

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, July 20, 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:	none participating
Public:	<i>as noted below by agenda item</i>

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 with changes to the order of business to accommodate later-than-scheduled road foreman reports and to combine discussions on the Harlow Road situation with Windsor County Sheriff's reports. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried.

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2020 special meeting as submitted. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator Service Agreement:

Joe Ronan provided a status report on membership of this newly-formed consortium of towns collaborating on energy conservation and planning. The Town of Norwich has dropped out of the group, and the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission has agreed to make up the deficit in funds needed to cover the salary of the regional energy coordinator. An employment offer has been extended to a candidate. Selectmen reiterated their opinions that the TRORC could have better communicated its proposed role in HR matters, yet they also expressed continued general support for the one-year trial venture.

Kevin Gish moved to approve the amended IRESCA agreement as amended to reflect Norwich's withdrawal, and to authorize the Chair to sign on the Board's behalf. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. **Harlow Road (Royalton) Updates - Windsor County Sheriffs:**

Joining discussions: Michael Chamberlain, Sheriff; Captain Claude Weyant; Deputy Tom Batista; Vince Gross and Colleen Trudo (residents).

Selectboard members were briefed on Windsor County Sheriff's high-speed pursuit of a suspicious vehicle on I89 to Exit 2, through Sharon Village and onto River Road that afternoon. Selectmen expressed disappointment that the vehicle had not been apprehended. It had been noted the car has been previously seen visiting the Harlow Road property.

Vince Gross reported on the Royalton Selectboard's consideration of a proposed ordinance that will address non-criminal issues including housing, public health, and public nuisances. Enforcement of this ordinance could be of assistance in the Harlow Road case. Selectboard members agreed to research this ordinance and to further discuss at its next regular meeting.

Selectboard Chair Joe Ronan asked the Sheriff's Department for input as to how the Town should assist in moving the case along, yet received little new guidance. Captain Claude Weyant reported on increased communications between Royalton PD, VSP, and Windsor County Sheriffs. He confirmed the WCS is sharing its observations of activities on Harlow Road with the VSP.

Aspects of the Windsor County Sheriff's contract with the Town were reviewed and discussed. The schedule for increased summertime patrols was noted. The WCS is available to enforce traffic-related ordinances. An ordinance related to travel on class 4 roads and trails would fall within that category. Chair Joe Ronan inquired whether new statewide standards for policing, if adopted by the legislature, would carry over into WCS's contract with the Town. Sheriff Chamberlain stated yes, the WCS would be bound by any changes in policing statutes and those standards would be incorporated in the department's policies.

6. **Black Lives Matter and Issues of Racial Justice in Sharon:**

Joining discussions: Lucia Gagliardone (resident)

Chair Joe Ronan invited Lucia Gagliardone to summarize her email to the Selectboard requesting the Town address racial and gender justice. Lucia noted she has asked town leaders to a) take a stand on racial justice, b) display solidarity with Black Lives Matter and all people of color, including black and brown members of the LGBTQ2IA community, c) mandate anti-racist training of town and school officials and employees. She encouraged the Town to re-think its use of police.

Though the schools will be participating in anti-racist training geared towards educators, Selectboard members wondered if town officials may participate in these trainings. Joe Ronan will follow-up with Keenan Haley on this option. It was also agreed the Town will contact the VLCT for training options. Staff expressed interest in implicit bias training.

Mary Gavin inquired whether Lucia would be interested in assisting the Town in developing a broad-based policy statement of solidarity. Lucia asked if all members were committed to addressing the issues she has raised, and hearing a consensus that they were, she agreed to provide assistance. But she asked that the Board hear other voices throughout the town. Chair Joe Ronan agreed that public comments on the Board's policy statement, once prepared, would deserve public review and comments. He also noted that Selectboard members had been participating in a 4-town committee looking into housing (unaffordability) issues. Continuing discussions on the topic of racial justice will occur at the next regular meeting.

7. Request to Restrict Travel on Legal Trail (Whitney Road to White Brook Road):

Joining discussions: Sharon residents Ben Beres and Ellen Eisenberg, Warren and Sandy Johnston, Loretta Kit and Charles Ryan, Marian & Jim Weatherbee, and Royalton resident John Mayer.

Joe Ronan asked for further input from residents about whether the Town should restrict travel on this trail. Ben Beres and Ellen Eisenberg reported they are okay with reasonable use of the legal trail by motorized vehicles. But 'reasonable use' does not include nighttime use nor excessive speeds. They further commented on the prevalence of speeding motor bikes. Sandy Johnston also reported there has been a lot of nighttime use of the trail. She notes it is illegal for ATV's to be travelling on Whitney Road, which is a Class 3 road. Warren Johnston stated that lately traffic on the trail has been abusive.

Kevin Gish noted some neighboring towns have adopted ordinances regulating travel on trails via permit. Kit Hood inquired how permits would be enforced. She noted this past Friday evening there were motorized vehicles at 10:30PM and 11:30PM on the trail. How would the Town enforce at that hour? She further noted that this past weekend there was trash left on the trail. Sandy Johnston agreed noise pollution to be a concern.

Discussions of ordinances and permits, and how permits might be issued, followed. This approach appeared to gain support among landowners. The flexibility afforded to the Town for regulating the time of day and means of travel on trails was noted.

Loretta Kit inquired whether the Town could track traffic use. Mary Gavin noted perhaps the Town could request TRORC install a traffic counter on the trail. John Mayer stated he was okay with the idea of authorizing travel on the trail via a permit, similar to Pomfret and Strafford's approach. Marian Weatherbee commented on the uptick of trail use due to COVID 19. Ben Beres and Ellen Eisenberg expressed concern that should the trail be closed to motorized vehicles, traffic may divert onto their property. Kevin Gish suggested signage could play a key role in addressing this concern.

