

**Sharon Selectboard  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
October 17<sup>th</sup>, 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: Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Kevin Gish, Chair; Mary Gavin, Vice Chair; Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Catherine Sartor, Town Clerk; Deb Jones, Resident; Marcy Marceau, Resident; Alex Bird, Resident; Laurie Foster, Sharon Health Initiative Representative; Dena Wilkie, Sharon Health Initiative Representative

Participating by Phone: Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

1. **Call to Order:**

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

2. **Review/Approve Agenda**

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

3. **Public Comments**

No public comments.

4. **Minutes**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the October 3<sup>rd</sup> minutes with changes. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

5. **Finance Manager Reports**

Lucy Pierpont provided a financial report update. Lucy said the YTD operating expenses for this year as compared to last year at this time are equivalent.

Also, Lucy reported that as of today, the current balance due for the first tax payment is just under \$32,000.00. This time last year there was about \$40,000.00 owed to the town.

Kevin Gish added that the first Opioid Settlement payment has been received by the Town and there is another payment coming. The payments are in the \$500 range.

## 6. Highway Business/Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers reported that there was minimal damage to the roads from a recent rain event. He noted that one crew member is on vacation. The rest of the crew is finishing up the super grit hauling which should be complete by the end of the week.

The replacement Wing Wall on Quimby Mountain Road is now complete. The work was completed on schedule and in a professional manner. Frank was happy with the quality of the work and the level of professionalism in the way it was completed.

The crew is also preparing for winter.

Nicola Shipman and Frank will be working on the Structures RFP and the MRGP road segments inventory updates.

Frank also said he will be attending an Open Forum on Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup> that directly addresses staffing and supply chain issues. This is a meeting spearheaded by the Town of Norwich. Frank will bring any relevant information to the Town. Kevin Gish also said he is planning to attend.

## 7. Executive Session

**Mary Gavin made a motion to enter Executive Session to receive "confidential attorney-client communications for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the Selectboard" per 1 V.S.A. §§ 313(a)(1)(E) and (F). Participants to include Kevin Gish, Sarah Pfeiffer, Mary Gavin and Heather Devine. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Mary Gavin made a motion to exit executive session at 7:20PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

No action taken.

## 8. Old School House and TSA HVAC Grant Stipulations

Mary Gavin asked Andrew Lane for clarification regarding the useful life of the HVAC equipment to be installed in the Old School House. Andrew Lane said he is waiting for more details regarding the useful life of the equipment.

Andrew said the terms of the Federal grant may mean that should TSA ever vacate the building or be asked to vacate, and if the value of the system has not dropped below \$5000.00, the Grantee (TSA) could be held liable for making a payback to the Federal government for the remaining value on the HVAC system.

Mary also asked for the ballpark figure for the cost of the project. Andrew Lane said the cost of the equipment and labor cost could be up to \$100,000 but it is fully grant funded. Mary asked about the depreciation for the system.

Deb Jones said labor and equipment would be rolled into the depreciation. Deb and Mary also agreed that it would be difficult to obligate a future Selectboard to commit to something. Andrew Lane said he, too, agreed that it would be unfair to commit a future Selectboard, but was asking for consideration.

The Board expressed the need for more time to understand the depreciation for the system and what the associated financial risk might be to the Town.

Alex Bird was recognized by Kevin Gish and invited to participate in the discussion. Alex Bird said there is some truth to what has been said about a lease holder improvement and how that benefits the Town and the building. He referenced a point made by Deb Jones suggesting asking a future board to consider renumeraling the school for an investment they made to a future board doesn't seem appropriate.

Marcy Marceau was recognized by Chair Kevin Gish and invited to participate in the discussion.

Marcy mentioned she had originally wanted to join during public comment but was not available at that time. Marcy said she thought this discussion was a good segue based on the topic at hand.

Marcy asked the Selectboard if they were aware of a proposed expansion of the Sharon Elementary School and asked about the future of the OSH building as it relates to a possible Sharon Elementary School expansion.

Kevin Gish confirmed, yes, he was aware of the expansion.

Marcy also asked if there had been communication between the School Board and the Town's Selectboard and whether there was any information as to how the Old School House could be used as an alternative building for a future expansion of The Sharon Elementary school.

Kevin Gish said there is a five-year lease in place with the Sharon Academy Middle School, and while the proposed school expansion was an important topic, he said it is also beyond the scope of the Selectboard.

Marcy Marceau said she wanted to make sure the Board is aware of this development and that there is good communication between the two Boards and asks that Town assets are managed in a cost-effective and prudent manner. Kevin agreed that communication between the two boards is important.

