

**Sharon Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 15th, 2023 FINAL**

Participants attending In Person: Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair

Participants attending via Zoom: Sarah Pfeiffer, Selectboard Clerk; Mary Gavin, Selectboard Vice Chair; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Ira Clark, Town of Sharon TRORC Regional Board Member; Galen Mudgett, Head Lister

Call to Order:

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

1. Review/Approve Agenda:

Mary Gavin made a motion to accept the agenda with a change to strike Item 21 - Executive Session. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

3. Selectboard Member Reports

Sarah Pfeiffer said she attended a Steering Committee meeting co-hosted by the Energy Committee and Vermont Council for Rural Development on May 8th. Sarah shared that there will be an in-person community-wide conversation on June 8th at the Sharon Elementary School at 5:30PM. Sarah said there was a significant effort being made to get broad participation from as many residents as possible.

Kevin Gish reported that he attended the Ashley Community Forest Board meeting.

Kevin also noted there is a conversation around bringing the Town government and the School Board together to have conversations about future capital projects that have been identified as priorities (such as a Town Garage capital project, possible sidewalks, and a possible school expansion), as these large-scale projects would have an impact on taxpayers. The members agreed that communication and big picture planning is important, especially when considering the impact on residents and taxpayers. Kevin shared that the School Board Building Committee has invited the Selectboard and the Planning Commission to attend the next building committee meeting on June 1st at 5:30PM and he is able to attend. The purpose is to create open lines of communication between the Town and the School Board.

4. Finance Manager Reports

The RFP for Sand Hauling has been issued and the deadline for proposals is May 31st. There have been no additional applications for the Road Crew opening, but Lucy will be posting the position in the papers and on local listservs and noticeboards.

Lucy said the Designated Employee Representative training is offered on the second Thursday of each month. In the meantime, the Selectboard can appoint Lucy as the DER, and she can attend training the next time it is offered.

Lucy sent the Board the April YTD Balance Sheet as well as the Budget-to-Actual for the Highway Fund and the General Fund.

In her report to the Board, Lucy noted that she updated the projections for both the General and Highway funds. Projections included an increase of \$30,000 for anticipated delinquent taxes collected based on Town receipts to date. Lucy anticipates that the General Fund and the Highway Fund will come in at or below what was budgeted.

Lucy asked if there were any questions. The members did not have any questions at this time.

Kevin Gish asked if Lucy was planning to take the Designated Employee Representative training. Lucy confirmed she is planning to take that training as soon as possible.

5. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Nicola Shipman let the Selectboard know that Jack Jones anticipates starting exterior building repairs for the Town Office on Wednesday this week. Nicola noted that funds for this work are available as this has been planned for in budgeting conversations, and the cost has been accounted for in a Building Reserve Fund schedule.

Nicola reported that the Conservation Commission shared that they have purchased a Parsnip Predator and two Pullerbear Tools to aid in the control of invasive plants. These tools will be available through the library for residents to “check out” to help with managing invasive plants.

Nicola reported that the Town Attorney attended a status conference today for a case currently ongoing in environmental court. The plaintiff has been instructed to provide the court with more specific information and there will be another status conference on June 19th.

Nicola researched the requirements in response to Selectboard concerns about Legal Trails conditions in the Town during Mud Season. Nicola said that the Town would need a Legal Trails Ordinance should the Town wish to have any authority to close Legal Trails to vehicular travel during mud season; Nicola also said she is still working on identifying a Class 3 roads that serve one residence in collaboration with Galen Mudgett. Nicola will provide mileages/total miles of those roads so the Board can evaluate costs for maintaining those roads.

Nicola said she attended the TAC meeting on Thursday May 11th in Bethel and noted there is a new state grant, the Small-Scale Safety Improvement Grant, specifically designed to improve rural road safety, was announced last week. The deadline for application is June 16th; Nicola and Frank will be looking to see what projects are already on Frank’s safety list that might qualify. The grant is for projects over \$5,000 with a maximum award of \$35,000. Funding will cover a range of safety-related improvements including signage and road markings and removal of permanent objects from the Town Right of Way such as trees.

Nicola also said that Doris Backus visited the Town Office to share with the Selectboard that the Sharon Congregational Church governing board voted on May 7th to move forward with removing pews and taking steps toward opening their building as a multi-use space. Nicola also said that she anticipates the Church will also bring forward an ARPA request to assist with furnishing that space.

Nicola also mentioned that the Baxter Memorial Library has received a Free Library, and Karen Rodis, representing the Library Board, had requested in an email that the Selectboard consider installing the Free Library near the municipal offices in conjunction with the anticipated kiosk that will be going up this spring/summer.

Following up on Sarah Pfeiffer's report about the community meeting in June, Nicola noted the community meeting is being organized by VCRD and a steering committee of town residents with the support and leadership of the Energy Committee. The event will be on June 8th at 5:30 pm at Sharon Elementary School and will be funded using MERP mini grant funding, which was awarded to the Town and is being administered by the Energy Committee.

Finally, Nicola shared that the Planning Commission responded to the Selectboard request to consider the optimal size of the body, and she received their information via Andrea Morgan today. Andrea also wanted the Board to know that she is working on the Historic Village Designation renewal, and she will need the Selectboard to assist with that application at the first meeting in June.

6. Road Foreman Reports

No reports from the Road Foreman.

