

**Sharon Selectboard
REGULAR Meeting Minutes
May 16th, 2022 FINAL**

This meeting was held in compliance with the January 2022 VT Open Meeting law amendments regarding fully-remote electronic meetings.

Participants attending via Zoom: Kevin Gish, Chair; Mary Gavin, Vice Chair; Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk; Margaret Raymond, Resident/Treasurer; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk; Lucy Miller, Finance Assistant; Deb Jones, Finance Manager; Darren Marcy, Valley News; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Laura Tatro, Resident

Participants attending via Phone: Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Call to Order: Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:30PM as warned.

1. **Review/Approve Agenda**

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. **Public Comments**

No public comment.

3. **Approve Minutes:**

There were some changes needed to the May 2nd minutes, so Nicola Shipman will be re-submit them for final approval at the 6/6/2022 meeting.

4. **Selectboard Member Reports**

Given the thunderstorm, the members decided that, in the event of power failure, the meeting will recess until Tuesday, 5/17/2022 at 6:30PM

Kevin Gish shared with the members that there will be a new group called the Friends of the Ashley Forest, created to establish a more robust mechanism for community support and fundraising opportunities for the Ashley Community Forest. Mary Gavin said it would be appropriate to put out the word to the community once the Friends group has been formed to encourage local participation.

There was some discussion that there needs to be a process for how the Ashley Community Forest Board finances are handled. Margaret Raymond suggested there needs to be a designated member of the Board to sign checks.

5. Selectboard Assistant Reports:

Nicola Shipman provided updates on the following topics:

Baxter Library Drainage: Since there was a movement to dovetail projects with the school in 2019, Nicola has been in touch with Jaime Kinnarney and will continue to follow up regarding the status of the school drainage project with key players.

Tri-Valley Transit: Nicola has been working in partnership with Tri-Valley Transit to find an interim solution for safer pedestrian crossing options from the Park and Ride to The Sharon Academy Middle School.

Bike and Pedestrian Grant: Rita Seto suggested the first step to take would be to commission a Bike and Pedestrian Scoping Study. Nicola asked for guidance as to whether this would best be pursued this year or next year. The members agreed that it would be best to cue this up for application in June 2023 and to do the prep work needed to successfully apply, including finding out if it is possible to revamp an old study performed in 2001. Nicola will pursue this over the next several months.

Chapel Hill Road: Legal counsel provided the members an update in writing, and it is clear the members will need additional information from Phoebe Manchester and further legal counsel to proceed with this matter. Nicola Shipman will follow up with Phoebe Manchester and the Town legal representative. Nicola will add this item to the agenda for the 6/6/2022 meeting.

Park and Ride Exit 2: Nicola wrote to the VTrans representative regarding the plan for the Park and Ride improvements at Exit 2. The plan from the state is to proceed with Alternative 1A as supported by the Selectboard in the initial planning phase. This plan will provide for a bus turnaround, improved lighting and security, improved and expanded pavement surface, pedestrian sidewalk access along Route 132 and a bus shelter. The project should be programmed this month, and VTrans anticipates approximately 3 years to get it out to construction.

6. Approve Warrants:

Mary Gavin made a motion to ratify the payroll warrant for the pay period 4/24/2022 through 5/7/22 ratification for Cash Draw of \$17,603.98. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1313 to Recreation Fund in the amount of \$118.00 with payment to Stateline Sports \$118.00. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1314 to the Old School House in the amount of \$3,004.00 with payment to Countryside Alarms. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1316 for \$14,008.89 with payments to Aubuchon's \$116.05 (formerly Welch's), BCBS \$4700.20, Casella Waste \$78.83, City of Lebanon Landfill \$45.90 (Green Up), Community Bank NA \$8716.50, Compucount \$200.41, EC Fiber \$151.00. **Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1317 in the amount of \$60,753.79 with payments to Kofile Preservation \$2484.46, Evans Motor Fuel \$3913.24, Eyemed \$70.42, Foley \$118.17, Haun Welding \$231.70, Innovative \$4775.65, Key Communication \$131.96, Magee Office Products \$143.87, Cathy Sartor \$70.79, Sharon School District \$48,813.53. **Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1318 in the amount of \$15,012.50 with payments to Nemrc \$5,000, Nicola Shipman \$40, Pike Ind. \$1383.48, Royal Auto Parts \$5.62, Seven Days \$97.76 paint bid advertising, State of VT \$1350.00 stormwater permit, Suburban Propane \$1176.84, Tarrant Gillies et al atty's \$500.80, Treasury Operations Div \$760.00 dog licenses, Windsor County Sheriffs \$4,698.00. **Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Mary Gavin made a motion to ratify HRA Reimbursement Warrant for 3/30 – 4/30/2022 in the amount of \$,1457.39. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

7. Finance Manager Reports

Deb Jones said the second loan quote for the Town truck purchase had not yet come through, so there won't be any action the board can take until that second quote comes through.

