

**SHARON SELECTBOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES (DRAFT)  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020**

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

**Attending via Zoom:** Selectboard members Joe Ronan, Mary Gavin, Kevin Gish; Town staff Margy Becker (SB Assistant), Deb Jones (Finance Manager), Frank Rogers (Road Foreman);

Guest listeners and meeting participants were as follows: Marcy Marceau, Ryan Haac, Sharon Energy Committee; Geoff Martin, Regional Energy Planner (TRORC), John Roe, TSA Board of Directors.

1. **Call to Order:**

Joe Ronan convened the meeting at 6:30PM.

2. **Review/Approve Agenda:**

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the agenda as posted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

3. **Public Comments:**

There were no public comments apart from items on the agenda.

4. **Road Foreman Reports & Highway Business:**

Frank Rogers provided his reports. Hardpak purchased from Pike and applied to Cross Road was problematic, and Pike supplied grittier material to mitigate the situation. The crew has switched back to purchasing the better material or 'blue sand'. Though the crew has already stockpiled 2,000 tons of the inferior hardpak, the crew will be mixing the 'blue sand' into the stockpile going forward. Frank reported on remaining tonnages of winter sand to be hauled and stockpiled.

Sharon Trading Post – VTRANS Permit to Work within ROW: The engineers for RL Vallee have requested the Town be co-applicant for the permit application to VTRANS to construct within the right-of-way to Rte. 14. A new sidewalk will be installed in front of the store. It will be 7" high.

**Kevin Gish made the motion to authorize the Chair to sign the VTRANS State Highway Access and Work Permit as co-applicant with RL Vallee. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Garage Roof: Frank Rogers reported Jason Flint had inspected the garage roof and tightened some screws. Jason had noted both the building and roof need replacement. SB members acknowledged it is time for the Town to undertake planning for a new town garage.

Plowing Turnoffs-Trails in Downer Forest: It was agreed the road crew will continue to plow the pull-offs to enable public access to ski trails in Downer Forest. Margy Becker will inform Sharon Conservation Commission of the Board's action.

**5. Pike Final Requisition: 2020 Paving:**

Deb Jones reported Pike and Horizons Engineering had both signed off on the asphalt adjustment savings amount of \$21,900. There were approximately \$64,000 savings on the project overall – or approximately 4.5%. Selectmen commended Deb Jones and Frank Rogers for their vigilance regarding project invoicing and change orders.

**6. Finance Manager Reports:**

Deb Jones presented initial recommendations concerning employee health insurance for calendar year 2021. She is no longer using the BCBS CDHP Gold Plan as a 'benchmark' plan for her analysis of health plan offerings, because it is too expensive. She is looking at the new plan entitled "Silver Select", which still comes with a high deductible but lower premium deductions from paychecks. Discussions on employee health insurance plan offerings and cost-sharing will continue at a special meeting on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

**7. Sharon Academy: USDA Grant and Letter of Support**

John Roe, Chair of the TSA Board of Directors, summarized plans for expansion of the high school campus to include a new science wing, which will include three classrooms and two labs. The yurts will be eliminated. The TSA will maintain enrollment at the 120-student design capacity. The TSA has applied for a USDA competitive grant. John Roe asked the Town to provide a letter of support for the grant application. Mary Gavin inquired as to the grant amount being sought. John Roe indicated TSA is applying for a \$1.6 million grant, project costs are estimated at \$2.2 million, and TSA has an estimated \$250,000 in project 'add-ons' above the \$2.2 million for the new wing. The TSA will be holding a public hearing on the application and proposed expansion later in the fall.

**Kevin Gish made the motion that the Town sign the 'Evidence of Support' form for the TSA USDA grant application. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

**8. Town Participation in RFQ for Energy Services Company:**

Geoff Martin (Inter-municipal Regional Energy Coordinator for Barnard, Fairlee, Thetford, Sharon, Strafford, and Woodstock) resumed conversations with Selectboard members concerning procurement of an 'energy services company' or "ESCO". He reported the

Department of Energy qualifies contractors as an ESCO. Would an ESCO charge higher pricing? Geoff conceded that yes, potentially. But he hopes the RFQ and contract language would control costs. The towns could ask for disclosure of 'mark-ups'. Geoff further reported the ESCO only gets paid if the Town agrees to move forward with recommended energy efficiency measures, hence there is a disincentive to inflate costs. Could the Town of Sharon 'buy out' the initial energy audits of town buildings and proceed to work with an alternative contractor? Geoff explained he did not have an answer yet. He directed attention to the failed bond vote in Norwich for energy efficiency measures to Tracy Hall. The Town was not obligated to move forward with the ESCO's recommendation.

