

Last Update: 11/9/2023

**Sharon Selectboard  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 FINAL**

Participants attending in Person: Kevin Gish, Chair; Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk; Scott Henkels, Vice Chair; Deb Jones, Treasurer; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Participants attending via Zoom: Ryan Haac, Energy Committee Chair

1. **Call to Order:**

Chair Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:33PM.

2. **Review/Approve Agenda**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of Item 19 for a Contract Addendum and Item 20 for discussion of the Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) opportunity. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

3. **Public Comments**

None

4. **Selectboard Member Reports**

Sarah Pfeiffer reported that all municipal AEDs have been installed. The Maplefields AED is pending location confirmation from Maplefields.

Nicola Shipman noted employees who would like to train on the use of AEDs may wish to consider online training through the American Red Cross.

Kevin Gish provided a report on the school expansion project. The School Board is looking to put the question of a \$9 million bond to the voters in Spring of 2024.

5. **Finance Manager Reports**

Lucy Pierpont presented the two options for under/uninsured motorist liability coverage available to the municipality through PACIF. PACIF currently offers coverage as either a \$250,000 per occurrence or a \$10 million motorist coverage limit. The annual cost difference between the two options is minimal.

**Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize Lucy Pierpont to secure under/uninsured motorist coverage for the Town with the \$10 million coverage limit as offered through the Town's insurance provider, PACIF. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Lucy also noted that the Town Treasurer, Deb Jones, secured better interest rates for the Town's investments/savings accounts which has generated \$13,000 in unanticipated revenue since July.

6. **Road Foreman Reports**

Frank Rogers reported that the Road Crew has finished most of the mowing for the season.

Frank also noted that he and Brad would be attending a training with information regarding a new 4-wheel drive system for highway trucks that is becoming available.

Frank listed the Flood Repair projects that are either completed or due to be completed in the next week, including paving repairs on Route 132 and bank stabilizations on Broad Brook Road and Quimby Mountain Road, as well as anticipated repairs to a section of Quimby Mountain Road in early November.

There was also some discussion about how the Town might consider contracting out additional plowing and sanding work for municipal highways over the winter since the Town currently has three full-time road crew members.

Frank Rogers and Nicola Shipman will work to develop an RFP to release in time for winter plowing season if needed.

#### **7. Selectboard Assistant Reports**

Nicola Shipman noted that the Town Offices painting project and the ADA ramp project are currently on hold. She will reach out to the contractors to find out if there is a plan for completion this calendar year.

The Efficiency Vermont Lighting upgrade is nearly completed at the Town Offices.

Nicola noted that the Town has not yet been informed of the date for the MERP Level 2 Energy Assessments.

Nicola attended the Scoping Study Kick Off with representatives from VTrans, Rita Seto, the Municipal Project Manager from TRORC as well as representatives from Fuss and O'Neill.

Nicola shared that next item of business is to hold a Local Concerns meeting which is scheduled for Monday, November 6<sup>th</sup> as an agenda item for the regular Selectboard meeting. Nicola will be working with TRORC to disseminate this date and time broadly to ensure maximum participation from a range of community members.

Nicola shared that Frank is working to get an estimate for bank stabilization work on Fay Brook Road to see if we can get a realistic number for a repair rather than mitigation. This repair may not require engineering. Frank is working to get that before the meeting with FEMA on October 26<sup>th</sup>. The Town will be required to sign the Damage Inventory Report by October 30<sup>th</sup>, so Nicola, Frank and Lucy are working to ensure the Report is accurate prior to that deadline.

Nicola also noted that the Town is heading into budget season, and she will provide a schedule of meetings leading up to Town Meeting 2024 within the next week or so.

Nicola shared that the Planning Commission submitted the 2023 Town Plan to the Regional Board; the plan was accepted, and a Certificate of Energy Compliance was also issued.

Nicola received an update via email from Ryan Haac regarding the EV Bus and charging infrastructure. The school district in collaboration with Ryan, has found a way to implement a lower-cost solution, so the EV Charging infrastructure for the EV Bus can remain on school grounds.

Finally, Nicola reported that VLCT is hosting a municipal budgeting webinar offered on the 25<sup>th</sup> which is a valuable opportunity just in time for budget season.

**8. Review Minutes:**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the October 2<sup>nd</sup> minutes with changes. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the October 9<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**9. Sungen Proposal Review**

Ryan Haac presented information and background regarding the offer presented to the Town by the owner of Sungen. While there was significant discussion, the Selectboard does not feel equipped to fully understand the pros and cons of this kind of purchase, and the Town would need significant guidance from an outside consultant to evaluate the risks and possible benefits more fully.

The Selectboard thanked Ryan for his thoughtful guidance. Ryan will reach out to the owner to communicate that the Town would need to do additional research to ascertain whether this is a viable project for the Town to pursue or not.

**10. HRA/Health Insurance Premium Employer Contribution Caps**

There was considerable discussion of Health Insurance plans. Lucy Pierpont noted that costs have increased by just over 14% for 2024. Lucy presented financial models using a range of employer contribution caps for the Board to consider.

The Selectboard discussed the actual costs for health insurance in recent years versus what the Town had budgeted for health insurance expenses in previous years. The Board noted that while the Town has relatively few employees participating in the Town's plans, the budget must be flexible enough to allow for unanticipated events, such as hiring a new full-time employee or qualifying life events that would affect existing employee coverages. The Board also weighed how different employer contribution caps could affect the overall projected employee costs and the effect on their overall take-home pay.