Lucy Miller filed an insurance claim today for damage to the Loader and Truck 2. Fortunately, most of the work on the vehicles can be done in-house, except the work that requires a lift. Deb and Frank agreed during their discussions that the cost of repairs is likely to be high enough that it is a financial benefit to the town to file an insurance claim.

Deb Jones shared there is an RFP out for sand hauling, which was spearheaded by Lucy Miller. Bids are due June 1st, 2022.

Deb Jones also said she has put a draft Planning Commission Clerk job description and will submit that to the members for review.

Deb also suggested that she provided projections based on Town spending. She asked if the members had any questions about the financials. There were no questions from the members.

8. **Highway Business/Road Foreman Reports**

There was some discussion about an incident with the Loader and a Town Truck. The damage was minimal, and there were no injuries. Frank Rogers said the team has learned some valuable lessons, and they will move forward with better systems in place. The team will continue to work on the daily tasks, and Frank is anticipating the schedule will pick up next month.

The new Town truck will likely be available early next month. Kevin Gish asked if the loan decision can wait until June 6th meeting. Deb Jones explained that the loan documents, once signed, will take about three weeks to be approved, and therefore there may need to be a meeting prior to the June 6th meeting to ensure the loan is processed in time. A special meeting will be set for next week once the second loan quote is available.

9. **ARPA/SLRF Work Group Report: Deb Jones/Sarah Pfeiffer**

Sarah Pfeiffer thanked Deb Jones for the framework for the ARPA/SLRF funding proposals. Deb Jones gave a verbal overview of the document which includes the full extent of ideas that have been presented so far. The goal is that document will serve as a guideline for the disbursement of ARPA/SLRF funds.

Kevin Gish reiterated the need to formulate a plan for how to move forward. Deb Jones suggested using a ranking system as a tool for narrowing the Town's focus. The members will individually rank the priorities to pass onto the Work Group, so a targeted list can be developed to bring forward to the public.

The members will return their scoring to Deb and Sarah by next week, 5/23/2022.

Once those have been submitted, Deb Jones and Sarah Pfeiffer will review the results of the Selectboard ratings to determine if there are any visible trends and will create a report with the findings.

10. **Review/Approve Finance Assistant Job Description**

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the job description for the Finance Assistant with a minor modification. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

11. **Tax Penalties Review per Resident Request**

Mary Gavin brought forward a complaint from a resident who is concerned the tax penalties are too stringent for those who are late but who miss the deadline by only a few days. Mary Gavin said that the penalty rate is a topic brought to the voters each year, and it seems as though there is some logic in reducing the penalty. Sarah Pfeiffer asked if it would be an administrative challenge to implement a multi-tiered penalty system.

Kevin Gish asked if this would be decided at Town Meeting. Mary Gavin agreed that the Selectboard can suggest the changes, but this would need to be warned at the next town meeting. Even if the Town voted to change the late fees, the change would not be effective until February of 2024.

Cathy Sartor mentioned she reached out to Strafford, a town that has tried a seven-day grace period and that system doesn't seem to reduce the complaints from residents.

There was discussion that there should be a way to encourage people to get their tax payments in on time while reducing the penalty for late payments that are made within the first few days of the due date.

Nicola Shipman will add this item to the agenda for June 6th. Deb and Lucy will research how other towns handle this issue.

12. Approve Loan for Truck Purchase

The second loan quote was not yet available for review, so this decision was tabled to a future meeting.

13. Baxter Memorial Lighting

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the proposal from Zach Wood of Sharon Electric LLC for electrical work to create separate switches for the vestibule light and for the exterior light with the amount not to exceed \$300.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

14. Authorization to sign Exterior Painting contract with Lacaillades Professional Painting

Mary Gavin made a motion to authorize the Selectboard Chair Kevin Gish to sign the contract for Exterior Painting with Lacaillades Professional Painting and Powerwashing, LLC. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

15. Executive Session

Kevin Gish made a motion to enter Executive Session at 8:04PM regarding evaluation or discipline of an appointed employee with attendees including Mary Gavin, Lucy Miller, Deb Jones, Kevin Gish and Sarah Pfeiffer. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to exit executive session at 8:17PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a statement to acknowledge the resignation of the Animal Control Officer effective May 16th, 2022.

16. Coronavirus planning/updates as needed

Cathy Sartor said there has been an increase in foot traffic and was wondering what the Selectboard recommends as protocol for possible exposure.

The Selectboard recommends that the Town employees continue to follow the guidance from the CDC and Vermont Department of Health and to continue to use best practices during this period of increasing cases.

Deb Jones suggested, especially if there is a possible exposure of a Town employee, staff can limit exposure by choosing to eat outside or in less public areas of the office to reduce risk of transmission.

17. Harlow Road as needed

No significant updates. The property seems to be uninhabited, and there does not seem to be the same level of traffic as there had been in the past. Mary Gavin suggested that it might be worth updating the VSP with regards to the changes as well providing notification to Jim Beraldi.

18. Adjourn

Mary Gavin made a motion to adjourn at 8:28PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Submitted by Nicola Shipman