

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY February 1, 2021**

MINUTES (FINAL)

As approved 2/16/21

Attending via Zoom: Selectboard members Joe Ronan, Mary Gavin, Kevin Gish; Town staff Frank Rogers (Road Foreman), Margy Becker (SB Assistant), Deb Jones (Finance Manager), Guest participants and listeners: George Ostler, Michael Sacca (Alliance for VT Communities), Dick Ruben (Sharon Conservation Commission), Matthew Perry (Ashley Forest Committee), Warren Johnston.

1. Call to Order:

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

2. Review/Approve Agenda:

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the agenda. Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Comments:

None received apart from agenda items.

4. Highway Business:

Road Foreman Frank Rogers provided brief reports:

- a. Frank requested, and SB members agreed to, an executive session to discuss a personnel matter during the next SB meeting.
- b. Frank reported on his idea for creation of an office on the mezzanine in the town garage. SB members expressed support for the idea. Frank will prepare a budget for the project, and he will confirm the improvements required to floor joists to meet load bearing requirements.
- c. Frank presented a recommendation for a pilot purchase of Cargill's 'Clearlane' product, which is a magnesium-based salt with a liquid additive. The product is effective to minus 20 degrees, whereas traditional rock salt is effective only to 0 degrees. Though more expensive than rock salt, Cargill's product is more environmentally-friendly. **Kevin Gish made the motion to authorize the Road Foreman to sign the quote for a one-time trial purchase of 50 tons of Clearlane at \$82.11/ton. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried.**
- d. Truck specifications were reviewed and modified as discussed with Deb Jones. **Mary Gavin made the motion to authorize issuance of the revised truck RFP, Joe Ronan seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

- e. SB members acknowledged Ken Wright's inquiry, via email, about **plowing the Church**. SB members declined to authorize town road crew to plow the Church this winter. SB members agreed to revisit discussions with Ken later in the spring/early summer.

5. **Alliance for VT Communities – Ashley Forest Vote:**

Michael Sacca, Alliance for VT Communities, acknowledged he understood the rationale for the SB's decision to delay Town Meeting, but the decision is concerning for the Ashley Forest project. The Sharon Town Meeting warning includes an article regarding the Ashley Forest. Michael Sacca noted the significant amount of planning and negotiating between Sharon and Strafford yet to occur. Grant funds which provide seed monies for the community forest project expire in December 2021.

Michael Sacca reported Strafford is proceeding with its Town Meeting on March 2nd. He inquired whether the Sharon SB would support moving ahead with the planning process if Strafford voted YES on its article. SB members affirmed their desire for the planning process to begin, despite the delay in Sharon's Town Meeting. Chair Joe Ronan indicated the Board would appoint members to the planning team by March. Dick Ruben expressed interest in serving as one of the town's two representatives.

6. **Old School House Maintenance Items:**

SB members reviewed Andrew Lane's email concerning Old School House maintenance items. SB members agreed

- a. The Town will procure estimates from ARC and Alliance Mechanical for annual boiler servicing and repairs;
- b. SB members agreed to transition to TASCOS for fire alarm system monitoring;
- c. SB members noted its preference to wait for recommendations for lighting upgrades as a result of upcoming energy audits of town buildings;
- d. The Town will proceed with cosmetic improvements – i.e. clapboard repairs and painting;
- e. SB members noted TSA's desire to pursue additional improvements to ventilation in the building.

SB members also discussed the fact that maintenance of the OSH has become time-consuming for town staff. SB members further expressed interest in hearing from TSA about its long-term plans for the Middle School. The lease for the OSH building expires in one year. Joe Ronan agreed to follow-up with TSA.

7. **Town Meeting – Consideration of May 8 date:**

Mary Gavin and Joe Ronan briefly reported the January 25th meeting with the School Board and Town Clerk Debbie St. Peter had concluded with School Board action to postpone the Annual School Meeting from March 1st TO May 8th. The School Board had further agreed to schedule a follow-up planning meeting to be held February 10th.

Kevin Gish expressed concern the May 8th date would not allow enough time for reconsideration of budgets, should they fail. He also pointed out the logistics required for holding an outdoor socially-distanced town meeting are substantial. Yet after further discussions Selectmen found they were in agreement as to the benefits to the community of holding local elections and both Town and School annual meetings on Saturday, May 8th.

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the date of Saturday, May 8 as the date for 2021 Town Meeting. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.

Margy Becker reviewed the revised timelines associated with delaying Town Meeting from March 2nd to May 8. The deadline for petitioned articles for the town meeting warning is now on or about March 23rd. The deadline for candidate consent forms for local offices is now Monday, March 29. The SB scheduled a public information meeting to discuss articles to be voted on by Australian ballot on Thursday, April 29th at 6:30PM. This meeting will be held virtually.

