



**Town of Sharon  
Selectboard Meeting**

**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 FINAL Minutes**

Attending In Person: Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Kevin Gish, Chair; Scott Henkels, Vice Chair; Geena Baber, TRORC; Deb Jones, Assistant Finance Manager; Ken Wright, Collector of Delinquent Taxes

Attending via Zoom: Joe Ronan, Resident; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk; Sydney Steinle, TRORC; Nic Antal, White River Valley Herald

Attending via Phone: Frank Rogers, Road Foreman

Not in attendance: Sarah Pfeiffer, Clerk

**1. TH-46 and TH-47 Public Hearing [15]**

Kevin Gish called the public hearing to order at 6:30PM to resume the public hearing for proposed discontinuances for TH-46 and TH-47.

Kevin Gish asked if Joe Ronan wished to provide testimony related to the proposed discontinuances. Joe did not wish to provide testimony.

Kevin Gish asked Frank Rogers if he could explain the safety issue for the town highway vehicles and operators when accessing TH-47 (Butterworth Road).

Frank Rogers said that the sight lines are unsafe particularly because there is no turn around, and the municipal plow truck needs to back out onto Downer Road at a blind curve.

**Kevin Gish made a motion to adjourn the public hearing and enter deliberative session. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Kevin Gish and Nicola Shipman will work to generate the Selectboard's written decision which must be issued within 60 days from today, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

**2. Selectboard Regular Business**

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:42PM.

**3. Review/Approve Agenda**

**Kevin Gish motion to approve the agenda with Item 25 tabled. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

#### **4. Public Comments**

No public comments.

#### **5. MTAP Capital Budget and Plan Program Presentation**

Geena Baber of TRORC shared a presentation of the MTAP Capital Budget and Plan Program. Geena and Sydney Steinle, also of TRORC, helped answer questions posed.

Discussion centered around the Town's current capital budget and if/how that might be incorporated in the plan to eliminate redundancy and duplicate efforts and whether there might be a reduction of the scope of work so the plan would improve any areas where the Town might benefit from the additional technical support.

Sydney Steinle and Geena Barber exited at 7:05PM.

#### **6. Selectboard Member Reports**

Scott Henkels said he attended the VLCT's Selectboard Member Training. Scott shared that the VLCT recently released a new Model Rules of Procedure. The latest version may continue to be further refined over the next few months, so Scott said it would be valuable to consider adopting the new model Rules of Procedure in the future.

Scott also reminded the group that unless there is a change to the State law, Act 1, which currently allows for Fully Remote Meetings with no physical location, will expire on July 1, 2024.

Kevin Gish noted that at the Sharon Connects meeting, the group decided to coordinate a lunch in support of Green Up Day and in coordination with Dick Ruben.

Kevin Gish also noted that the Sharon Elementary School District is working toward a bond vote which will take place on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Finally, Kevin shared that the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District representative will need to be a Selectboard Member, so Kevin has offered to serve in that role. Scott Henkels agreed to serve as the alternate.

#### **7. Finance Manager Reports**

Deb Jones is the Assistant Finance Manager while Lucy Pierpont is on leave. Deb said that she is working to orient herself to where Lucy left off, so she does not have anything to report at this time.

#### **8. Road Foreman Reports**

Frank Rogers is anticipating a late spring storm. The ground is softer and wetter which will make plowing and highway maintenance more challenging.

Frank reported otherwise that the roads are in decent shape, and the crew is preparing for Wednesday and Thursday.

## 9. **Selectboard Assistant Reports**

Nicola Shipman reported that there may be technical assistance through MTAP for the Town according to an email from the Preservation Trust of Vermont. Nicola will reach out to Jackson Evans to discuss what might be available as it would be of benefit to receive technical assistance with the Old Town Hall repairs.