Joe Ronan polled attendees for support of a ban on motorized vehicles. Kit Hood spoke in favor; Sandy Johnston spoke in favor. Marian Weatherbee asked that signs be placed on both ends of the trail, and that travel be during the daytime only. Joe Ronan then conducted a straw poll of Board members opinions and noted support for restricted travel, possibly via

permit issuance, and with no travel at night. Discussions will continue at the next regular meeting. Staff was asked to procure a map of all legal trails to aid future deliberations.

8. **Road Foreman Reports:**

Joining discussions: Richard Johnson, Beaver Meadow Road

Frank Rogers provided brief reports on the progress of Pike's paving plans for the week on Howe Hill. Pike's need for additional shoulder material was discussed. Deb Jones reported the project actuals to-date indicate savings on some line items that could be redirected to shoulder materials.

Frank Rogers requested Board members consider its purchase of hardpack for the year, and after budget considerations **Kevin Gish made the motion, which Mary Gavin seconded, to purchase 4,500 tons of ¾" ledge pack for a not-to-exceed amount of \$36,000. The motion carried unanimously.**

Frank Rogers noted an employee needs to travel out-of-state for a family matter. Selectmen indicated quarantine requirements upon return will be based on the State of Vermont Department of Health policies. Deb Jones, Finance Manager, noted the COVID 19 allotment of sick time expired at the end of May. The employee will be required to draw from accrued sick and vacation time to quarantine.

Richard Johnson requested the Town address erosion of lawn in front of his house on Beaver Meadow Road, implying that maintenance along the road had caused the problem. Approximately 70 feet of ditching is needed there too, he said. Frank Rogers countered that highway maintenance was not the sole cause of erosion, noting other variables are at play including road width and incidents of more intense rainfall. Arrangements for a site visit to the property were agreed to. Reports on the site visit and further consideration of Mr. Johnson's request will be scheduled for the next regular meeting on August 3rd.

9. **Consideration of Treatment Recommendations – SES Water System.**

Margy Becker explained results of recent water testing has prompted the water system operator to recommend installation of a water softener. The softener will mitigate taste and odor issues in addition to removing iron and manganese. Manganese is considered carcinogenic above a certain threshold. The softener would be installed before the chlorine injection tap in the Sharon Elementary School utility room. Patricia Beavers has indicated the water softener would cost approximately \$2,000, and that her plumber is available to do the work. No permit is needed at this time. Kevin Gish agreed to follow-up with Patricia Beavers to inquire as to the type of iron needing to be removed from the water. Selectmen agreed to be available to meet with Keenan and School officials as-needed to further discuss.

10. **Finance Manager Reports:**

Selectmen thanked Finance Manager Deb Jones for her detailed budget projections. The Town is in a better position at fiscal year-end than forecasted. Selectmen agreed that they expect an increasing number of local households will be enduring increased financial troubles, as the pandemic plays out and federal unemployment assistance dries up at the end of July.

11. Old School House Repairs and Maintenance:

Discussions with Andrew Lane of the TSA Middle School concerning the need for increased air circulation in the Old School House were postponed to the next special meeting, Tuesday, July 28th at 7:30AM.

Unfinished Business:

12. Junkyard/Solid Waste Ordinance:

Selectmen agreed to postpone further consideration of this draft ordinance, as it is unclear how the Town could enforce it. Windsor County Sheriffs have indicated they will be unable to assist the Town with enforcing this type of ordinance as it is not traffic-related.

13. Procurement Policies:

Review of sole source procurement language was postponed.

14. Coronavirus: Planning/Updates:

Discussions postponed to the special meeting on Tuesday, July 28th at 7:30am.

15. Approval of warrants:

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve the payroll warrant for the period July 5 – July 18th, 2020 with a cash draw of \$12,508.42. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve check warrant #1052 in the amount of \$8,694.18 inclusive of payments to: Evans Motor Fuel for two invoices for fuel (\$949.36), Ferguson Waterworks for 12” metal culverts (\$27.62), Foley Services, Inc. for uniform cleaning services (\$109.56), Health Equity for two invoices regarding employee health insurance expenses (\$205.90), Horizons Engineering for library drainage consulting services (\$460), Howard Fairfield for equipment and vehicle parts (\$403.50), Innovative Municipal Products for chloride (\$4,038.24), and Mudgett, Jennett & Krogh-Wisner PC for FY20 audit expenses (\$2,500). The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mary Gavin to approve check warrant #1053 in the amount of \$220.00 for payment to Countryside Alarms for fire alarm monitoring (\$220). Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mary Gavin, seconded by Kevin Gish, to approve check warrant #1054 in the amount of \$13,514.06 for payments of two invoices from Northeast Delta Dental for July-August premiums and COVID 19 credit (\$500.63), Pike Industries for ¾” stone (\$3,622.03), Sabil & Sons, Inc. for fuel and vehicle expenses (\$1,249.42), Visiting Nurses for FY21 appropriation (\$3,500), W.B. Mason for supplies (\$1.98), Windsor County Sheriffs for June-July contract services (\$4,640). **The motion carried unanimously.**

Selectboard members noted receipt of the Finance Manager’s tabulation of Pike’s July 15th requisition. Additional time for review of this information was requested. Consideration of **Check Warrant #1055 in the amount of \$630,492.36** for payment of Pike Industries’ requisition was postponed until the next regular meeting on August 3rd.

16. **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn at 9:10PM made by Mary Gavin. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by,
Margy Becker