

**Sharon Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 20th, 2023 DRAFT**

Participants attending In Person: Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; John Roe, Planning Commission/TSA Act 250 Representative; Becky Foulk, HealthHUB; Bob Frenier, HealthHUB

Participants attending via Zoom: Mary Gavin, Selectboard Vice Chair; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Sarah Pfeiffer, Selectboard Clerk; Joe Ronan, Resident; Deb Jones, Treasurer

Participants attending via Phone: Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Call to Order:

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

1. Review/Approve Agenda

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

2. Public Comments

No public comments

3. Selectboard Member Reports

No member reports.

4. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont said the General Fund total revenue increased by just over \$9,000, which was from interest on Delinquent/late taxes, recording fees, dog license fees, ordinance fees and law enforcement fines. Lucy noted Selectboard expenses have increased by \$7,388, mostly due to wage related items. Lucy also said the Town is 66% of the way through the fiscal year and the Town has spent 66% of the General Fund budget.

The Highway Fund operating expenses have increased by \$63,292 since January. Wage related expenses increased by \$16,776. Vehicle expenses have increased by \$15,790, due to maintenance on the trucks, and fuel costs had also increased by \$11,164. Lucy noted the Town has used 90% of the fuel budget. Road maintenance expenses have increased by \$28,333. The salt expense has increased by \$18,866 since January. Contracted services have increased by \$9,467 since January, but Lucy noted that this is due to an increase in services

such as snow plowing and sanding. Lucy noted the Town has spent roughly 75% of the highway fund budget so far this year.

Mary Gavin asked how the Highway spending compared to previous years at this time, and Lucy said last year highway budget 74% had been spent by this time last year. This is comparable to the 76% that has been spent so far this fiscal year.

Kevin Gish noted that this lines up with historic Town Highway budget spending since much of the costs to the Town is for winter roads maintenance.

Mary Gavin asked if Lucy had seen a reduction in price per gallon for fuel. Lucy said pricing is still volatile.

5. Highway Business/Road Foreman Reports: Frank Rogers

Frank Rogers said the last storm was a challenge since the roads were soft, but there was heavy snowfall that had to be plowed.

Frank said he got the contract for ProMelt Mag, an additive the Town uses for dust control on the dirt roads.

Frank and Lucy Pierpont will review the contract and make sure the terms are acceptable to the Town.

Mary Gavin asked if there was another supplier for this product. Frank said no other supplier. Mary Gavin asked if there was a substitute product. Frank said there are other products, but he is unfamiliar with other products.

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize Lucy Pierpont and Frank Rogers to review the contract for the purchase of ProMelt Mag from Innovative Surface Solutions and to authorize the Finance Manager to sign the contract on behalf of the Town of Sharon. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Frank Rogers also wanted to bring to the attention of the board that there is a Class 3 road the Town is plowing and sanding, but there is no other maintenance allowed by the property owner despite the classification of the road. This is a section of road that Frank feels the Town of Sharon should either be allowed to fully maintain as required by the Highway policy for Class 3 roads or consider as a reclassification to a Class 4.

Frank said the conditions are dangerous to the drivers of the plow due to poor sightlines and hazardous conditions. Frank said he has experienced landowner opposition to any Town road maintenance beyond plowing and sanding, and the Town is unable to maintain the road to Class 3 standard as a result.

Mary Gavin said there are likely similar roads and there should be some investigation.

Frank said he just wanted to put this situation in front of the Board to brainstorm solutions for how to move forward with this road.

Mary Gavin said it would be worth communicating with the landowners, and that it would need to be handled diplomatically as there are likely many similar roads in the Town.

Sarah Pfeiffer asked if there are other similarly classified roads also serving a single household that are also unsafe for the road crew. Frank said he does not think there is another road like this one that also has the same level of safety concerns.

Nicola Shipman and Frank Rogers will coordinate their efforts. Nicola will also research Selectboard records and discover the rationale for why roads serving a single residence have retained their Class 3 designation.

6. Selectboard Assistant Reports: Nicola Shipman

Nicola Shipman reported that she is working on quotes for the lighting upgrades to LED. Currently, Nicola is waiting for Zach Woods' quote to come back since he will have the installation costs to convert the fluorescent to LEDs included. The application deadline for the EVT rebate is April 30, 2023. The Board agreed that it would be best to continue with getting quotes for the project. Nicola said this would likely need to go out to bid to comply with the procurement policy.