Nicola noted that only a single groundskeeping bid came in, and it is far outside the Town's budgeted amount. The Board will be able to review the bid at the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Nicola also noted with significant building repairs / concerns, there may be a need for more expert support of the buildings. The Town has not successfully hired a Property Manager for the buildings and grounds despite attempts. Also, there is not solid documentation of all systems nor a contractor in place who can readily provide routine or emergency repairs building systems. Nicola is hoping the Selectboard offices could help consider a solution that might allow for some technical support and capacity to help Nicola work through creating a "master plan" through a building committee, for example, or, as suggested, seeking out someone with expertise/capacity who could help provide support for creating and implementing a plan for the buildings.

Nicola also noted that the Town will need to readopt the LEMP by May 1<sup>st</sup>. which will come before the selectboard on April 15<sup>th</sup> for readoption.

Nicola recommends the Town seek legal counsel for the Aldrich Farm Road petition sent to the Selectboard. The process for reviewing a request to lay out a highway is more complicated and nuanced than a discontinuance as it involves ensuring accurate surveys, consideration of damages, and property ownership questions.

Nicola also raised the question of how to secure funding for two structures, one known as Bridge 9 and the other as Bridge 10. Both are three-sided box culverts, and both are located on Quimby Mountain Road. Nicola is working to see if/how the Town might be able to qualify for mitigation funding through the State, but they are not likely to be competitive candidates. The structures are undersized, but they did not sustain significant flood damage, even during Irene. Bridge 9 has a retaining wall in need of repairs and a wing wall that must be replaced and tied back into the structure and evidence of scouring that also needs repairs. Town replaced the failing wing wall for Bridge 10 in 2022. Even if the Town were to receive mitigation funding for one or both projects, the Town would need to meet the required 25% match. These two structures alone would cost upwards of \$650,000 each. This level of match has not been budgeted for. Nicola will continue to explore how the Town might find a way forward in collaboration with Deb Jones.

## 10. **Minutes**

Kevin Gish made a motion to accept the minutes from March 18th, 2024 with minor change. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**11. Warrants**

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify Payroll for 3/10 - 3/23/24 with a cash draw of \$20,902.78. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratify the correction to AP Warrant 1631 to change the payee from South Royalton Rescue to Corinne Ingraham in the amount of \$140.00. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made motion to approve AP Warrant 1635 in the amount of \$2,010.54. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1636 in the amount of \$7,829.68. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1637 in the amount of \$1,678.00. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1638 in the amount of \$59,259.75. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1640 in the amount of \$4,303.09. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1639 in the amount of \$13,475.86. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1641 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$1,364.75. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1642 from to the Old School House Fund in the amount of \$2,744.79. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**12. Collector of Delinquent Taxes**

Ken Wright, Collector of Delinquent Taxes, provided a detailed explanation of the process for how his office operates as it relates to the collection of delinquent taxes and the process for moving forward with a tax sale.

Joe Ronan asked a clarifying question regarding the overall tax delinquency amount owed to the Town at this time.

To provide a sense of what is owed in FY2024, Deb Jones reported that there are \$48,000 in outstanding taxes owed to the Town.

Joe Ronan asked what the total of all outstanding taxes currently owed plus interest plus penalty owed to the Town? Deb Jones noted that the current total owed to the Town is \$205,000.00.

**Kevin Gish made a motion to sign the letter of support as presented in support of a tax sale of seven parcels with at least two years of delinquent taxes owed to the Town of Sharon, additionally naming Scott Henkels as the agent of the Town. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **13. Sand Hauling Bids**

Deb Jones provided the Sand Hauling Bids for Selectboard review.

Frank Rogers would prefer the contractor to haul as much of the sand as the budget supports.

