

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
March 1, 2021
MINUTES (DRAFT)**

*This meeting was held in compliance with the Vermont
Open Meeting Law with Electronic and Telephonic Participation*

Participating via Zoom: Selectboard members Joe Ronan, Mary Gavin, Kevin Gish; Frank Rogers (Road Foreman), Margy Becker (SB Assistant), Deb Jones (Finance Manager), Margaret Raymond (Treasurer),

1. Call to Order:

The Chair convened the meeting at 6:35PM.

2. Review/Approve Agenda:

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

3. Highway Business/Road Foreman Reports:

Frank Rogers indicated VTRANS is staging equipment along River Road on EPE Corporation Property. The staging area is associated with the I89 bridge overpass repairs.

4. Investment Policy Review:

Treasurer Margaret Raymond met with SB members to further discuss a proposed investment policy. Joe Ronan agreed to draft amendments to the VLCT model policy to assure it better suits the Town's needs. Discussions with the Treasurer will continue during future meetings.

5. VCRD 4-Town Americorps VISTA Position:

Vermont Council for Rural Development ("VCRD") staff met with the SB during the February 16 meeting to discuss a request for appropriation of \$1,000 of FY21 funds to support an Americorps VISTA position. The position is to be hosted by Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation ("GMEDC"). SB members noted they are in favor of funding the \$1,000 request. Sara Danly of VCRD will be asked to join the March 15th SB meeting to provide a status report as to whether other towns are endorsing the position. The SB will take action on the appropriation at that time.

6. Hazard Mitigation Plan Revisions:

Margy Becker provided a brief overview of the proposed schedule for review of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Input from the Selectboard, other boards/commissions, and Fire/EMS personnel is suggested at several phases of the review process. The Selectboard agreed to schedule a special meeting for 6:30PM on Monday, March 22nd, for a discussion of town emergency response capabilities. SB members suggested the IC Team could be a valuable entity to join discussions to rank hazards and participate in the vulnerability assessment. Margy Becker will follow-up with the IC Team and Threat Owl.

7. **May 8, 2021 Town Meeting Preparations:**

Margaret Raymond, Treasurer, commented that if the SB is considering changes to the Treasurer position, 2021 Town Meeting is when a vote should occur. The change would not go into effect until the following year. Margaret Raymond agreed to follow-up with the School District regarding the school meeting warning. The Treasurer currently serves as Treasurer for both the Town and School. The SB postponed further discussion on this potential article.

Date of Australian Ballot information Meeting: This years' town meeting format has officially changed, as a result of continued pandemic conditions and SB prior action to move all town meeting business considered "from the floor" to Australian ballot. The SB was granted temporary authority to do so by legislative action in mid-January. But this authority ONLY applies to 2021 town meeting.

State law requires a public information meeting to allow voters to discuss articles prior to a vote. That meeting has to be held within 10 days of the scheduled vote. **Selectmen agreed to schedule the Australian ballot information meeting for 6:30PM, Thursday, April 29, 2021.** This will be a remote meeting, which will be warned per open meeting law and Australian ballot voting requirements. Voters will be able to join the meeting by video, smart phone, or telephone.

Articles for the TM Warning: SB members agreed to some modifications to traditional budget and tax articles for the draft May 8 town meeting warning. **March 23 is the revised deadline for petitioned articles to be submitted to Sharon Town Clerk.** After that date the Board can finalize and sign the warning, which will then be published in the town report for distribution.

8. **Finance Manager Reports:**

RFP for Independent Auditors: Deb Jones has circulated a draft RFP for independent auditors and has asked for comments. SB members agreed to provide those to her by Monday, March 8th at which time Deb can finalize and issue the RFP.

Deb Jones provided updated property tax collection information. There are now approximately \$107,000 owed for current year taxes that became delinquent in February, and \$200,000 delinquent taxes owed for all years. This is on par with past years.