Marcy Marceau asked if the expansion of the elementary school building had been addressed within the context of a Selectboard meeting. Mary Gavin said that the expansion of the Sharon Elementary School had not been discussed in a Selectboard meeting as it is outside the role of the Selectboard.

Kevin Gish stated that the only mention of a possible expansion of the Elementary School was during earlier discussions about a shared drainage project affecting both the Baxter Memorial Library building and the Elementary school. Mary Gavin reiterated that it was “they might be”. Kevin explained that the area of the drainage problem had been discussed as the possible site of a future expansion and there was some debate as to whether the School Board would move forward with the drainage project or not.

Andrew Lane said he would sign off and ask for the Board to get back to him with a decision.

Nicola Shipman will add this item to the agenda for the next meeting.

## **9. Sharon Health Initiative**

Kevin Gish invited Laurie Foster and Dena Wilkie to present their ARPA Funding request to the Selectboard.

Laurie Foster presented a brief overview of their request. Laurie expressed that ultimately the Sharon Health Initiative (SHI) wants to create more capacity for Dena Wilkie to help local residents in need.

Dena Wilkie said the SHI serves 9-10 people on a weekly basis, and she also offers additional email support as questions come through. She also noted the SHI is in a good position to expand the mission and serve more people, but finding funding is often an issue for the SHI.

Mary Gavin asked if this request for ARPA funding is a one-time ask or if this would be subsequent request from year to year. Dena and Laurie confirmed that this request is a one-time request, and they recognize the need to seek alternative funding sources for programming in the future in order to sustain any new programming. That said, Laurie and Dena also explained that the ARPA funding could enable the SHI to get programs funded sooner, so that the SHI can provide support to residents as soon as possible until new funding sources can be secured.

Mary Gavin asked for clarification with regards to funding things that are more program oriented and asked how this might be funded in year two and three. Dena doesn't think there would be funding available through the Vermont Department of Health, but she said the SHI is always looking for grant funding sources, including from the State.

Mary Gavin suggested another source might be the Ross Grindle Fund. Deb confirmed that those services must be provided through Gifford. Dena said she hadn't heard anything about the Ross Grindle fund from the Gifford staff and she was grateful for the connection to that

resource. Deb Jones will provide that contact information to Nicola so she can pass it along to the SHI.

Deb Jones also recommended the SHI reach out to the Trustees of Public Funds.

Mary Gavin also suggested that it would be worthwhile to fundraise specifically for items listed in the ARPA request.

Laurie Foster agreed that fundraising is important, but the SHI can only fundraise so many times before they have exhausted their donor list.

Dena Wilkie said the list of needs provided to the Selectboard for consideration is listed in order of priority.

Kevin asked if there was any action the Selectboard would like to take tonight. Mary Gavin asked that the request from the SHI be added to the list to the overall ARPA framework, so that the Board can fully consider the request.

Laurie Foster asked for clarification regarding the process the ARPA distribution of funds.

Kevin Gish said the Board wants to get all the requests in and come up with a plan for the funds before distributing funding piecemeal. Kevin also said the overarching goal is to have a big picture plan before deciding how funding will be disbursed.

#### 10. **Health Insurance Plans for 01/01/2023 – 12/31/2023**

There was discussion about the offerings for Health Plans and how best to implement changes to the HRA contributions and policies to be effective from January 1, 2023 when the new plans take effect.

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to offer full time employees Small Group health coverage from BCBSVT for calendar year 2023 offering a Medicare Supplement along with Vermont Preferred Gold and Silver Plans, Vermont Select Silver CDHP Reflective and Bronze Plans, and Standard Silver CDHP Reflective and Bronze CDHP Plans. The funding caps for these plans will be:**

- Blue 65 Medicare Supplement combined with reimbursement for Part B and Part with a total cap of \$700 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2250 HRA cap.
- Single level caps will be a \$700 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2250 HRA cap.
- Two-person level caps will be a \$1250 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2750 HRA cap.

- Adult & Child(ren) level caps will be a \$1210 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2750 HRA cap.
- Family level caps will be a \$1700 monthly premium cap and an annual \$3000 HRA cap.

**Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Mary Gavin made a motion to adopt a Town policy outlining that when COBRA is offered to an employee in conjunction with a plan that includes an HRA, the Town will charge the employee the group's 5-year utilization average plus the allowable percent for administrative overhead as set by Federal regulations. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **11. Delinquent Tax Collector Request**

Ken Wright joined the meeting at 8:32PM.

Ken Wright said that he mentioned to the Board when presenting his plan for a Tax Sale, that he wouldn't spend any of the Town's money without first bringing his request to the Selectboard.

