



**Town of Sharon
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
February 5th, 2024 FINAL**

Attending In Person: Kevin Gish, Chair; Scott Henkels, Vice Chair; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Steve Basham, Town Moderator Elect

Attending via Zoom: Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Erik Skarsten, Conservation Commission Candidate; Deb Jones, Treasurer; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk

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

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 comment.

3. Selectboard Member Reports

Scott Henkels reported that he attended a Sharon Connects planning meeting, and the February 10th Skill Swap is being held in collaboration with the Sharon Energy Committee. Scott Henkels also reported that he has been confirmed as the Deputy Town Health Officer.

Kevin Gish asked Nicola Shipman for clarification regarding the insurance for the February 10th event. Nicola noted that any building owners hosting participants of Sharon Skill Swap could request a Certificate of Insurance from the Town as this is a Town-sponsored event.

Kevin Gish mentioned that he attended the Old Home Day Bingo Night and was impressed by the event.

Lucy Pierpont joined the meeting at 6:35PM.

Sarah Pfeiffer said that she has used up all her time off for Town Meeting 2024. Sarah had a concern as to whether it would cause a legal issue. Nicola Shipman said the Town Meeting planning agenda item would be an excellent opportunity to discuss along with any other Town Meeting related discussion.

4. Road Foreman

Frank Rogers was not available for this meeting, but Nicola Shipman shared that Frank Rogers wanted the Board to know that the highway department is holding steady, and he had nothing to report.

5. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont reported that as of today, there is \$978,122 owed for both tax payments (1st and 2nd installment combine) with \$945,000 in taxes outstanding. CoreLogic payment of \$200K came in last week and just over \$200,000 of tax payments were processed today. The due date for the second installment of taxes is on or before February 14th at 6:00PM

6. Selectboard Assistant Report

Nicola Shipman provided updates regarding the Town Buildings, including the Old Town Hall and questions posed by the Sharon Historical Society. Nicola also provided updates regarding grant funding opportunities for public libraries focused on ADA accessibility and public internet accessibility.

Nicola reported that the Personnel Policy has gone through the drafting process and is ready for legal review.

Based on discussion with Frank Rogers and TRORC, Nicola is also recommending the Selectboard does not pursue MTAP technical assistance for Bridge 9, a three-sided box culvert on Quimby Mountain Road. Nicola noted that the Town will still need to repair a retaining wall at this site as there are no reliable sources of grant funding for the full replacement project, which is estimated to be over \$600,000, not including engineering costs.

Regarding the privately-owned culvert on Quimby Mountain Road, Nicola said she is still waiting for guidance from ANR and TRORC as to the best way to move forward and whether to secure a temporary versus permanent easement.

TH-46 and 47 Site visit confirmed March 9th at 9AM; Nicola will be warning both this and the hearing this week with 30 days' notice.

Steve Basham arrived at 7:07PM

7. Warrants

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1606 in the amount of \$12,390.73 with payments to Andrea Morgan \$96.03, Cargill Inc. \$4,845.73, Chase Site Services \$4,074.00, Consolidated Communications \$137.84, Evans Motor Fuels \$1,839.70, Foley Services \$57.60, Green Mountain Power \$1,339.83. **Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1607 in the amount of \$1,523.37 with payments to Key Communications \$142.92, R.C. Brayshaw \$223.06, Royal Auto Parts \$23.31, Suburban Propane \$1,009.88, Valley News \$124.20. **Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Scott Henkels AP Warrant 1608 in the amount of \$148.96 from the Old School Fund with payment to Crystal Rock \$148.96. **Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1609 from the Downer Fund \$847.23 with payment to Pine Hill Cemetery \$847.23. **Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1610 in the amount of \$5,000 with payment to the South Royalton Area Senior Center \$5,000. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Conservation Commission

Chair Kevin Gish introduced Erik Skarsten. Erik has been attending meetings and he would like to contribute his time to the Conservation Commission.

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint Erik Skarsten to fill a vacancy effective immediately with term ending in March 2024. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. ARPA Funding Resolution

Deb Jones initiated the discussion, showing a change from last week, which includes the Payroll Budget for FY2024 and allows for documentation that payroll budgeted for FY25 is less than the ARPA funding that would be allocated for the Retention Resolution.

Cathy Sartor joined the meeting at 7:22PM.

Kevin Gish asked if the Resolution presented would be accurate. Deb Jones said there would be a report filed after March 31, but if between now and March 31, there could be a rescinding of the original resolution and a new resolution could be adopted if new information is made available to the Town.

Deb Jones also noted that the requirements of the funding would have been difficult to meet the timelines for fund obligations. This preserves the funds so they can be used for projects that are in the pipeline but will not be contractually obligated by Dec. 31 2024 and completed by Dec. 31 2026.

Scott asked about the impact of the resolution. Deb said this would be a “paper” move. The funds will be sitting in the money market account. After March 31st, the Town will report the status of the obligation resulting from the resolution.

Scott Henkels made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-01 for American Rescue Plan Act Allocation to obligate and expend SLFRF funds in the amount of \$354,565 for the purpose of municipal workforce retention divided as follows: \$212,739 in the General Fund and \$141,826 in the Highway Fund. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Town Meeting 2024 Preparation

Steve Basham, moderator elect, was recognized by the Chair Kevin Gish.

Discussion focused on the way in which Town Meeting will be conducted and answering any questions as to the format and responsibilities of each official. Kevin Gish noted that the Town Moderator runs town meetings as an independently elected official.

The Board decided that Kevin Gish will be responsible for delivering the Selectboard Report and Scott Henkels will be responsible for delivering the Budget Report. Sarah Pfeiffer will prepare an ARPA summary in advance of Town Meeting.

Steve Basham exited at 7:55PM.

11. Personnel Policy Legal Review

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to authorize an agreement with Stitzel Page & Fletcher PC for services related to Personnel Policy review due to staffing limitations at VLCT with a “not to exceed” hourly rate of \$200 an hour. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. Route 132 Emergency Relief

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize Nicola Shipman to sign the DDIR submitted by VTrans MAB for Emergency Relief funding reimbursement for repair projects completed on Route 132. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

13. Executive Session

Kevin Gish moved that premature public knowledge of the Town’s legal strategy would put the Town at a substantial disadvantage and Scott Henkels and Sarah Pfeiffer concurred.

Scott Henkels made a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing pending or probable civil litigation or a prosecution, to which the public body is or may be a party and confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body. 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1). Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to exit executive session at 8:13PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkel made a motion to designate Kevin Gish as representative authorized to answer and sign discovery requests related to 23-ENV-00020. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

14. Other Business

No other business

15. Adjourn

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to adjourn at 8:16PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Nicola Shipman