road to Town Farm Road):**

Several interested members of the public joined the meeting for discussions on this topic inclusive of Marian and Jim Weatherbee (Town Farm Road), Kit and Allen Hood (Whitney Road), John Mayer (Dairy Hill Road), Loretta Kit, Charles Ryan (White Brook Road), Galen Mudgett, Lister.

Kevin Gish began with a brief report on the site visit held June 30th. It was noted that the legal trail proceeds level with Whitney Road before it drops off steeply as it descends towards White Brook Road. This steep section is impassable and a detour exists into fields owned by Loretta Kit and Charles Ryan.

Joe Ronan invited public comments. John Mayer indicated he has maintained the private detour onto the Ryan fields for summertime use for 20 – 25 years, and he also owns a jeep and rides the trail. He suggested signs could be posted to encourage respectful use by motorized vehicle users.

Kit Hood spoke again of concerns regarding the increase in motorized traffic, recent incidents of reckless operations, and the fact that trucks, ATV’s and other vehicles are

coming by all day and during the night. Traffic was increasing even prior to the corona virus. She and Allen own land on both sides of the trail.

Loretta Kit and Charles Ryan spoke in favor of continued use of the trail by motorized vehicles, indicating that gates or barriers would cause more diversions from the trail. Loretta Kit concurred there has been an increase in traffic on the trail, which she attributes to the COVID 19 stay-at-home order. There has been increased development along White Brook road as well.

Jim Weatherbee reported they bought the house on Town Farm Road a year ago, and they knew the trail existed. It is very steep and wet by their property. The detour onto the Ryan property puts trucks and vehicles on the other side of the tree line from them. But last month there was a truck late at night which was directing lights directly at their house. They found this concerning.

Galen Mudgett, Lister for Town of Sharon, indicates he has walked this legal trail for 20 – 22 years. Over the past two years the trail has been very ‘chewed up’ by vehicles. He reported this is also true of legal trails out on the Strafford end of town. He agreed there is much more traffic and that ruts have been impassable at times.

Kevin Gish inquired whether leaving the trail open to motorized users with signs encouraging respectful use was an acceptable solution. Kit Hood inquired how the Town would enforce use of the trail, and whether cameras should be used? Mary Gavin suggested asking Royalton PD and Windsor County Sheriff for coordinated patrols on the weekends. However, Kit Hood indicated problem incidents with trail usage happens more randomly than just on weekends. John Mayer then concurred that perhaps trail cameras could be useful for monitoring behavior of trail users. He also inquired whether the trail could be closed during certain hours?

Selectboard Chair Joe Ronan suggested the Board refrain from formal action, given all this input. He suggested trail use continue to be monitored over the next few weeks. John Mayer agreed to get the word out that motorized use of the trail is in jeopardy, and that users needed to be more respectful. He agreed to help post some signs accordingly. Joe Ronan announced the Board will resume its consideration of the request to restrict motorized use on the trail at the Selectboard’s next regular meeting on July 20th.

9. **Junkyard Ordinance:**

Margy Becker briefly noted the avenues for ordinance enforcement neighboring towns are using. Towns enforce their ordinances through the VT Judicial Bureau or Superior Court. Local enforcing officials vary. Some towns rely upon Windsor County Sheriffs or their own police departments. Other towns designate local constables or even ‘grand jurors’ as enforcing officials. Joe Ronan suggested the Board suspend further action on the draft ordinance until it has met with Windsor County Sheriffs’ Department to discuss enforcement.

10. Corona Virus Planning: FY21 Interest on Late taxes:

Selectmen met with Margaret Raymond, Treasurer, to discuss COVID 19 procedures for FY21 tax collection. She is preparing to mail tax bills. There will be a notice printed on the tax bill requesting tax payers to submit payments via mail. Other procedures will be put in place to address those who must pay in cash. The first payment is due September 11th.

Recent COVID 19-related legislation made changes to tax laws. Towns were granted temporary authority to reduce interest on late taxes. Margaret Raymond would like to reduce interest due on late payments from 1.5% to 1% for the period December 10, 2020 through May 10, 2021 (90 days after the second payment is due). But the legislation appears to limit the period during which interest could be adjusted. Deb Jones has asked for clarification from the VT League of Cities and Towns. It was agreed tax bills will be mailed as-scheduled. The Selectboard can always reduce the interest rate after the bills are mailed, if appropriate.

11. Finance Manager Reports:

There were none.

12. Opioid Litigation:

Joe Ronan briefed the Board on the need to file a 'proof of claim' document in the Bennington suit. Selectmen made note of several opioid-related incidents in town, which could boost the Town's claims against opioid manufacturers.

13. Selectboard Assistant Reports:

Margy Becker noted the Town is awaiting communications from water system operator Patricia Beavers (P2 Environmental) as to the next steps to be taken to address system-wide sulfur odors and elevated magnesium levels in water sample results. Selectmen inquired whether iron filtering has been considered. Margy Becker will present this inquiry to Patricia Beavers.

The VTRANS continues to move ahead with permitting and procurement of easement deeds for the Rte. 132 culvert upgrade on Rte. 132 in the vicinity of Aldrich Farm Road, where the road had washed out during thunderstorms on July 1, 2017. Horizons Engineering has been asked to submit the Town's application to VTRANS for approval to connect to the Rte. 14 drainage system to address problems with drainage on the Baxter Library parcel.

14. Harlow Road (Royalton) Property:

Representatives Tim Briglin and Jim Masland joined the call to provide reports on conversations with VT State Police and State's Attorney on the case. Residents should continue to provide "actionable" information regarding vehicles, license plates, times of day, locations on Harlow Road of suspicious activity. Please note the time of day or night of any sounds of firearms being discharged and notify the VSP immediately.

15. Approval of Warrants:

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve the payroll warrant for the period June 21, 2020 through July 4, 2020 for a cash draw of \$12,337.52. Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve check warrant #1047 in the amount of \$2,630.83 inclusive of payments to Blue Tarp Credit Services for tools & equipment (\$135.98), Compucount for June 2020 payroll services (\$150.60), Consolidated Communications for telephone charges (\$89.77 and \$223.92); Evans Motor Fuels (\$461.28), Foley Services for uniform cleaning (\$109.56), Health Equity for employee health insurance expenses (\$1,294.53), and United Ag & Turf for a mower battery (\$165.19).

Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve check warrant #1048 in the amount of \$15,702.57 for payments to Horizons Engineering for paving project oversight and materials testing (\$8,710), Pike Industries for paving expense (\$3,778.06), Royal Auto Parts (\$41.48), VT Correctional Industries for 52 E911 house plates (\$414.12), VMERS DB retirement (\$2,635.94), Welch's True Value for shop expenses (\$32.97), and Wyatt's Welding for welding hinges (\$90). Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve check warrant #1049 in the amount of \$43,631.98 for payments to EC Fiber for library telephone (\$79), EyeMed Vision Care for premium expense (\$57.67), Mascoma Savings Bank for truck loan expense (\$24,806.31), Business Tech Management for IT Consultant Services (\$1,433), Pine Hill Cemetery Association for FY21 appropriation (\$5,750), Two Rivers Ottauquechee RPC FY21 dues (\$2,298), VT Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired FY21 appropriation (\$150), VLCT FY21 dues (\$2,938), Windsor County for 50% of the FY21 bond payment and FY21 county tax payment (\$5,870), Windsor County Mentors FY21 appropriation (\$250). Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried.

16. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 8:50PM made by Mary Gavin. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Joe Ronan
Kevin Gish
Mary Gavin