8. Coyote complaint: 3399 Beaver Meadow Road

SB briefly reviewed reports about a coyote in the Rte. 132/Beaver Meadow Road areas. The coyote was observed to have a severe case of mange. The Game Warden was contacted, and subsequent reports indicate the animal was legally euthanized.

9. Finance Manager Reports:

It was agreed that discussions regarding an Investment Policy would occur at the next meeting. The Town is required to separately manage and track decommissioning funds for the Rte. 132 solar project developed by Norwich Technologies.

10. Selectboard Assistant Reports:

Margy Becker reported on the progress of hazard mitigation planning. A ‘kick-off’ meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 4th at 11:00AM. She further noted the final version of the letter to VT Law School Board of Trustees was ready for signature. This letter is in response to news that the VLS has been considering moving from its Royalton location to Burlington. **Mary Gavin made the motion to direct SB members to sign the letter to VT Law School Directors via DocuSign. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

11. Opioid Litigation Update:

Joe Ronan indicated there will be some settlements within the next few months, and there may be some movement on distribution of settlement proceeds by the end of the calendar year. Lots of questions remain concerning the amount of proceeds that would trickle down to the Town. However, he encouraged the SB to begin thinking about how best to use those proceeds, as those dollars will need to be directed towards addressing the opioid problem.

12. Coronavirus planning/updates:

Joe Ronan and Margy Becker provided a brief report of discussions from the most recent IC meeting. SHI has reported it is assisting seniors with registering for vaccinations. Mary Gavin reported the SRRS Advisory Board is considering a request from Vermont EMS for assistance in administering COVID vaccinations. The vaccination clinics SRRS personnel may participate in would be in Hartford or Randolph. There is presently no option for a vaccination clinic in Sharon. It remains unclear whether the SRRS will assist with administering vaccinations to homebound Vermonters.

13. Harlow Road – updates:

There were no relevant updates to report.

14. Approval of Minutes:

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 special meeting as submitted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

15. Approval of Warrants:

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve AP Warrant #1119 is for \$11,206.11 with payments to Blacktop for \$121.98 for coldpatch, to BCBS for Feb 2021 for \$5,875.63, to Cargill for \$1,529.54 for 22.1tons of salt @ \$69.21, to Chase Site Services for \$605 plowing and sanding Sharhart Road Dec thru Jan 4, to Consolidated Communications for \$ 340.06 for phone the Town Offices & phone/internet for the Garage, to Evans Motor Fuel for \$1,366.58 for diesel, to Foley Services for 112.66 for uniforms x 2wks, to GMP for 5 monthly invoices totaling \$739.40, to HP Fairfield for \$175.95 for parts, Kimball West for 334.81 for shop supplies – Torq CB and cobalt maxx large, and PTO lock, and to LHS Associates for \$4.50 for thermal paper for voting tabulator. **Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve AP Warrant #1120 for \$14,318.56 with payments to Magee Office Supply for \$204.33 for office supplies and Lysol wipes, to Mascoma Bank for \$12,803.28 for a ½ yr loan payment + interest for the 2018 Freightliner, Delta Dental for \$446.18, to Royal Auto Parts for \$34.14 for tractor part & small tools, to Sabil & Sons for \$207.30 for DEF and shop supplies, for Sanel for 137.68 for shop supplies and parts for asst'd trucks, to TENCO for \$23.25 for micron filter, to Lincoln National Life for \$223.24 for February Life insurance, to US Bank for \$143.10 for February's copier lease, to VT State Treasurer for \$40 for dog registrations, to VLCT for \$40 for Dec workshop on Australian balloting for \$40 for Margy & Mary, and to Welch's for \$16.06 for fasteners. **Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

AP Warrant #1121 is for Library Trustees to approve. No action taken.

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve AP Warrant #1122 is for \$633.56 for the Downer Fund to reimburse Pine Hill Cemetery Association for maintenance of the Town Green for the summer season of 2020. **Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.**

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve AP Warrant #1123 is for \$500 for the Rec Fund to pay the \$500 appropriation for the 2020 Sprouty Race to their fiscal agent, BALE. **Joe Ronan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Kevin Gish made the motion to approve payroll warrant for the period 1/17/21 – 1/30/21 with a cash draw of \$17,874.17. **Mary Gavin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

16. Selectboard Meeting Schedule:

Selectmen agreed to resume a bi-monthly meeting schedule on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at 6:30PM.

The SB also agreed to reschedule its February 15 regular meeting (President's Day) to Tuesday, February 16th at 6:30PM.

17. Adjourn:

Kevin Gish made the motion to adjourn at 8:24. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by,
Margy Becker