



**Town of Sharon
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
January 16th 2024 FINAL**

Attending In Person: Scott Henkels, Selectboard Vice Chair; Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Attending via Zoom: Sarah Pfeiffer, Selectboard Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk; Deb Jones, Treasurer; Sydney Steinle, TRORC

Call to Order:

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:32PM.

1. **Review/Approve Agenda**

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

2. **Public Comments**

No public comments

3. **Selectboard Member Reports**

Scott Henkels reported that he met with Joyce Amsden about the SHS collection at the Old Town Hall recently. Scott Henkels communicated that the Old Town Hall remains closed to the public and until repairs can be completed, no one will be permitted to enter the building unless there is another person present.

Scott reiterated that the two main safety concerns include the area beneath the stage and the southwest corner which also has a large, heavy vault. Scott said he and Joyce have roped off those areas, so they are inaccessible. Scott also noted that two preservationists were present at the to help Joyce assess the SHS collection and assist with preparations for document preservation and relocation.

Scott said he has asked SHS to develop a proposal for their relocation. He said that the SHS would first like to develop an inventory, so they can prepare their proposal for the move. Scott noted that the exterior ramp and drainage project are already slated for completion. The intent of the Town is to get those projects complete prior to any interior work starts. The Town needs to confirm that humidity levels are in fact under control once the ramp removal and drainage project is completed.

Scott Henkels said there is a possibility that Joyce will reach out to the Congregational Church to see if there is space available to store SHS items temporarily.

Scott noted that Joyce Amsden also agreed that there is a visible change in conditions of the flooring, especially near the state end of the building. Scott also reported he has installed a humidity sensor just below the hatch at the main entrance to discover what might be happening down under the building.

Kevin Gish reported that he spoke with Stephen Sanborn of SRRS, and the 2022 contract should be signed in a day or so and returned to the Town.

Kevin Gish also noted there were incidents of two ambulances showing up to the same location at the same time. Kevin said Stephen Sanborn thought this was more of a dispatch issue. Kevin also noted that SRRS has recently hired three additional staff members and are trying to fill one more vacancy. Kevin feels that the level of service at SRRS should be more sustainable now that they have more staff members.

4. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont reported on the December Budget to Actuals, and she noted she did not have any concerns with General Fund spending tracking at 50% of budget with about 50% the fiscal year complete. Lucy did note that while the highway is tracking slightly over budget for this time of year, with about 60% of budget spent for the year, truck repairs and the prepurchase of road materials have contributed to that higher spend.

5. Road Foreman Report

Frank Rogers was not present during this time as he was attending to the roads. Chair Kevin Gish tabled this item until Frank could be available to provide his report.

6. Selectboard Assistant Report

Nicola Shipman reported on items related to municipal buildings. She noted the new ADA ramp section required for the Old School House has been installed and seems to be working well.

She also reported that the Town Garage roof has been in poor condition for a while, and it does leak. Nicola noted the Town Garage is an old building in need of significant repairs, and given the delays in the MERP Energy Assessments, it may be beneficial to seek proposals for a roof repair/replacement for the near future.

Nicola communicated that there are significant safety concerns about TH-47 as the 0.05-mile Class 3 section of road is steep and on a blind curve with a dead end leaving no safe turnaround for the Town Road Crew. This means the operator is backing out of the TH-46 onto Downer Road at the blind curve. There have been near misses with traffic this winter alone. Since the Selectboard needs to select a new site visit date for the TH-46 discontinuance, Nicola suggested the Board also include a TH-47 site visit at the same time since TH-47 is on route to TH-46.

Nicola said that FEMA requires a signature to move forward with reimbursement for FEMA Project #730404 which covers the contracted bank stabilization repairs from the July flooding. With a 75% FEMA contribution estimated at \$42,877.50 and remaining non-federal share \$14,292.50.

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize both Nicola Shipman and Lucy Pierpont to sign off on FEMA projects as needed. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Nicola informed the Board that she sent a follow-up letter to a property owner regarding the culvert on Quimby Mountain Road including a request for an easement drafted by the Town Attorney. The Town is seeking landowner permission to control this culvert as though it would be part of the Town's culvert inventory. Nicola will follow up within the next week or so if there has been no communication from the landowner.

Nicola reminded the Board that on Saturday, February 10th, the Sharon Connects group is hosting a Sharon Skills Swap at SES.

Finally, Nicola shared that she needs all Town Report documents for 2023 Town Report ASAP as that project is due to the printer by February 8th. Nicola said she will put together bullet points for Selectboard to use for their report.

Frank Rogers arrived at 6:50PM

7. **Road Foreman Report**

Kevin Gish invited Frank Rogers to provide an update.

Frank reported that there have been issues with equipment and keeping the trucks functional. The Road Crew have been working to get the trucks back up and running, and three trucks are again available for sanding. Frank noted the Road Crew has been working for several days in a row to keep municipal roads plowed and graded, and they have been managing variable conditions and frequent storms.

Frank Rogers exited the meeting due to the ongoing snowstorm.

