

**Sharon Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 20th, 2023 FINAL**

Participants attending in person: Kevin Gish, Chair; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Sue Sellew, Sharon Historical Society; Dave Phillips, Sharon Historical Society

Attending via Zoom: Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Ryan Palmer, Windsor County Sheriff

Attending via phone: Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Call to Order:

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

1. Review/Approve Agenda:

Kevin Gish made a motion to accept the agenda with Item 15 removed. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

3. Selectboard Member Reports

Kevin Gish reported that he will attend the Green Mountain Economic Development Council meeting next week. This will focus primarily on housing and childcare in Vermont.

4. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont noted that the first half of the audit was finished and it went smoothly. There were no issues with the audit, and the second half will be conducted in the fall. Lucy also reported on the Budget to Actual for May, and she noted that both the General Fund and the Highway Fund were under budget to date. The General Fund is under budget by roughly \$57,000 at this point. The Highway Fund currently about \$16,000 under budget, but with the hiring of a new road crew employee, that Highway surplus will shrink before the end of the fiscal year. Lucy noted that the new road crew candidate had signed their offer letter and their first day is scheduled.

Kevin Gish noted that the revenue for traffic violations was significantly below what was budgeted in FY23, but he also felt that model for policing in the Town is changing. The Town will likely see a reduction in that revenue line moving forward, and this should be considered during budget process next year.

5. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Nicola Shipman reported that the Baxter Memorial Library/Sharon Elementary joint drainage project timeline will be pushed back. The engineers identified late August as the earliest time they could proceed with design work.

Nicola shared that the Cemetery Committee is working to remove two trees from Howe Hill Cemetery. The Town will coordinate with the Vermont Old Cemeteries Association as they can receive restricted funds from private donors on behalf of the Town so that the funds can be made available for that specific project. Nicola has requested quotes from three arborists.

Nicola shared an update from Joyce Dion letting the Board know that the first weed harvest of the CCC pond was complete. Joyce noted there is evidence that the harvest is smaller than last year because of weeding efforts.

Finally, Nicola mentioned there was new information transmitted earlier in the day from the Town attorney regarding ongoing litigation in Environmental Court. The Board decided to revisit the case details with a possible executive session at the end of the meeting.

6. Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers noted that the crew was able to get back out to grade the roads since the rain over the weekend created some issues that needed to be resolved.

Frank also said that he was waiting to hear from Avery Excavation regarding the start date for the Culvert project on Downer Road.

Frank asked if the Board would agree to hire an excavator with operator to assist with some catch up on ditches and culvert replacements. The road crew has been short a staff member and it will take time to train a new employee so there is a need for more experienced operators to get work completed over the construction season. Sarah Pfeiffer asked if Frank and Lucy Pierpont could meet to identify the best funding source for that in the FY24 budget, and the Board will revisit the question at the July 3rd meeting.

7. TAP Scoping Study

Nicola Shipman provided background on the TAP Scoping Study process, as well as an overview of the At-the-Ready Consultant Selection process.

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint Nicola Shipman as the Municipal Representative in Responsible Charge for the TAP Scoping Study project. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to proceed with the At-the-Ready Consultant Selection process for the TAP Scoping Study. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Review/Approve Minutes

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the minutes from May 15th, 2023. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the minutes from June 5th, 2023. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the minutes from June 6th, 2023. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the minutes from June 8th, 2023. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the minutes from June 15th, 2023 with two minor changes. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. Approve Warrants

