

**Sharon Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 1st, 2023 FINAL**

Participants attending In Person: Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair; Ryan Palmer, Windsor County Sheriff

Participants attending via Zoom: Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk; Mary Gavin, Selectboard Vice Chair; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Catherine Sartor, Town Clerk; Deb Jones, Treasurer; Christian Pelletier, White River Partnership

Call to Order:

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:29pm

1. Review/Approve Agenda:

Mary Gavin made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

3. Selectboard Member Reports

Mary Gavin and Sarah Pfeiffer did not have anything to report. Kevin mentioned that he attended an invasive barberry pulling party on April 22nd at the Ashley Community Forest. The party was an effort to manually pull plants, avoiding the use of pesticides. Kevin said that twelve people showed up, but only two from Sharon - Kevin and Rob Stainton. Kevin wanted everyone to know there will be more pulling sessions in the future, and they need more volunteers to keep the barberry at bay. Mary suggested putting out the dates of future pulling parties well in advance. Kevin assured her that all information about the parties has been posted on the Sharon Listserv and will continue to be moving forward.

Kevin reported that he and Nicola Shipman attended a meeting with Jan Lewandowski on April 28th at the Old Town Hall building to discuss repairs. Jan suggests moving forward with the ramp repair to divert water away from the foundation. Jan also recommends proceeding with any indoor repairs that are needed (such as framing) and suggests putting in trap doors to ventilate the crawl space.

4. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont did not have anything finance related to the report, but she did want the board to be aware that one person had applied for the road crew position. Kevin Gish suggested passing the application onto Frank Rogers, Road Foreman. Lucy also mentioned that Nicola Shipman had posted the position in several different places.

5. Selectboard Assistant Reports (provided in writing by Nicola Shipman in advance)

Nicola reported that there were no Crack Sealing Bid responses. The RFP was reissued, and the new deadline is May 10th.

Nicola said she spoke with Derek Kenison, the contact at VTrans supporting the Town through the TAP Scoping Study Grant process. The Town received the fully executed agreement on 4/28/2023, ahead of schedule.

Derek recommended having a plan for hiring a municipal planning manager as that would be the next best step. Nicola's recommendation to the Board would be to hire TRORC as the MPM. Derek agreed that he would strongly encourage working with Rita Seto on this project as she is a valuable resource and experienced in this kind of project. He also said it tends to be a more cost-effective way to hire an MPM unless you do it in house, which we don't have capacity to do. Nicola has also experienced the extreme value Rita has to offer the Town. Derek said there is a process for hiring the RPC, but it would not require going out to bid. The budget submitted with the grant application included the cost of paying an MPM as it is a requirement of the funding, so we do have the funding to cover the cost.

The Cemetery Committee received a quote for tree removal in the Howe Hill Cemetery. Cole Hull said he would mark the three trees they are recommending for removal with flagging tape, so that it is obvious which trees should be removed. There is one maple that has a split base, a seemingly dead cherry tree and an oak tree that is leaning over the cemetery. Based on the quote of \$7000 for removal of two trees, supplied by New England ZenScapes' Ray Rodriquez, a climbing arborist, the Town will need to go out to bid. Nicola will need to draft an RFP to go out to bid on this project. The Cemetery Committee intends to fundraise for the tree removal project, and the landowner where the project is located is in support of the project. As a plug, the cemetery committee is hosting an event in collaboration with VOCA on May 20th.

Jan Lewandowski came to assess the Old Town Hall building. He will send a written report, but in the meantime, he is recommending creating more air flow in the basement with vents which could be added into the front of the building when the ramp is in progress. Nicola will need to make some changes to the Ramp RFP to include some of his recommendations in the scope of work and reissue with the new deadline.

6. Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers said he didn't have much to report other than everyone was going about their daily jobs and hoping for the rain to stop.