Ken Wright is asking that he be authorized to approach the Town's legal counsel with regards to the legal ramifications of what happens when an individual dies and the estate owes the Town taxes.

Additionally, a property in question was in the process of subdividing. This subdivision had been recognized by the Town Listers due to a formality of how the subdivision was recorded, but the subdivision had not yet been finalized through the DRB/Planning Commission until recently. Ken Wright expressed his need for legal counsel, so he can find out how best to proceed given the complications with the property.

Mary Gavin agreed that these are complex issues, and Ken agreed that this is beyond the advice the Tax Department can offer.

Nicola Shipman will reach out to the Town Attorney to ascertain if it is appropriate for the Delinquent Tax Collector access the Town's legal counsel.

If the firm sees no conflict and is available to advise Ken as an employee and elected official of the Town, the Selectboard supports Ken's requests to seek counsel from the Town's lawyer.

### **12. Approve Warrants**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1382 in the amount of \$8,642.49 with payments to Al's Body Shop \$60.00, Andrea Morgan \$219.76 , ATG Westminster \$496.82, Blue Cross Blue Shield \$4,700.20, Compucount \$190.52 , EC Fiber**

\$151.00 , Evans Motor Fuels \$2,753.77 , EyeMed Vision care \$70.42. **Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Kevin Gish made a motion AP Warrant 1383 in the amount of \$22,112.40 with payments to** Foley Services \$122.28 , Galen Mudgett \$384.20 , Haun Welding Supply \$105.00 , Innovative Municipal Products \$4,662.38 , Magee Office Products \$88.56 , South Royalton Rescue \$14,947.68, Tarrant, Gillies, and Shems \$1,366.80, Texas Refinery \$435.50. **Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1384 in the amount of \$13,575.36 with payments to** Casella Waste \$81.54, The Herald of Randolph \$107.88, Treasury Operations \$150.00 , Twin State Sand and Gravel \$13,136.34, United States Postal Service \$60.00. **Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to ratify the HRA Reimbursement warrant in the amount of \$18.18. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to ratify payroll for the pay period 9/25/22-10/08/22 with a cash draw of \$16,960.91. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### 13. Selectboard Member Reports

Mary Gavin said the work with South Royalton Rescue Building fund is making progress.

Sarah Pfeiffer called a contact regarding a donation for roofing for the Town kiosk, but Sarah has not heard back.

Kevin Gish said there is also an offer of synthetic slate for the roof. It would be free and so the Board might go in that direction.

The Ashley Community Forest Public Hearing is going to be held on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 6:00PM. Nicola Shipman will make sure this is posted as a notice on the website.

Kevin Gish attended the Planning Commission/DRB meeting as the Town was notified as an abutter to the Ainsworth property. Kevin noted that the subdivision was approved at that meeting.

### 14. ARPA/SLRF Work Group Update

Sarah Pfeiffer said that the ARPA proposed spending spreadsheet has been updated. Deb Jones said that it is time to decide what stays on the ARPA appropriation list as the total amount of requests now exceeds the amount awarded to the Town.

Kevin Gish suggested that it would be worth having a separate meeting to discuss the ARPA funding.

Sarah Pfeiffer would like to put a survey out to residents.

Nicola Shipman will warn a Special Meeting dedicated to the ARPA funding discussion for Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am.



**15. Selectboard Assistant Reports:**

Nicola Shipman informed the Board there were no responses to the RFP for a Building Manager.

Nicola also obtained garbage services quotes to streamline operations at the Town.

Nicola informed the Board that the Studio Nexus plans for the ADA-accessible ramp required changes because of the Historic Preservation review conducted by Caitlin Corkins. The added cost for those changes to the plan is \$190.00.

**Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the \$190.00 expense to update the plans to include the feedback from the State. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Nicola alerted the Board to an offer delivered to the Town Offices by Jack Jones Carpentry, outlining a plan for securing carpentry services for the Town in an alternative solution the Building Manager RFP. The Town has significant projects that require the attention of a skilled carpenter, including the Old Town Hall, the Town Offices and the Old School House. This discussion was tabled until the next Regular meeting.

Kevin Gish offered to take on the role of a Building Manager as a part-time employee so long as there is no conflict of interest for the Town.

Nicola Shipman will reach out to the VLCT to find out if there would be a conflict of interest for a Selectboard Member to also be an employee of the Town.

TAP Grant Application opportunity: This item was tabled until the next meeting

**16. Continued Goals Discussion for Board and IREC**

The Members decided to table this. Nicola Shipman will add this item to the forefront of the October 28<sup>th</sup> Special meeting agenda.

**17. Adjourn**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to adjourn at 9:15PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Submitted by Nicola Shipman