

**Sharon Selectboard
REGULAR Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2021 (Final)**

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: Joe Ronan, Selectmen; Margy Becker, SB Assistant; Attending remotely via Zoom: Selectmen Mary Gavin and Kevin Gish; Deb Jones, Finance Manager; Road Foreman Frank Rogers; Christian Pelletiere, White River Partnership.

Joe Ronan convened the meeting at 6:35PM;

1. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the agenda as submitted. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments. Chair Joe Ronan thanked all staff and officials for their hard work over the past year, noting with regret continued pandemic conditions. He also made the announcement that he would not seek re-election to the Selectboard.

3. Review/Approval Minutes:

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve the minutes of the December 6th regular meeting with modifications. Second by Mary Gavin and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve the minutes of the December 13th budget meeting as submitted. Second by Mary Gavin and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Warrants:

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve the Payroll Warrant for Period Ending 12/18/21 with a cash draw of \$16,421.61. Kevin Gish seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve AP WARRANT #1245 in the amount of \$7,297.91 including payments to: Casella Waste \$64.21, Chappell Tractor \$3,155.00; Chase Site Services \$1,229.50; DeLage Landen Financial \$94.53; Evans Motor Fuel \$2,536.09; Fastenal \$77.10; Foley Services \$57.48; and Frank Rogers \$84. Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve AP WARRANT #1246 in the amount of \$2, 465.54 including payments to: GMP \$486.37, Kofile Preservation \$624.55, Magee Office Products

\$72.96; Mudgett Jennett & Krogh-Wisner \$1,200; and Royal Auto \$81.66. **Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Joe Ronan to approve AP WARRANT #1247 in the amount of \$19,242.12 including payments to: So. Royalton Rescue \$6,824.50; Viking \$752.25; VLCT Pacif 1st quarter 2022 \$11,148.16; and Suburban Propane \$517.21. **Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve AP WARRANT #1248 in the amount of \$7, 123.92, including payments to: Key Communications \$1,179.46 – 2nd half of phone install payment; Welch's True Value \$6.45; Windsor County Sheriff's \$5,800; and Worksafe \$138.01. **Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Kevin Gish to approve AP WARRANT #1249 (Recreation) including a payment to Tiffany Clark \$166.31 for basketballs. Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Joe Ronan to approve AP WARRANT #1250 (Old School House) in the amount of \$3,756.24, including payments to: Sharon School District \$2,377.40 for annual debt service payment (Town Share) for water system, and VLCT Pacif \$1,378.84 1st quarter payment 2022 for OSH. **Mary Gavin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve AP Warrant #1251 in the amount of \$5,167.84 including payments to BCBS of VT \$4,700.20 and Delta Dental \$467.64. Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mary Gavin to ratify the HRA Reimbursement Warrant for November 2021 in the amount of \$694.61. Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Finance Manager Reports:

Deb Jones reported November financials are in line for the time of year. There are no red flags as far as expenditures. She inquired whether board members had questions; there were none. Deb then indicated the Board's prior action to increase employee compensation had mistakenly omitted the cleaning service position. **Mary Gavin made the motion to increase pay for the cleaning service position by 5% effective January 1, 2022. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

6. Road Foreman Reports/Highways:

Frank Rogers noted there were no mishaps during the recent storm. He explained the overtime presented in current payroll was a result of his time checking roads during the warm spell ahead of the storm. He further indicated he and Deb Jones had agreed to specifications for the truck bid. The RFP will be presented at the January 3rd meeting.

7. White River Partnership: White River Access Improvements:

Christian Pelletiere indicated the WRP is still waiting to hear back regarding the grant to fund proposed improvements to trails and the parking area at the Broad Brook river access. There are two additional projects the WRP would like to undertake. The WRP would like to install a kiosk at the access on Rte. 14 across from Academy Drive (to the town garage/TSA high school). A stone staircase leading down to the river will be built for recreation purposes and water quality sampling. The WRP proposes better parking delineation further upstream at the 'Sharon River Access' in order to discourage long-term camping. Christian Pelletier indicated the WRP intends to fundraise for these improvements and to collaborate with Sam Brakely ('Hermit Woods') on site plans. Christian will be in charge of obtaining landowner agreements. Selectmen encouraged the WRP and Sharon Conservation Commission to propose more distinctive names for these two accesses.

8. Acceptance of Brook Field Services Annual Maintenance Agreement (2022):

Kevin Gish reported on his recent communication with Brook Field Services. He recommended the Town continue with one annual service of the Town Offices generator. **Motion by Mary Gavin to select 'Program 1' for one annual servicing at a discounted rate of \$371/year. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

9. Ashley Community Forest: Approval of Inter-local Agreement with Strafford:

Deb Jones noted the proposed final inter-local agreement was fairly vague regarding the annual budget adoption process. After some discussion Joe Ronan suggested, and board members agreed, that the Ashley Forest Committee could address the deficiency in wording in Section 6 (b)(6) when it adopts its bylaws. **Joe Ronan made the motion to accept the revised Inter-Local Agreement, as submitted by Paul Gillies, Esq., subject to execution of bylaws that provide greater clarification of annual budget adoption. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried.**

10. Opioid Settlements: Updates:

Joe Ronan summarized the general nature of the two opioid settlement agreements germane to the Town. It appears the Town will not receive much from either settlement. The State will receive funds, 70% of which will be directed to an 'abatement fund'. Joe Ronan suggested the Town could submit grant applications to that fund. He further advised the SB accept the two settlement agreements and move on. The attorneys involved in representing the Town have agreed to waive their fees. **Mary Gavin made the motion to accept the settlement agreements as proposed by the town attorneys. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

11. Review 1st Draft TM Warning:

Margy Becker indicated she was still awaiting clarifications from the VLCT regarding her questions about the cannabis legislation. She is also researching whether or not the town meeting warning should address the second constable position. Neither first nor second constable positions have been filled in several years. It seems the voters are in a position to

decide whether to discontinue the position of second constable. In subsequent discussions Selectmen stated support for conducting March 2022 town meeting business by Australian ballot, should the legislature again provide this authorization which is expected in early January.

12. SB Assistant Reports:

Margy Becker reported Nicole Antal is busy on the town report.

13. Coronavirus planning/updates:

Town staff inquired whether the SB would support a temporary closure of the Town Offices after the holidays, indicating concerns about community spread of new COVID variants. Other towns are temporarily suspending 'walk-in' business. Mary Gavin explained the Town of Norwich's approach. SB members expressed support for a temporary closure of the Town Offices to walk-in business effective immediately. Selectmen will revisit this decision at its January 18 meeting. Selectmen declined to take action on any kind of a mask mandate. This topic will be addressed at the January 3rd meeting and after further research into recent enabling legislation.

14. Harlow Road:

SB members note the resumption in drug-related traffic and agreed to make reports, as relevant, to the VSP. Joe Ronan will contact Royalton Selectmen Chris Noble to discuss a joint selectboard meeting in January.

15. Tentative Agenda & Town Office coverage for January 3rd, 2022

Joe Ronan agreed to be present in the Town Offices for the January 3rd meeting. Deb Jones and Frank Rogers will present bid specifications for a new truck then.

16. Executive Session:

Motion by Mary Gavin to enter executive session at 8:08PM to discuss HR matters. Kevin Gish seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The Board exited executive session at 8:35PM.

A motion was made and seconded to provide a \$500 bonus to full-time administrative and highway department staff. The motion carried unanimously.

17. Adjourn:

Mary Gavin made the motion to adjourn at 8:25PM. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by Margy Becker