



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Selectboard Meeting
July 15th, 2024 FINAL Minutes

In-Person Attendees: Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Ted Austin, Resident/Selectboard Candidate; Scott Henkels, Selectboard Vice Chair; Margaret Raymond, Resident/Selectboard Candidate; Alex Bird, Resident

Remote Attendees: Betsy Ritter, Resident; Sarah Pfeiffer, Selectboard Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Henry Pierpont, Guest; Grant Ritter, Resident; Elisabeth Newton, Resident; Bill Sowerwine, Resident; Dave Celone, Resident; Mark Neuroth, Resident; Deb Jones, Treasurer

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:34PM.

2. **Review/Approve Agenda**

Kevin Gish asked to add two items to the agenda including a request from the Sheriff's Department and a request from Old Home Day committee.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the agenda with addition of Sheriff's Department Item and Old Home Day Item. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. **Public Comments**

No public comments.

4. **Selectboard Member Reports**

No reports.

5. **Finance Reports**

Lucy Pierpont reported that both the General Fund and Highway Fund are looking to be underbudget for FY24. Wages shown in the report are the actual numbers for the fiscal year end.

Lucy said the fuel budget was under budget by \$17,000. She also highlighted that the Highway budget is projected to come in \$19,000 under budget.



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Lucy noted additional opioid settlement funding of about \$1,700 was received and another \$538 is on the way.

6. Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers reported that the resurfacing of White Brook Road is not complete, but otherwise the ditching and culverts project is finished.

Frank said the Town was lucky as it fared well in the latest storm with no damage to the roads reported.

Scott Henkels asked about the dust treatment for the roads. Frank said there has not been need for significant amounts of grading since the roads have been holding up, and there was no need for chloride. Frank did observe that there will be a return to grading in the next week or so.

7. Warrants

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1687 in the amount of \$12,776.85. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1688 in the amount of \$580.40. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1689 in the amount of \$18,050.25. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve Warrant 1690 in the amount of \$9,305.83. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve Warrant 1691 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$150.00. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve Warrant 1692 from the Old School House fund in the amount of \$50.00. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to authorize HRA Reimbursement Warrant for June 6/1/24-6/30/24 in the amount of \$213.22. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to approve Payroll Warrant for 6/30/2024 through 7/13/2024 with a cash draw of \$16,720.70. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Minutes

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the minutes from July 1, 2024 as presented. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. Conservation Commission

Kevin Gish provided a brief overview of the Conservation Commission's request that the Selectboard appoint Donna Foster as a Commissioner. Kevin noted Donna's experience with the Vermont Land Trust, and her connections to the local community.

Scott Henkels made a motion to appoint Donna Foster to the Conservation Commission to a three-year term effective immediately through March 2027. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Motion to Recess for Public Hearing

Scott Henkels made a motion to recess the regular meeting until 7:20PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

11. PUBLIC HEARING- Aldrich Farm Road (continuation from 7/1/2024)

Kevin Gish called the hearing to order at 6:59PM

Kevin Gish gave some background as to the process and noted that there were no members of the public present at the July 1st hearing, and so the Board decided to extend the hearing to give the public opportunity to give any final comments and/or testimony.

Betsy Ritter thanked the board for their assistance with the process and for the responsiveness of the Town.

Lee Simek noted that she did not have additional information to submit.

Mark Neuroth asked about the length of time for how long a petition could be valid. Kevin Gish responded that it would be difficult to answer.

Kevin Gish asked if the residents are still interested in pursuing Town highway acceptance given the road would need to be brought up to the standards in the Highway policy.



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Mark Neuroth responded that there was informal conversation among the residents of the road. Mark Neuroth responded that the residents do not wish to pursue Class 3 classification. There is additional conversation regarding whether to pursue Class 4.

Kevin Gish noted that the requirements specified in our Highway Policy are the requirements for new construction and would need to be met in order to be considered for acceptance as a Town Highway.

Mark Neuroth asked for clarification regarding private road adoption, and if they would need to meet or exceed the Class 3 classifications outlined in the Highway Policy.

Mark also requested that during the revision of the Town Highway Policy there is a clearer definition of the standards for acceptance.

Mark Neuroth noted that they were grateful for the time and effort spent by the Town Selectboard and employees.

Kevin Gish made a motion to adjourn the public hearing at 7:18PM to enter deliberations. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. Resume Regular Meeting

Kevin Gish noted that with the adjournment of the public hearing, the regular meeting reconvened at 7:18PM.

13. School Board Listening Session Questions

Kevin Gish recognized Alex Bird who was in attendance to ask questions regarding the School Board Listening Session.

Alex Bird noted that he reviewed the Selectboard agenda and the recordings from June 3rd in preparation for this meeting.

Alex provided observations based on his experiences from participating in meetings and from speaking with Sharon residents. He also voiced his thoughts regarding the school bond vote.

Alex said he feels the community has had opportunity to become well informed about the school bond vote.



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Alex provided a narrative regarding various alternatives that he heard discussed for the school building.

Alex noted alternatives at various points of the early phases included creating different storage solutions, using prefabricated buildings, fixing code deficiencies, and using the old elementary school. Alex is in favor of reducing the scope of the project.

Scott Henkels asked how Alex was defining the “Town” in reference to a comment Alex made that the “Town” was putting “all its eggs in the EEI basket.” The explanation Alex provided made it clear that Alex sees the “Town” in this case as the voters, rather than the municipal bodies.

Alex wanted to make the Selectboard aware that the School Board is working toward a consensus from various organizations in town to garner support for the bond vote.

