

Sharon Selectboard Special Meeting Minutes January 23rd, 2023 FINAL

Participants attending via Zoom: Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair; Sarah Pfeiffer, Selectboard Clerk; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Mary Gavin, Selectboard Vice Chair; Deb Jones, Treasurer

Participants attending via Phone: Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Call to Order:

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:32PM.

1. Review/Approve Agenda

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of an Executive Session as Item 15 for the purposes of discussing “the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee” per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). Sarah Pfeiffer seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Public Comments

No public comments.

3. Review/Approve Minutes

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the January 9th, 2023 minutes with a minor change. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Selectboard Member Reports: Members

Sarah Pfeiffer mentioned that she wanted to thank the Road Crew for their quick response to the Board’s request for tree clean up, particularly at a location on Route 132.

5. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont sent the December financial reports and gave an overview to the Board on notable changes in income and expenses. Lucy also mentioned that about 25% of taxes for the second installment have been paid to date, and there is about \$24,000 in outstanding taxes owed for the first installment.

6. Highway Business/Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers, after a long day, joined the meeting and gave a brief report. He mentioned that the full road crew team is healthy and back to work. He noted today was busy for the Road Crew with significant snowfall to clear. Overall, Frank said he had nothing out of the ordinary to report.

7. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Nicola Shipman provided updates regarding H.42, the bill that was passed by the Vermont House and Senate and is before the Governor for signature. The bill, if enacted, would extend certain temporary authority to the Selectboard including 1) permission to move the date of the annual municipal meeting, 2) to apply the Australian ballot system to annual and special meetings, and 3) to hold fully electronic informational meetings in the days preceding the annual meeting. The law would also extend the capacity of a public body to hold electronic meetings without designating a physical location and without requiring staff to be physically present at that location as had been previously permitted by Act 78 which expired January 15th, 2023. H.42 expires July 1, 2024.

Nicola also shared that the Town received the Construction Permit from the Division of Fire Safety for the renovations to the Old Town Hall/Sharon Historical Society building including the interior fixes for the North side flooring and the removal and installation of the ADA ramp. This means the ADA ramp replacement may proceed. Nicola will move forward with the RFP process.

Nicola also informed the Board that the Old Home Day Committee Chair, Jennifer Donahue, shared that the organization is now a registered 501(c)3 and has designated non-profit status.

8. Approve Warrants: Selectboard

Mary Gavin made a motion to ratify AP Warrant 1423 in the amount of \$967.37 with payment to Pine Hill Cemetery from the Chester Downer Fund for maintenance on the Town Green. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1424 in the amount of \$11,185.20 with payments to Cargill \$5,372.42, Chase Site Services \$4,735.00, Evans Motor Fuels \$965.53, Tom Honigford \$74.30, Catherine Sartor \$37.95. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1425 in the amount of \$9,439.31 with payments to Nicola Shipman \$43.77, Southworth Milton \$584.76, Tarrant, Gillies, and Shems \$913.28, TRORC \$3,097.50, Windsor County Sheriffs \$4,800. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1427 in the amount of \$6,869.98 with payments to Alta Construction \$446.17, Blue Cross Blue Shield \$4,613.89, Capital One Trade Credit \$45.00, Casella Waste \$104.66, Evans Motor Fuels \$1,450.13, Foley Services \$122.28, Magee Office Products \$87.85. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1428 in the amount of \$47,921.58 with payments to Community Bank NA \$12,889.87, Mudgett, Jennett, and Krogh-Wisner \$4,200, Royal Auto Parts \$47.10, Sabil and Sons \$474.17, Sharon Firemen's Association \$26,575.00, VMERS \$3,735.44. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1429 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$1,120 with payments to Big Green T's \$1,120. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1430 from the OSH Fund in the amount of \$144.00 with payments to Alliance Group \$144.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to ratify the HRA reimbursement for the period 12/1/2022 – 12/31/2022 in the amount of \$300.49. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratify the payroll warrant for the period 1/1/23-1/14/23 with a total cash draw \$16,150.12. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. Contract with Avery Excavation

Mary Gavin asked that the Agreement for Services with Avery Excavation for the Downer Road Culvert #41 replacement first be reviewed by the Town attorney. Nicola Shipman will ask for legal review with the goal of having the document available to sign at the meeting on January 30th.

10. Town Meeting and Annual Report Preparation

Mary Gavin made a motion to authorize Nicola Shipman to hire R.C. Brayshaw to print the 2022 Annual Town report with the total cost not to exceed \$2,000.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

There was discussion about the options for the format of Town Meeting once H.42 becomes law. The Board agreed that it is not interested in moving Town meeting to a future date, but the Board was also not ready to decide if it would be best to hold an in-person Annual Meeting or if all town business should be conducted by Australian Ballot in 2023. The Board will decide the format at their meeting on January 30th.

There was discussion of how best to word a voter-backed article if all articles on the warning are voted on by Australian Ballot rather than in-person. Nicola Shipman will reach out to VLCT for guidance on how the article should be worded if there is to be Australian Ballot-only voting in 2023.

The Board members also discussed how they would each share responsibilities at Town Meeting (or at the Australian Ballot Informational Hearing if all business is to be conducted by Australian Ballot). Mary Gavin expressed reservations about presenting the budget to the voters as she did not vote in favor of the budget. Kevin Gish agreed to present the highlights of the budget to the voters and will be the point person for questions about the budget as needed. Sarah Pfeiffer will present an overview of and answer questions about ARPA funding. Mary Gavin will provide an overview of the articles related to the proposed tax-penalty changes for FY24 and will answer any questions as needed.

11. Ashley Community Forest Budget

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the Ashley Community Forest FY23 and FY24 budgets as presented. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. ARPA Working Group Update: Deb Jones and Sarah Pfeiffer

Nicola Shipman will initiate preliminary discussions with Becky Foulk and Keenan Haley as well as the Good Neighbor Clinic with regards to dental services in our area and services provided to the Town. Nicola will also look further into the HealthHUB ARPA funding request with the goal of having additional information for the February 6th meeting.

13. Other business:

No other business.

14. Executive Session:

Mary Gavin made a motion to enter executive session at 8:03PM for the purposes of discussing “the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that the public body shall make a final decision to hire or appoint a public officer or employee in an open meeting and shall explain the reasons for its final decision during the open meeting” per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) with participants to include Lucy Pierpont, Mary Gavin, Sarah Pfeiffer, Kevin Gish and Cathy Sartor. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mavin Gavin made a motion to exit executive session at 8:27PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

The Board directed the Finance Manager to conduct some additional research otherwise there was no action taken.

15. Adjourn

Mary Gavin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:29PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Submitted by Nicola Shipman