8. **Minutes**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the minutes from 1/2/2024 5:30PM minutes as presented. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the 1/2/2024 6:30PM minutes with minor changes. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. **Warrants**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1594 in the amount of \$4,656.71 with payments to Aubuchon Hardware \$73.94, Capital One Trade Credit \$509.90, Charlie Brown \$18.96, Chase Site Services \$183.00, Compucount \$366.29, EC Fiber \$151.00, Evans Motor Fuels \$1,862.29, EyeMed \$38.91, ATG Westminster \$1,452.42. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1595 in the amount of \$2,883.30 with payments to Foley Services \$113.70, Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste \$315.00, Key Communications \$139.80, Lucky's Trailer Sales \$180.99, Power Washer Sales \$957.19, Southworth Milton \$491.93, Tarrant, Gillies, & Shems \$594.69, Treasury Operations \$90.00. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1596 in the amount of \$12,301.85 with payments to Twin State Sand & Gravel \$3,763.35, Two Rivers-Ottauquechee \$3,097.50, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles \$68.00, Windsor County Sheriffs \$5,373. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1597 from the Old School House Fund in the amount of \$2,538.36 with payments to Crystal Rock \$160.96, Sharon School District \$2,377.40. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1598 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$2,000 with payment to Camp Downer \$2,000. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1599 in the amount of \$2,288.31 with payments to De Lage Landen \$94.53, Tom Honigford \$25.00, Frank Rogers \$156.25, Two Rivers Ottauquechee \$2,012.53. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1600 with payment to RCBrayshaw in the amount of \$207.03. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratify payment to Community Bank NA in the amount of \$8,399.94. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify Payroll for the period 12/31/23-1/13/24 with a cash draw of \$17,449.20. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion ratification the HRA for December for the period 12/1/23-12/31/23 in the amount of \$215.19. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. MTAP Presentation

Kevin Gish welcomed Sydney Steinle from TRORC. Sydney provided a comprehensive explanation of the program. Sydney also shared that she would continue to engage in conversation with the Town about projects that might be eligible for free technical assistance through MTAP.

Sydney highlighted that the purpose of MTAP is to provide support to municipalities looking to securing grant funding for municipal projects that meet the eligibility categories of the MTAP program.

Sydney outlined the eligibility categories which include:

- Water and Wastewater
- Housing
- Work force development, business support and community development
- Climate change mitigation and resilience
- Community economic development

Kevin Gish asked what the next steps for the municipality might be.

Scott Henkels asked if this is a one-time opportunity or if it is ongoing. Sydney said currently this is a one-time opportunity.

Sydney shared the goal set by the State is that statements of work between TRORC and the municipality would be completed by Spring and all the money would be obligated by summer.

Sydney also noted that creations of Capital Budget and Programs is also MTAP eligible

Deb Jones noted that the Town does have capital budgeting for highway infrastructure, and highway equipment that is already in place. Deb noted there is the seed of a capital budget for municipal buildings, but that could be better defined as the costs are outdated and could be refined.

Sydney said she will continue to gather information from the town staff and the Selectboard. The Selectboard has invited her to join the February 20th meeting.

11. Annual Highway Mileage Certificate

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to authorize the submittal of certificate of highway mileage for the year ending February 10th, 2024 as presented with no additions or subtractions of highway mileage. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. FY25 Budget Revisions

Scott Henkels made a motion to rescind the motion from January 2nd, 2024 to approve a FY25 budget with total municipal expenses of \$2,020,889, including highway and transfers, of which \$1,480,000 were to be raised in taxes and to instead approve a new FY25 budget with total municipal expense \$2,019,789 in expenses, including highways and transfers, of which \$1,480,000 shall be raised in property taxes. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

13. Ashley Community Forest Policy

Kevin Gish gave a brief overview of the Ashley Community Forest (ACF) Board's Management Policy as provided by the ACF Board. There was discussion about the Interlocal Agreement as well as the Town's procurement policy and the relationship to the management of the ACF.

Kevin Gish made a motion 1) allowing the Ashley Community Forest Board to manage any approved budget line items as needed and 2) requesting the ACF Board to first seek permission from each Town in advance should the ACF Board anticipate the need to exceed the total expenditures allowed by an approved budget. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the ACF Management Policy as presented by the ACF Board. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Nicola Shipman will provide the Town's procurement policy to the ACF Board members.

14. Executive Session: Personnel

Kevin Gish made a motion to enter executive session at 8:10PM for the purposes of employment per 1 VSA 313(a)(3) with attendees to include Kevin Gish, Sarah Pfeiffer, Scott Henkels, Lucy Pierpont Finance Manager and Deb Jones, Treasurer at 8:10PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to exit executive session at 8:25PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

No action taken.

15. ARPA Funding Solution Options

Deb Jones outlined the recommendations from the VLCT regarding the ARPA funding and how to use a Resolution to allocate the funding to the General Fund to preserve the funding and allow its use to support municipal projects.

Deb noted that about \$102,000 of Town of Sharon's ARPA funding has already been allocated

After detailed discussion about the ARPA funding and the possibility of allocating funding using the recommended resolution, Scott Henkels and Sarah Pfeiffer agreed that they would prefer to include the full amount of the funding in the proposed resolution, so that the Town does not risk losing the funding.

Based on recommendations from Deb and VLCT, the Board members discussed options for how to obligate the ARPA. The Selectboard instructed Deb to explore the option of how the Town might move forward with a resolution to allocate \$212,000 to the General Fund and \$141,000 to the Highway Fund.

16. Other business

No other business

17. Adjourn

Scott Henkels made a motion to adjourn at 9:01PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Nicola Shipman