Nicola also asked if the Board was in support of applying for the MERP Mini-Grant \$4,000. The mini grant is non-competitive and first-come, first-serve and is designed to fund community outreach and education on energy resilience. If the Selectboard is interested in pursuing the funding, Nicola asked if she could have authorization to apply on behalf of the Town in collaboration with the Energy Committee.

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize the Selectboard Assistant to apply for the MERP Mini grant application on behalf of the Town of Sharon in collaboration with the Energy Committee. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Nicola provided an update on the MERP grant funding that will open to municipalities in 2024. The funding will be applicable to town halls, offices, libraries, and fire stations and new construction will be considered but only on a case-by-case basis. Nicola did let the Board know that the Town will need to apply for an Energy Resilience Assessment through the MERP program, and those applications will open Spring 2023. She also mentioned that the Town may not be a strong candidate for the funding, but TRORC is encouraging all Towns to apply regardless. Mary Gavin asked if a previous Energy Audit could be used. Nicola thought not, but she would investigate it.

Nicola asked if she should continue to pursue the Robert A. Sincerbeaux grant through the Preservation Trust of Vermont for a Conditions Assessment for the Old Town Hall. This is initiated with a site visit from a Field Service Agent, likely Jackson Evans. \$500 max, with

about \$1000 – 1500 expenditures for conditions assessment. The Board agreed that it would be appropriate to move forward with the grant process.

Nicola said Sue Sellew was wondering about applying for the Cultural Facilities Grant for the flooring repairs in the Old Town Hall. Nicola suggested it might be worth waiting until after the Conditions Assessment is complete. The Board agreed that waiting would be their preference.

Nicola said she and Frank are working to apply for the VTrans Paving Grant which is due April 15th.

Nicola also spoke with a candidate interested in serving as a “per diem” Animal Control Officer today. He has submitted a cover letter and resume and appears to be well qualified. He is available to meet with the Board on April 17th, so Nicola will make sure he is on the agenda for that meeting.

The Town of Pomfret is wondering if the Town of Sharon would be interested in pursuing the possibility of a shared Constable. Kevin Gish said he would follow up with the Town of Pomfret to find out more about what they are looking for and what the best next steps might be.

Nicola reminded the Board that Ian MacKenzie will be available to meet with the Board on April 3rd to review the culvert plans for the Downer Road culvert replacement, and he can provide any updates from the State if there are any.

Nicola also shared that the Library Trustees are looking into grant funding specifically available to Libraries. Nicola thought after looking briefly at the descriptions of the purpose for the grants that the library drainage project might be an acceptable project for this type of grant. Mary Gavin said it would be appropriate to continue with the Needs Assessment that is due on March 30th as that does not commit the Town to anything but might create an opportunity for the Town.

Nicola also mentioned that the Planning Commission will be sending some names to the Selectboard for appointments to the Planning Commission/DRB and those should be available in April, hopefully in time for the April 3rd meeting.

Nicola also reminded the Board that the Planning Commission is holding the Town Plan Hearing on Tuesday, March 27th, 2023 at the Sharon Elementary School.

7. Review/Approve Minutes

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the Organizational Meeting Minutes from March 8th, 2023 as presented. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

The Selectboard tabled review and approval of the Annual Meeting Minutes to the April 3rd meeting.

8. Approve Warrants: Selectboard

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1450 in the amount of \$19,279.29 with payments to State of VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation \$1,125, Blue Cross Blue Shield \$4,698.59, Bethel Mills \$434.97, Cargill Inc. \$7,515.54, Chase Site Services \$5,090.00, Compucount \$245.19, Cott Systems \$170.00. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1451 in the amount of \$6,656.40 with payments to De Lage Landen Financial \$94.53, EyeMed \$63.68, Evans Motor Fuels \$5,132.03, Fifield Electric \$965.45, Foley Services \$183.42, The Herald of Randolph \$107.88, Howard P. Fairfield \$109.41. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1452 in the amount of \$3,116.73 with payments to Joe Robinson \$125, Key Communications \$137.52, LHS Associates \$816.40, Magee Office Products \$172.26, New England Truck tire \$183.23, ATG Westminster \$464.39, R.C. Brayshaw \$1,203.50, Royal Auto parts \$14.43. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1453 in the amount of \$2,012.70 with payments to Sabil and Sons \$309.15, Suburban Propane \$789.15, Tasco Security \$602.00, Ted Green Ford \$100, Tarrant, Gillies, and Shems \$104.40, Valley News \$108. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1454 in the amount \$21,369.85 with payments to VLCT Property and Casualty \$10,148.85, VLCT Employment \$121.00, Windsor County Sheriffs \$11,100. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1455 from the Old School House Fund with a single payment in the amount of \$1,248.40 to VLCT Property and Casualty \$1,248.40. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to ratify payroll for the pay period 2/26/23-3/11/23 with a cash draw of \$22,180.31. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to ratify the HRA warrant for the period from February 21, 2023 – February 28, 2023 in the amount of \$658.37. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. HealthHUB ARPA Funding Request