7. Review/Approve Minutes

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the minutes from April 17th, 2023 with minor changes. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Approve Warrants

Kevin asked Frank to clarify why we purchased aluminum wheels. Frank said it was so that we would have a set for summer and a set for winter. **Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP warrant 1468 in the amount of \$5,774.55** with payments to Consolidated Communications \$123.22, Cott Systems \$170.00, Petty Cash \$253.28, Evans Motor Fuels \$2,624.16, Fisher Auto Parts \$2,400, Deb Jones \$203.89. **Mary Gavin seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP warrant 1469 in the amount of \$1,455.19 with payments to Foley Services \$122.28, Green Mountain Power \$941.32, Haun Welding Supply \$83.71, Madison National \$226.17, Magee office products \$81.71. **Mary Gavin seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.**

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP warrant 1470 in the amount of \$11,684.18 with payments to Mascoma Savings Bank \$9,274.66, Northeast Delta Dental \$552.10, Pike Industries \$1,511.18, Royal Auto Parts \$23.97, Sabil and Sons \$270.27, Valley News \$54.00, VLCT \$70.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP warrant 1471 in the amount of \$8,416.14 with payments to VMERS \$3,672.66, Windsor County Sheriffs \$4,590.00, Worksafe \$153.48. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP warrant 1472 in the amount of \$363.09 with payments to Big Green T's \$210, Brandilyn Frary-Stewart \$153.09. **Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to ratify payroll for the period of 4/9/23-4/22/23 with a cash draw of \$16,094.14. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

9. Sheriff's Department Update

Ryan Palmer started off by pointing out that this was day 90 of his term. He said that during that time, the Windsor County Sheriff's Dept has received 133 calls for Sharon, many of which were traffic stops.

Ryan wanted to highlight a few calls of note: The Sheriff's Dept responded to a person who was struggling with mental health issues and substance abuse and had been dropped off at the Town Hall. The officers were able to diffuse the situation. The officers also helped a different person who was struggling to find housing. Ryan mentioned officers also responded to a domestic assault call and helped calm a Maplefields customer who was causing issues in the store.

Ryan cited a recent Valley News article, stating that it highlighted the vision the Sheriff's Department is trying to push forward. Ryan said he would like to see the calls for service to be covered for 12-16 hours a day.

Mary Gavin asked Ryan if there was a law that would give either his department or the Selectboard the authority to deal with abandoned vehicles. Ryan said there would probably need to be a village ordinance in effect and used the Town of Windsor as an example. Ryan said his department will enforce our ordinances per our contract.

Kevin Gish wondered about increasing services to towns. Kevin asked Ryan how he envisions being able to respond to 911 calls from Sharon residents. Ryan said that he will need time to evaluate and might have to come up with some creative solutions.

Mary asked if there was more or less drug activity, and how much of it was dangerous. Ryan responded that property crimes, etc., in more rural areas like Chelsea, Tunbridge, and somewhat Sharon have gone up due to a lack of police presence and an uptick in stimulants.

Mary noted that she had been seeing lots of unregistered vehicles and wondered if that was related to these crimes. Ryan said some people are finding ways to print temporary registrations/ plates from DMV. He agrees that it causes issues but assured the Board that his department is trying to be proactive. Ryan said that his department is trying to make lasting improvements by working with kids, helping people who require services, and being proactive as police. Kevin asked if Ryan's officers have body cameras. Ryan said they have had them since March 1st.

10. Letter of Support White River Partnership Route 14 Project

Christian Pelletier joined to discuss the river access improvement project on Route 14 near Academy Drive. Christian said that Sam Brakeley has been hired to install steps across from TSA. Mary asked if the town must provide funding. Christian said it is all being covered by a grant. Mary asked if it has been confirmed that the town owns that location. Mary wondered if the town owns the land, why has no one discussed improving it. Christian said he will double check and get back to the Board. Mary asked if we should just merge the access points together to have larger access. Christian said there is a big enough bar between them to keep them separated.

Mary made a motion to authorize the Selectboard members to sign a letter of support for the White River Partnership River access improvement project. Kevin seconded. The motion was approved by all.

Kevin asked if the Broad Brook deal was dead or just on hold. Christian said they want all parties to be happy, so they will have bigger conversations about it and will find a way to make it work.

11. Sand Bids

Frank Rogers said he is looking to get approval for winter sand from D&D and 3/8" stone from Pike. He also wants to know who the Board wants to use to truck the material. Mary said it should go out as an RFP. Frank said D&D will be the cheapest. Mary said that the procurement policy requires an RFP. Mary asked if Frank felt the quantities of material were sufficient. Frank said that he still has material left over from winter and is trying to stay within budget. Kevin asked why we would substitute the Supergrit for 3/8 stone. Frank said the 3/8 stone is the same product as Supergrit, just a different shape. Frank said he is confident that it will mix in and be fine.