9. Rental Housing Inspection (146 Dyer road):

Joe Ronan presented his final status report on a rental housing inspection of the dwelling at 146 Dyer Road dating back to September. Some violations of the rental housing code had been documented, and he has participated in a long, complex process to address those violations. The landlord reports the property is now for sale and the tenant is moving out. Joe Ronan indicated the case is closed.

10. Selectboard Assistant Reports:

The Town is still without an Animal Control Officer to enforce the Town's long-standing dog ordinance. The responsibility for enforcement falls to the Selectboard. Margy Becker noted numerous animal control complaints detract from her ability to complete other work. She asked the SB to consider "sweetening" the compensation for an Animal Control Officer. The Board had previously agreed to \$50 'per incident', including out-of-pocket expenses.

Suggestions for increased compensation, and preferred status as a part-time town employee, were discussed. Margy Becker will further investigate the possibility of combining Animal Control responsibilities with another town officer position. SB members further agreed to keep enforcement of the Town's Animal Control Ordinance a priority, inclusive of revisiting procedures for enforcement of licensing provisions. Margy Becker noted that more patrolling and public education is needed, and that these activities should be the initial priorities of a new Animal Control Officer.

11. Coronavirus planning/updates:

SB members reported on the March 1st Incident Command Meeting. SB members also noted the unfortunate news of a fire at the Foster residence on Eastman Road over the weekend. A fundraising initiative is underway.

12. Harlow Road – updates:

None were reported.

13. Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the minutes of February 16, 2021 as submitted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

14. Approval of Warrants:

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve Payroll Warrant for the period Feb 14 – Feb 27, 2021 with a cash draw of \$19,434,94. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Deb Jones reported the warrant included compensation to the Delinquent Tax Collector for the 8% penalty on approximately \$44,355 in delinquent taxes plus Listers' payroll from July 2020 – March 2021.

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve AP Warrant #1128 in the amount of \$11,433.68 with payments to ATG \$116.88, Cargill \$2,722.77, Chase Site Svs \$4880, Clark's Truck Ctr \$294.90, Consolidated Communication \$341.40, Evan's Motor Fuel \$2,509.67, Evolution Edges \$500, Fastenal \$11.73, Foley Services \$56.33. **The motion was seconded by Kevin Gish and carried unanimously.**

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve AP Warrant #1129 in the amount of \$2,020.46 with payments to GMP \$795.22, Lucky's Trailer Sales \$29.06, NE Construction Engineering PLC \$750 (Jonathan Rugg re garage), NE Delta Dental \$446.18. **The motion was seconded by Mary Gavin and carried unanimously.**

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve AP Warrant #1130 in the amount of \$2,073.26 with payments to The Lincoln Nat'l Life \$223.24, Royal Auto \$102.29, Sabil & Sons \$288.25, Southworth Milton Cat \$231.66, Suburban Propane \$1,227.82 (Town Offices & Library heat). **The motion was seconded by Mary Gavin and carried unanimously.**

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve AP Warrant #1131 in the amount of \$8,428.16 with payments to TENCO \$1,289.08, US Bank 164.91 (copier lease), USPS \$110, United Ag & Turf \$623.80, Valley News \$45.90, VMERS \$3,265.47, Windsor County Sheriff \$2,929. **The motion was seconded by Kevin Gish and carried unanimously.**

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve AP Warrant #1132 in the amount of \$1,000,000 with a second payment to the Sharon School District due 20 days after the tax due date of 2/10/21. This leaves approx. \$29,622 due for the April 30 'true-up' with the School District. **The motion was seconded by Mary Gavin and carried unanimously.**

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve AP Warrant #1133REC in the amount of \$3,000 with payment to One Planet for last summer's program. **The motion was seconded by Kevin Gish and carried unanimously.**

15. Executive Session:

Mary Gavin made the motion at 8:35PM to enter Executive Session to discussion a litigation matter with the Selectboard Assistant in attendance. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously. *Zoom recording paused.* The Board exited executive session at 8:50PM. *Zoom recording continued.* There was no follow-up action taken.

16. Adjourn:

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

Submitted by,
Margy Becker