Bob Frenier and Becky Foulk made a presentation and made a second ARPA-funding request of \$50,000 on behalf of HealthHUB. HealthHUB is looking to provide adult dental services in the area and is seeking funding to get the program off the ground.

Mary Gavin asked several questions including that if \$50,000 was allocated, knowing that Sharon would not be able to commit to such a large sum, what guarantee would there be that HealthHUB would not return for funding in Year 2 of the program.

Bob Frenier responded that the fact that there would be no ARPA funding available would mean that HealthHUB would not be able to ask for funding in Year 2.

Joe Ronan felt the answers provided by HealthHUB about the financial forecast were not clear, and so he also asked how HealthHUB would operate on a go-forward basis. Joe felt he was still unclear as to whether the program could be self-funding or not.

HealthHUB representatives responded that the new medical management technique for treating caries is sound, and the number of treatments possible per hour is higher than using traditional methods. At the current Medicaid reimbursement rates, HealthHUB feels confident they will be financially self-sustaining after Year One.

10. ARPA Survey Results

There was a brief update from the ARPA Working Group to explain the results of the ARPA survey thus far. Deb Jones asked for ideas on how to move forward. Mary Gavin asked if there could be specific projects and dollar amounts listed for each category to determine how the funding might be allocated.

11. Certification for Annual Financial Plan – Town Highways

Mary Gavin made a motion to certify the Annual Financial Plan for FY24 Town Highways as presented to be submitted to the State of Vermont. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. Review Town Meeting 2023 and Discuss Considerations for Town Meeting 2024

Tabled until 4/3/2023.

13. 3W0862-5 Minor Notice and Draft Permit for Sharon Academy

John Roe gave an update to the Selectboard explaining why the minor notice was issued.

The Selectboard has no objection to the Act 250 Permit amendments and the Selectboard will take no action.

14. Letter of Support for South Royalton Rescue Squad Project

Mary Gavin asked if the Selectboard would offer to sign a Letter of Support to be included with the SRRS application for Federal funding. The SRRS is seeking funding to assist with building crew quarters and an ambulance garage. The Selectboard members agreed that since the Town has authorized funding for the SRRS building exploration, it would be appropriate

to issue a Letter of Support. Mary will provide a template for Nicola Shipman in advance of the April 3rd meeting.

15. Permit Applications for Culvert #41 on Downer Road

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize Mackenzie Engineering to file the Stream Alteration Permit Application with the \$200 application fee on behalf of the Town of Sharon. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish asked if the Town would reimburse MacKenzie Engineering for the \$200 permit fee. Nicola Shipman said those are the terms of the agreement.

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize MacKenzie Engineering to file the Army Corps of Engineers Permit Application on behalf of the Town of Sharon. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

16. Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) Annual Report Filing

Mary Gavin made a motion to certify that the Town of Sharon is compliant per the MRGP Annual Report 3-9040 as presented and to authorize the Finance Manager to issue payment of the \$1,125 permit fee required to file with the State. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. Appointments

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint the Conservation Commission as the Green Up Day Coordinator for a one-year term from March 2023 – March 2024. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to appoint Nathan Potter as the Emergency Operations Director for a one-year term from March 2023 – March 2024. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to appoint Keith Lyman, Jr., and Becky Owens as the Emergency Co-coordinators each for a one-year term from March 2023 – March 2024. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

18. Other Business

No other business.

19. Adjourn

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to adjourn at 8:25PM. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Submitted by Nicola Shipman