Mary made a motion to approve 2,500 yards of winter sand from D+D for \$10 a yard, and 2,000 tons of 3/8 stone from Pike for \$9.75 a ton. Mary wanted it to be known that this does not include hauling. Kevin seconded. The motion was passed by all.

12. Culvert #41 Project on Downer Road

Mary asked if there was a delay with easements. Frank said there was.

Mary Gavin made a motion to authorize Frank Rogers and Nicola Shipman to draft and sign a Notice to Proceed on behalf of the town once the necessary permits and easements have been secured for the Culvert #41 Replacement project on Downer Rd. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion was passed by all.

13. Appointments

Mary Gavin made a motion to appoint David Karon as Representative and Clare Holland as First Alternative to the Governing Board of the East Central Vermont Telecommunications District, each for a one-year term, and to agree to sign the resolution provided as required by 30 VSA Chapter 82. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. The motion was passed by all.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to appoint Galen Mudgett as E911 Coordinator for a one-year term as required by 30 V.S.A. §7056. Mary seconded. The motion was passed by all.

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint Ryan Haac, Dee Gish, Jill Wilcox, and Zach Stremlau to the Energy Committee, each for a one-year term. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion was passed by all.

Mary Gavin made a motion to appoint Ryan Haac as the liaison to the IREC Steering Committee for a one-year term. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion was passed by all.

14. ARPA Funding

Deb Jones joined to report on the ARPA survey results. Deb said the survey is now closed and the results are in the Dropbox folder.

Deb mentioned river access being high on voters list but notes that there may be an overlap with that category with the White River Partnership and doesn't want to duplicate efforts.

Deb asked where the Board would like to reach out for the Arts category.

Deb also noted that there may be an idea regarding a meeting space by the end of the month, and she also mentioned that the Town can reach out to people who indicated they would like to be involved to get more input if need be.

Mary Gavin asked what might fit for the Community Health category. Deb said the Sharon Health Initiative, the HealthHub Dental Program and South Royalton Rescue are the groups that have presented ideas to the Board.

Deb asked if there were any updates on river access, and Mary mentioned the project on Route 14 and how the intention is to put in steps and a kiosk at that location. Kevin Gish mentioned that the White River Partnership/River Alliance would hopefully help with river access. Mary wondered if there was a need for more access points, or if people just weren't aware of the ones that already exist.

Regarding community health, Deb said that the Town should reach out to organizations that are already established. Mary said that ARPA funds should not go toward ongoing appropriations. Deb mentioned the Maplefields AED cost should go into the Community Health line of the budget.

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize the purchase of a fourth AED unit, of the same make and model that was previously ordered, for the Maplefields store in Sharon and the funds for this will be taken out of the ARPA Community Related Projects funding line. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. The motion was passed by all.

Kevin Gish asked if there were other community health ideas. Frank Rogers mentioned upgrading town radio systems. Kevin said he thought we were already pursuing that through some other channel. Deb Jones asked how much that would cost. Frank said he didn't know. Kevin asked if Frank ever got an estimate. Frank said there were certain names needed regarding the Baxter Mountain tower and now that they are known, he can reach out and get estimates.

Deb Jones asked if we had an advisor on town building conditions. Mary said that there is an advisor for the Old Town Hall. Kevin commented that the TRORC advisor was more about energy assessment and stressed the need for a general maintenance person. Mary mentioned that Jeff Grout talked about looking at the whole building for potential repairs, such as asbestos, lead, etc.

Deb brought up that she had drafted an RFP for a remodel/ new building for the highway garage but would like guidance on how to move forward. Mary Gavin asked Deb to share the draft with the Selectboard and then sit down with Frank Rogers to create a wish list. Frank shared his concern about the site being suitable. Kevin reminded everyone to not necessarily think about the building we have now, but more about what we want moving forward. Deb said she will circulate an RFP for viewing/ editing.

Finally, Deb brought up that she has been the designated employer representative for drug and alcohol testing for the town, but the Board might want to have Lucy Pierpont as the representative instead. The Board will review the appointment at the next meeting.

15. Other Business

No other business.

16. Adjourn

Mary Gavin made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 pm. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Pfeiffer, Selectboard Clerk