**Scott Henkels made a motion to award hauling bids to Chase Site Services at \$9.25 and increasing the bid amount of 2,000 yards to 2,500 yards hauled with delivery by November 20, 2024. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **14. MTAP Capital Budget and Program**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize signing of a Statement of Work with TRORC for a Capital Budget and Program Services with changes as requested by the Selectboard. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **15. 2024 Town Appointments**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to make the following appointments:**

#### **Conservation Commissioners**

Mike Zwikelmaier for a one-year term ending in 2025

Dick Ruben for a one-year term ending in 2025

Scott Chesnut for a two-year term ending in 2026

Dan Daneen for a two-year term ending in 2026

Sam Brakeley for a three-year term ending in 2027

Erik Skarsten for a three-year term ending in 2027

#### **Green Up Day Coordinator**

Dick Ruben / Conservation Commission as Green Up Day Coordinator for a one-year term ending in 2025

#### **Planning Commissioners**

Dee Gish to a three-year term ending in 2027

Paul Kristensen to a three-year term ending in 2027

#### **Flood Hazard Bylaw Administrator**

Geo Honigford to a one-year term ending in 2025

#### **Cemetery Committee**

Reappoint Cole Hull, Stacey Lober and Dave Phillips for a one-year term ending in 2025

**Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District**

Appoint Kevin Gish as the Sharon Representative Scott Henkels as alternate representative both with two-year terms ending in 2026.

**Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**16. Liquor Licensing**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve a First-Class Liquor License Application #39444 and Third-Class Liquor License Application #39647 as submitted to the State Liquor Control Board by Saddleback Bar Services. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**17. Ashley Community Forest Board: FY25 Budget Proposal**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the FY25 Proposed Budget which shows expenditures of \$11,500 and projected revenues of \$11,500. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**18. Baxter Library Drainage Plan**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Town of Sharon Baxter Memorial Library Drainage Plan. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**19. FEMA Mitigation**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to authorize Frank Rogers and/or Nicola Shipman to notify FEMA that the Town of Sharon does not wish to pursue mitigation funding for the Fay Brook Road Bank Stabilization project. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**20. AED at Seven Stars**

Kevin Gish will reach out to Seven Stars to see if they are willing to assume responsibility for the device as well as training if the Board decided to reassign surplus funding for the purchase of an additional AED.

Deb Jones will work to get a price on the cost of an AED for the Selectboard.

**21. Route 14 Camper**

Kevin Gish provided an update regarding an unregistered camper parked on the property on Route 14 across from the former gravel pit. At this point, Kevin noted that all records from the Town point to this being State property, though there were permits issued to the Sharon through the Conservation Commission in the 1990s that authorized the Town to make improvements to the river access. Kevin said the State is pursuing a notice of trespass, but he has not heard that any action has been taken at this time.

Scott Henkels said that he reached out to the Department of Environmental Conservation as well as Meg McCarthy at the Department of Health to understand what responsibility, if any, the Town Health Officer / Local Board of Health might have as there is concern that residents of the camper are dumping human waste into the White River.

Joe Ronan asked if there was a time limit that vehicles can park on State property and what the State eviction process might look like. Joe also noted there is a \$500 no littering sign on the property, and he is wondering if that is enforceable.

Nicola Shipman responded that she did not know the State regulations regarding vehicles parked on State property nor the State's policy for eviction, but she believes the littering notice was also posted by the State, and the Town does not have any ordinance regarding littering or any other ordinance that would be enforceable on State or even municipal property.

Additionally, Frank Rogers said the vehicle is parked outside of the highway right of way.

Scott Henkels said he would continue to explore what the Town might do from a health officer's perspective. The Town officials will remain in close contact with the State and the Windsor County Sheriff's Department.

## **22. Executive Session**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to enter executive session at 9:00PM** for the purpose of appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). **Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to exit at 9:44PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

No action taken at this time.

## **23. Upcoming Meeting Dates/Topics: Sharon Historical Society.**

In addition to questions regarding The Ranger, a Fire Safe cabinet, Narcan Boxes, and Groundskeeping Bids, Scott Henkels noted that the Sharon Historical Society would like to meet with the Board on April 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Old Town Hall repairs and project phasing.

## **24. Other Business**

No other business

## **25. Adjourn**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to adjourn at 9:49PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Nicola Shipman