Margaret Raymond asked Alex if he objected to that consensus building. Alex said no he did not. He wondered why it was not done before.

Nicola Shipman asked if Alex had any questions for the Board.

Alex said he wanted to make sure the Selectboard is made aware that this is a multidimensional issue, and he is concerned about the cost of the proposed bond, and he believes other residents are also concerned.

Alex then exited the meeting.

14. Community Survey

Nicola Shipman will work to mail the survey to registered voters with the revised deadline.

15. Selectboard Candidate Interviews

Kevin Gish opened the floor to the candidates for the Selectboard role to express their reason for interest in the Selectboard.

Margaret Raymond said she is interested in serving the town and helping its future. Margaret feels she is well qualified and understands the process of tax payments and how the listers function, for example. Margaret said she has over 30 years’ experience in the Town. Margaret noted she would be a female opinion rather than a male opinion. Margaret said having an appointment that is for a brief period would be an effective way to get to know the position before deciding whether to run for the position during election time.



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Ted Austin introduced himself to the attendees. He said up until recently he had a busy schedule but due to recent changes, he is more flexible. Ted said he is available to help and does not have a political agenda which he thinks is helpful.

Ted said he has lived in Sharon for three years, but he has been in Vermont since 1982 and has a varied set of experiences in life and work. Ted worked in the ski industry and has lived and worked in variety of locations.

Ted noted he was a director of the New Hampshire State Parks Association and is familiar with the Act 250 process due to his work with Okemo Mountain.

Ted said he is a “doer,” but he understands there is a process and respects that consensus is worth the effort.

Scott Henkels asked the applicants to clarify their eligibility regarding residency requirements and a registered voter.

Both candidates confirmed they are eligible for appointment.

16. Executive Session

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of the 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 at 7:59PM.

Kevin Gish made a motion to exit executive session at 8:05PM. Sarah Pfeiffer seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to appoint Ted Austin to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Sarah Pfeiffer effective as of 12:01AM August 1st, 2024 until an election is had. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. Windsor County Sheriff’s Request for Speed Trailer

Kevin Gish noted that the Sheriff’s Department is looking to purchase a speed trailer with estimated costs of around \$14,000. The Sheriff’s department is wondering if each Town could commit to \$1,000 for use of the speed trailer.

Sarah Pfeiffer said she thinks it is in theory a promising idea, but she would like to have more information.



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Scott Henkels said he feels the Sheriff is looking for words of support. Scott said he would be in support. But Scott also wondered if the Town could suggest times when it might be available, such as during Town events, and, if other towns also buy into the speed trailer at a future date and time, what it means for the Town that already paid in.

Kevin Gish will reach out to the Sheriff's department to ask for clarification.

18. Old Home Day

Kevin Gish said the Selectboard offices received a request from the Old Home Day to host the 132nd Old Home Days on Saturday, August 10th. The Selectboard is in favor of this event and supports the request.

Additionally, the Old Home Day planning committee requested a power source for Mac's Maple. There will need to be additional research as the Town buildings do not have exterior power available.

Old Home Days Committee also requested access to hang a banner and to place a sign on municipal property. Nicola Shipman will reach out to let the committee know they have permission for their signage.

19. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Nicola Shipman provided an update on the municipal building projects including the Old Town Hall and the Baxter Memorial Library construction projects.

Nicola also noted that the library asked if the Town could install lighting in the parking lot for visibility and safety, especially in the darker days of winter. The Town would first need to identify funding source. Nicola also noted Frank observed that with the drainage project, there will be a paving company in town to pave the access to the library. Nicola wondered if the Selectboard would be amenable to replacing the broken concrete pavers with asphalt for front of building entrance. Nicola also noted that this would not need to be decided imminently, but she would also raise it again when the bids are reviewed for the Drainage project.

Nicola said she is working to complete additional paperwork for TASCOS, so the Town can be included in the TASCOS schedule sooner rather than later.

The Town has purchased a digital recording device for Non-Advisory Boards to use to record meetings if needed. Nicola sees areas of challenge as the Town navigates the requirements of the new Open Meeting Laws and the coordination of meeting materials, so all information can be posted online within the mandatory deadlines. Nicola is coordinating for



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

now, but she hopes each group will eventually have capacity to do this independently once a new website is in place.

Nicola also noted she will be working to secure quotes for a website upgrade in the next few weeks for Selectboard review. Nicola is hoping for accessibility improvements as well as for ease of use with multiple users able to manage their own pages.

Nicola noted changes to state statute as it pertains to Humane Officers and Animal Control. Nicola said she connected with the Animal Control Officer to share information about those changes

Nicola reported that the Capital Improvement Plan is in progress, and Deb, Lucy and Nicola are working with TRORC to get that completed.

The Baxter Library Drainage Project Bids are due August 1st. Nicola has submitted the 1111 Permit application along with the fee, so now the Town is waiting to hear from the State. The paving contract has been sent for signature, and we are waiting for Pike to sign.

The TAP scoping study is moving along with a public session sometime in September and the contracted work should be completed within the year.

Nicola noted that ANR issued a permit for the Fay Brook Road bank stabilization, and the last communication from Northwoods indicated a project start date of Monday, July 22nd. Frank Rogers will reach out to Northwoods to confirm the start date, so the Town can post the road closures. There will be a section of Fay Brook Road that will be closed to all traffic.

20. Upcoming Meeting Dates/Topics

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, August 5th at 6:30PM.

21. Adjourn

Sarah Pfeiffer made a motion to adjourn at 8:33PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicola Shipman