

**Sharon Selectboard
SPECIAL Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2021 (DRAFT)**

This meeting was held in compliance with the VT Open Meeting law for electronic meetings with remote and in-person attendance.

Attending In-Person from Sharon Town Offices: Mary Gavin, Selectmen, Margy Becker, Selectboard Assistant; Attending remotely via Zoom: Selectmen Joe Ronan and Kevin Gish; Deb Jones, Finance Manager.

Joe Ronan convened the meeting at 6:32PM;

1. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the agenda as submitted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously. It was noted the Rec Committee's request to further discuss a quote for a new scoreboard in the SES gym has been postponed until further notice.

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

3. FY23 Budget:

Selectmen continued work on proposed FY23 general fund and highway budgets. Some of the budget highlights touched upon included the following:

- Uncertainties about compensation for new administrative staff,
- An agreement to add \$2,500 for staff involvement on independent audit preparation,
- An agreement to increase the Treasurer's stipend from \$3,000 to \$3,500,
- An observation that the South Royalton Rescue budget is still needed,
- An agreement on the 'transfer out' to the Recreation Fund of \$3,500. (The fund balance has been spent down over the past 5 years).
- An agreement for a 'transfer out' of \$45,000 to the building reserve fund. (Some discussion was had regarding whether to put this item as an article on the Town Meeting warning. No decision made).

Mary Gavin pointed out recent budgets have been formulated with the intention to draw down on fund balances. Yet this has not happened. The causes for volatility in highway expenses were reviewed (prices of salt, fuel). SB members and Deb Jones remain uncertain how federal infrastructure monies will help the towns.

In concluding discussions -

- The highway equipment replacement schedule was left unchanged and reflects Frank Roger's original input,

- SB members expressed concern regarding inflation,
- SB members stated agreement with achieving a fund balance to budget ratio of slightly higher than 20% in order to absorb possible overruns in FY22,
- SB members noted with the concern the impacts of tornadoes in the south central states,
- Deb indicates that VLCT Property & Casualty insurance premium rates will go down in calendar year 2022 yet will likely increase in 2023. Thus the proposed budget conservatively reflects only a minor decrease in expenses for those line items.

The budget meeting ended with Selectmen expressing agreement that they were very close to final proposed budgets. The combined general fund and highway budget increase is forecast at 11% (approximately \$178,000 increase). The tentative amount to be raised in taxes is set at approximately \$58,400, reflecting a proposed tax rate increase of 3% or approximately .032 cents over FY22 municipal rate. Selectmen agreed to consider a final budget on Monday, January 3rd. The Board thanked Deb for all her hard work.

4. **Adjourn:**

Mary Gavin made the motion to adjourn at 7:40pm. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by Margy Becker