**Scott Henkels made a motion to offer full-time employees Small Group Health Coverage from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont for calendar year 2024 offering a Medicare Supplement along with Vermont Preferred Gold and Silver Plans, Vermont Select Silver CDHP Reflective and Bronze Plans, and Standard Silver CDHP Reflective and Bronze CDHP Plans.**

**The funding caps for these plans will be:**

- **Blue 65 Medicare Supplement combined with reimbursement for Part B and Part D with a total cap of an \$800 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2,200 HRA cap.**
- **Single level caps will be an \$800 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2,200 HRA cap.**
- **Two-person level caps will be a \$1,430 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2,750 HRA cap.**
- **Adult & Child(ren) level caps will be a \$1,373 monthly premium cap and an annual \$2,750 HRA cap.**
- **Family level caps will be a \$1,945 monthly premium cap and an annual \$3,000 HRA cap.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**11. Downer Culvert #41 Approval of Revised Scope of Work**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve an additional \$10,062.00 for costs incurred by Avery Excavation, Inc. due to unanticipated bedrock which required removal during installation of Culvert #41 on Downer Road to be paid from using the Structures Grant funding. Scott Henkels approved. Motion approved unanimously.

**12. 2023 -2025 Municipal Plowing and Sanding Contract**

Kevin Gish made a motion to award a two-year contract to the lowest and sole bidder, Chase Site Services, Inc., for municipal Plowing and Sanding effective November 1, 2023 – April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 with the total amount per occurrence not to exceed \$862.00 per the bid submitted. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**13. FY23 Grants-in-Aid Municipal Invoicing Sheet**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to sign the FY23 Grants-in-Aid Municipal Invoicing Sheet as presented. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**14. Ashley Community Forest Board Budget Request**

The Board expressed their support of Ashley Community Forest Board's request to reallocate \$1,000 from Invasive Plant Control to the installation of a kiosk and a gate.

**15. Quimby Mountain Road Culvert Update**

Nicola Shipman presented some information from her discussions with FEMA and VEM as to possible grant funding sources for a culvert on private property that caused significant damage to Quimby Mountain Road.

There are very few outside funding resources available to the Town for this kind of work. The Town will continue to pursue options for this as well as identify if there are other private culverts causing similar levels of damage in Town over the winter. The goal is to have a plan for mitigating future damage before Spring of 2024.

**16. ADA Ramp for the Old School House**

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize the purchase of components needed to satisfy ADA-compliance for the Old School House with the amount not to exceed \$2,000 plus shipping costs to be paid for from the Old School House Fund. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**17. FEMA Damage Inventory Report Deadline: Nicola Shipman/Lucy Pierpont**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to authorize Nicola Shipman or Lucy Pierpont to sign the FEMA Damages Inventory Report for FEMA Event #4720DR related to the July 10<sup>th</sup> Flood Damages eligible for FEMA Public Assistance funding. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**18. Service Contract: Heating System Town Offices**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to sign the annual service contract with Brookfield Services for Program #1 annual maintenance of the Kohler generator with the amount not to exceed \$448. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**19. Contract Amendment for Site 2 Bank Stabilization on Route 132**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to sign a contract amendment with Avery Excavation, Inc. as presented. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**20. MTAP Participation**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to opt to participate in the MTAP opportunity through TRORC for municipal technical assistance. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**21. Warrants**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1545 in the amount of \$8,989.48 with payments to Arrow Central \$3,992.50, Aubuchon Hardware \$107.32, Blue Cross Blue Shield \$3,962.57, Brad Howe \$46.25, CED Twin State Electric \$450.00, Compucount \$185.31, De Lage Landen Financial \$94.53, EC Fiber \$151.00. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1546 in the amount of \$10,848.23 with payments to Evans Motor Fuels \$2,372.84, EyeMed Vision Care \$51.66, Foley Services \$150.94, Haun Welding supply \$105.00, Innovative Municipal Products \$5,471.80, James Armbruster \$37.00, Key Communications \$138.61, LaValley Building Supply \$540.38, Optimum Technical Solutions \$1,980.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1547 in the amount of \$25,617.48 with payments to Pike Industries \$4,139.31, Royal Auto Parts \$4.24, Sabil and Sons \$270.27, South Royalton Rescue \$15,496.46, Tarrant, Gillies, and Shems \$520.20, Treasury Operations \$260.00, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission \$1,500.00, Upper Valley Flagging \$3,427.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1548 in the amount of \$116,019.20 with payment to US Bank \$116,019.20. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1549 in the amount of \$6,552.66 with payments to Nicola Shipman \$195, Valley News \$59.40, VLCT Municipal Assistance \$10.00, VMCTA \$35.00, Windsor County Treasurer \$6,253.26. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1550 in the amount of \$147,062 with payments to Avery Excavation \$147,062. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1551 in the amount of \$17,710.00 with payments to Northwoods Excavating \$17,710.00. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1552 from the Old School House fund in the amount of \$764.49 with payments to Crystal Rock \$242.13, LaValley Building Supplies \$522.36. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the HRA Reimbursement warrant for 9/1/23-9/30/23 in the amount of \$678.41. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify Payroll for the period 9/24/23-10/7/23 with a cash draw of \$14,545.56. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

22. **ARPA Funding**

Nicola Shipman reported that the flooding sidelined the Radio Communications expansion project, but she will work to bring that back on the priority list so the Town can move forward.

23. **Other business**

On Monday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, the Selectboard meeting will be a hybrid meeting. The meeting will be held at the Sharon Elementary School Gymnasium not the Town Offices.

The meeting agenda will be adjusted to accommodate the Local Concerns portion of the meeting which will start at 6:30PM with the regular Selectboard business to follow at 7:30PM. Nicola Shipman will ensure the correct technology such as microphones, a projector and projector screen are all available for that meeting.

24. **Adjourn**

**Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to adjourn at 9:15PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted by Nicola Shipman