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1491 in the amount of \$4,784.35 with payments to Aubuchon Hardware \$125.67, VT Conservation Association \$50.00, Blue Cross Blue Shield \$3,962.57, Bethel Mills \$209.98, Casella Waste Systems \$108.13, Dave Phillips \$328.00. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1492 in the amount of \$1,673.43 with payments to De Lage Landen Financial \$94.53, Disa \$40.00, EC Fiber \$79.00, Evans Motor Fuels \$535.13, Eyemed Vision Care \$63.68, Foley Services \$107.76, Green Mountain Mowing \$503.33, Granite State Glass \$250.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1493 in the amount of \$33,393.92 with payments to Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste \$1,287.50, James Armbruster \$17.88, Jack Jones Construction \$875, One Planet \$3,000, ATG \$156.33, Ryan Haac \$1,049.43, Sabil and Sons \$432.78, Sharon Firemen's Association \$26,575.00. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1494 in the amount of \$1,754.06 with payments to with payments to City Of Lebanon \$125.46, Suburban Propane \$539.50, Tarrant Gillies and Shems \$617.40, U.S.P.S. \$7.40, Valley News \$361.80, VLCT \$40.00, Mike Zwikelmaier \$62.50. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1495 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$259.51 with payments to Britani Frary \$150.00, Meagan Cray \$109.50. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion ratify the HRA Reimbursement for the period of May 1 – May 31, 2023 in the amount of \$1,481.62. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to ratify Payroll for the period of 6/4/23 – 6/17/23 in the amount of \$13,481.07. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Sharon Historical Society Update

Sue Sellew and Dave Phillips attended the meeting in person to share updates regarding the purchase of insurance, the status of the RFP that is currently waiting responses as well as to bring to the Board's attention a fundraising training opportunity the Historical society is looking into. This training could be supported through a grant administered by the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

11. Windsor County Sheriff's FY24 Contract

The Board discussed the proposed contract changes with Sheriff Ryan Palmer. Both Kevin Gish and Sarah Pfeiffer were amenable to the changes in how services were offered, but Kevin noted that he is curious to see how the new model will work. Kevin noted it seems to be more responsive-based service rather than the four-hour shifts model that was provided in the past. Sheriff Palmer indicated the department also intends to offer daytime and nighttime coverage as part of the service provided by the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Palmer indicated that there would be opportunity to provide more coverage to help the Town with speed enforcement on the dirt roads, particularly Fay Brook Road, Downer Road and Beaver Meadow Road.

Kevin Gish made a motion to sign the FY24 Windsor County Sheriff's Contract effective July 1, 2023 – June 30th, 2024 with the changes as presented. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. Planning Commission/DRB

Tabled to future meeting

13. ARPA Funding Update

Nicola Shipman and Frank Rogers suggested that the Board consider allocating ARPA funds for the purchase and installation of a booster antenna on the Baxter Mountain antenna to improve radio communications coverage for the Town Road Crew. Often crew members work solo in areas where there is no cell or radio coverage. The goal would be to create expanded radio service coverage for the crew, improving connectivity and safety. This could be a convoluted (and possibly expensive) process as it requires gaining access to the cell tower and there is a legal process that must be followed. A vendor has visited the site and will be providing a quote so the Town has more information about the project. Also, Nicola has a contact at American Tower. Without identifying a funding source, this project will not be feasible as we are projecting it would be at least \$20,000 for equipment and labor to increase the radio coverage.

14. Broad Brook Parking Improvements

Nicola Shipman provided an update regarding the revised location of the White River access parking improvements at Broad Brook Road. Christian Pelletier asked via email for approval to move forward with the alternative location, which had been revised in response

to objections raised by the Broad Brook Cemetery Association. The Board is comfortable moving forward with the alternative plan.

15. **Executive Session**

The Board initiated discussion about a case currently ongoing in Environmental Court, but soon realized they needed additional confidential information from legal counsel.

Kevin Gish moved that public discussion of ongoing litigation and legal strategy would place the Selectboard at a substantial disadvantage. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to enter executive session at 8:05 PM for the purposes of discussing confidential legal counsel provided to the body per 1 VSA 313(a)1. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Attendees to include Kevin Gish, Sarah Pfeiffer and Nicola Shipman. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to exit executive session at 8:15 PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

16. **Resume Open Meeting**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to instruct the Town's attorney to file a written motion to dismiss in the Environmental Court case. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. **Other business**

No other business

18. **Adjourn**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to adjourn at 8:15 PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Nicola Shipman