Geoff further reported that although an ESCO would consider prior energy audits of town buildings – i.e. the 2012 audit of Baxter Library - there would be value in conducting another audit.

Mary Gavin inquired as to the proposed timeline for procurement of the ESCO, building assessments, and final recommendations to the towns. Geoff Martin reported he hoped there would be recommendations to the towns by Town Meeting 2021, but that this is an ambitious timeline.

9. **Proposed Hartford EMS Agreement FY21:**

Margy Becker reported the Town of Hartford is not proposing an increase in rates for this ambulance service contract for Kenyon Hill Road residents and I89 incidents.

**Mary Gavin made the motion to authorize the Chair to sign the Town of Hartford Fire Department's proposed FY21 EMS Agreement with a \$35 per capita fee and a \$175 response fee for interstate response. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

10. **Ashley Community Forest Vote:**

Joe Ronan reported the Sharon Town Clerk will not agree to provide for a vote in January. She would do so at March Town Meeting. Joe Ronan reported the Town of Strafford's decision on a proposed January vote is forthcoming. The Board took no further action.

11. **Anti-Racist/Implicit Bias Training:**

Discussions were postponed.

12. **Community Policing:**

Discussions were postponed.

13. **Harlow Road Updates:**

Selectboard members provided updates on the case and further conversations with the States' Attorney. Board discussions continued to reflect frustration with law enforcement response. Board members agreed to follow-up again with the Royalton Selectboard and with state legislators to begin work on changes to applicable laws.

14. **Selectboard Assistant Reports:**

Margy Becker reported P2 Environmental indicates Jerry Swasey has ordered the new standby chlorinator. It will be installed shortly. Selectmen expressed some dissatisfaction with P2 Environmental's treatment recommendations. The School District contracts with P2 Environmental for maintenance of the consolidated system.

It was agreed Margy Becker should begin the process of competitive procurement for bathroom ventilation upgrades at the Old School House. She will also begin to advertise again for a contractor to assist the Town with building repairs and maintenance.

A **health officer** is needed, and Margy Becker asked the Board to reaffirm its proposed compensation rate. Her research into the public record indicated the Board had not set a compensation rate for the health officer at the time it agreed on compensation of the Animal Control Officer.

**Motion by Mary Gavin to set the rate of compensation for the Town Health Officer at \$20.00/hour plus out-of-pocket expenses. The Health Officer will be required to submit a timesheet and receipts or documentation for out-of-pocket expenses. The motion was seconded by Kevin Gish and carried unanimously.**

15. **Coronavirus – planning/IC Meeting updates:**

Joe Ronan reported on the recent IC meeting. There was much discussion of the new outbreaks of COVID 19. Kevin Gish reported on increased demand at area food shelves.

16. **Approve Minutes:**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the minutes of October 5, 2020 with corrections noted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

17. **Approval of warrants:**

**Kevin Gish made the motion to approve AP Warrant 1084 for \$349,455.49 which includes payments to Pike Industries - \$7,328.88 for ledgepak and \$342,126.61 for the last 2 applications for the paving project. Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to approve AP Warrant 1085 for \$33,100.41 which includes payment of BCBS billing for November health insurance expense of \$5,987.98, Casella for garage trash 34.98, D&D Excavating for 1538yds of hauled sand \$21,933.40,**

Evans Motor Fuels for 2 weekly deliveries for \$1,351.74, Eyemed for vision care \$57.67, Freightliner of NH for filter kits for 2 trucks \$568.88, Gatekeeper Lock and Safe for repair of the door lock at the library for \$147.50, Health Equity HRA reimbursement for \$24, United Ag Turf for tractor filler cap \$17.26, LHS Associates for Accuvote machine coding \$502, Liftech for \$2,475 to perform the 1000 hour service on the JCB backhoe. **Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to approve AP Warrant 1086 for \$21,299.21** which includes a semi-annual Mascoma Bank loan payment for the JCB Backhoe for \$9,850.83, OB's for undercoating \$160, Sabil & Sons for a bulb and a tow and driveshaft repair for Western Star \$1,712.75, Sharon Firemen's Association reimbursement from their Equipment Reserve Fund for repairs to the pumper at JAS for \$5,383.10, Tarrant Gillies for legal fees related to health code and Down River Investments \$1,436.80, Twin State Sand & Gravel for supergrit sand (crew is hauling) \$2,503.53, Tyler Wight for Garage furnace service, \$137.50, and 3 invoices from Welch's mostly for conservation mix for \$114.70. **Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

**Kevin Gish made the motion to approve Payroll Warrant for the period ending 10/10/2020** with a cash draw of \$12,664.91. **Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **18. Adjournment:**

**Mary Gavin made the motion to adjourn at 8:42PM. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Submitted by Margy Becker