7. Review/Approve Minutes

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve the minutes from April 24th, 2023. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the minutes from May 1st, 2023. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Approve Warrants

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP warrant 1474 from the Old School House Fund in the amount of \$3,301.00 with payment to Town of Sharon \$3,301.00. KG seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1475 from the REC in the amount of \$377 with payments to Wind River Environmental \$250, Stateline Sports \$127. Kevin Gish seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1476 in the amount of \$10,395.04 with payments to Aubuchon Hardware \$50.1, Capitol Steel \$90.85, Community Bank \$8,505.83, Compucount \$181.95, De Lage Landen Financial \$94.53, Deb Jones \$53.30, EC Fiber \$151.00, Evans Motor Fuels \$1,203.73, EyeMed vision care \$63.68. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1477 in the amount of \$8,184.98 with payments to Foley Services \$122.28, Green Mountain Mowing \$503.33, Jan Lewandoski \$500.00, Key Communications \$137.83, NEMRC \$5,425.00, Pike Industries \$1,363.71, Royal Auto Parts \$51.54, Sanel Auto Parts \$81.29. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1478 in the amount of \$42,439.07 with payment to Sharon School District \$42,439.07. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made motion to approve AP Warrant 1479 in the amount of \$9,020.26 with payments to South Royalton Rescue \$7,473.84, Southworth- Milton \$331.64, Tarrant, Gillies & Shems \$67.20, Twin State Sand & Gravel \$219.14, Valley News \$295.20, Viking-Cives \$574.80, WB Mason \$58.44. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratify the HRA warrant for the period of April 4/1/23-4/30/23 in the amount of \$1,403.44. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion ratify Payroll for the period 4/23/23-5/6/23 with a cash draw of \$16,847.02. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. Request for Grand List Filing Extension

Galen Mudgett joined the meeting at 7:20PM. Galen notified the Selectboard that Lister's Office is asking for a 30-day extension for filing the Grand List. Galen indicated that the State has had some issues with the rollout from NEMRC to the new VTPIE software system and has recommended the Listers apply for a 30-day extension.

Mary Gavin made a motion to authorize Chair Kevin Gish to sign the PVR-4342 Grand List Extension Request as requested by Head Lister Galen Mudgett. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Dog Registration Reporting

Cathy Sartor shared that the Town Clerk is required by statute to submit a list of unregistered dogs to the Selectboard by the end of May. Cathy also noted that it is incumbent on Selectboard to decide what to do with the information provided to them, but there is a Dog Ordinance on the books in the Town as well as State statute available for enforcement of dog registration requirements. Cathy said that her offices have sent reminder letters to all households that she knows of with unregistered dogs, and the clerks have also made follow-up phone calls to remind people to register their dogs.

Nicola Shipman will contact the Town's new Animal Control Officer, Jim Armbruster, to ask how he recommends the Town should move forward with the list of unregistered dogs to encourage residents to register their dogs.

11. Old Town Hall Review

Ira Clark joined the meeting at 7:24PM.

Kevin Gish reported on the conditions assessment process performed by Jan Lewandowski on the Old Town Hall building in collaboration with funding support from the Preservation Trust of Vermont Robert Sincerbeaux matching grant.

Nicola Shipman will reach out to Jan Lewandowski to confirm that his estimate for the flooring replacement costs is as reported (\$35,000-\$45,000 estimated repair costs).

Nicola asked if the Board would be interested in moving forward with reissuing the RFP for the ADA Replacement Ramp with the added components suggested by Jack Jones and Jan Lewandowski to include the West drainage improvements as well as the ventilation in the basement suggested by Jan Lewandowski.

The Board agreed that it made sense to make those changes and reissue the RFP with those additions.

12. TAP Scoping Study

Mary Gavin made a motion to identifying Two-Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission/Rita Seto, Senior TRORC Planner, as the Municipal Project Manager for the TAP Scoping Study project. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Nicola Shipman will reach out to Derek Kenison of VTrans to see how to formalize that selection with VTrans.

13. Designate Employer Representative

Mary Gavin made a motion to appoint Lucy Pierpont as the Designated Employer Representative and Deb Jones as the Alternate for the Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing as required by the VT Department of Transportation. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

14. Town Offices Lighting Upgrade

Kevin Gish made a motion to hire Tilden Electric to complete the 2023 Town Offices Lighting Upgrade project in conjunction with the Efficiency Vermont Commercial Rebate program with the total anticipated project costs not to exceed \$2,516.24.

15. Dental Benefits Plan Renewal

Mary Gavin made a motion to renew the Delta Dental Benefit Plan 7 with individual rates set at \$35.98 per month, 2 persons at \$67.76 per month and 3 or more persons at \$120.44 per month as provided through VLCT for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30th, 2024. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

16. Crack Sealing Bids

Mary Gavin a motion to award the Crack Sealing Contract for FY2023 with the total amount not to exceed \$12,000 as per the FY2023 Highway Budget to Sealcoating Inc. D/B/A indus and authorize Chair Kevin Gish to sign the Letter of Agreement. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. The Ranger

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve local road access for The Ranger Bike Event on Sunday, June 11th between 10am – 12 noon using Town of Sharon roads outlined by the event coordinators. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

18. Initial Discussion of Town Plan 2023

Kevin Gish provided an overall review of the Town Plan adoption process so far and noted that the Selectboard now has the Transmittal Draft from the Planning Commission. The Selectboard needs to review the document to provide feedback, and the Selectboard will need to hold a public hearing that must be warned 15 days in advance.

The Board will consider offering June 12th for a Public Hearing to get the Plan to TRORC before summer, but Nicola Shipman will reach out to Two-Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) to see if that timeline is feasible.

Once the Town Plan has been finalized at the municipal level, it will be passed along to the TRORC Regional Board at which time they will review the plan for acceptance.

19. Executive Session

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to enter executive session for the purposes of the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) at 8:12PM. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Mary Gavin made a motion to exit executive session at 8:24PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

No action was taken.

20. Other business

No other business

21. Adjourn

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to adjourn at 8:26 pm. Mary Gavin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Nicola Shipman