



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Selectboard Meeting
August 5th, 2024 FINAL Minutes

In-Person Attendees: Kevin Gish, Selectboard Chair; Scott Henkels, Selectboard Vice Chair; Joyce Dion, Camp Downer/Resident; Frank Rogers, Road Foreman; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Elena Gaylord, Director of Camp Downer; Tom Weir, Resident; Emily Weir, Resident; Susan Root, Resident

Remote Attendees: John Lippman, Valley News; Catherine Sartor, Town Clerk; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Galen Mudgett, Lister; Ted Austin, Selectboard Clerk; Danielle Thibodeau, Resident; Laura Tatro, Resident

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

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

2. **Review/Approve Agenda**

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of the oath of office for new selectboard member, Theodore (Ted) Austin. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. **Oath of Allegiance and Oath of Office**

Swearing in of Theodore Austin, newly appointed Selectboard Member, as conducted by Town Clerk of Sharon, Catherine Sartor

Dated at Sharon, Vermont this fifth day of August 2024.

4. **Public Comment:**

No public comment

5. **GMP Update: Tim Brusso and Eric Lemery**

Kevin Gish recognized Tim Brusso and Eric Lemery, representatives from GMP. Tim Brusso noted that GMP has removed all the stumps in the Town's ROW/stormwater runoff ditches left from the River Road project.

GMP is working to continue to remove the remaining poles on Route 132 though progress has been made. GMP is waiting for the communications companies to remove their lines from the remaining poles.



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The GMP representatives noted that the River Road project was exempted from Act 250 permitting requirements.

The Town will continue to keep conversation open with GMP to work together to ensure communications poles are removed.

6. CCC Pond Transition Update

Joyce Dion said the existing weed removal permit required for the CCC pond on Downer Road will expire on January 5th, 2025. Joyce also introduced the Selectboard members to the Camp Downer Director, Elena Gaylord, who will be the new contact for permitting moving forward.

7. Vicious Dog/Domestic Animal Bite Hearing Procedures

Kevin Gish made a motion to adopt Vicious Dog/Animal Bite Hearing Procedures as presented. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to recess the regular meeting at 7:04PM to open the Vicious Dog/Animal Bite Hearing. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING (continuation)

1. Kevin Gish called the hearing to order at 7:04PM
2. Kevin Gish read aloud the victim's complaint regarding events that took place on Sunday, July 21st, 2024.
3. Kevin Gish administered oaths to those presenting testimony in the Animal Bite Hearing. Including Danielle Thibodeau and Tom Weir.
4. Kevin Gish asked if Tom had any questions about the procedures.
5. Kevin Gish asked if either victim or owner had any conflict of interests or ex parte communications. None were present.
6. Nicola Shipman explained the procedure
7. Kevin Gish offered the option to allow Tom to present further testimony.
8. Tom Weir asked to add verbal testimony in addition to his written report. Tom stated that on Sunday July 21st, he went to ClearChoiceMD urgent care. On Sunday July 22nd, it became clear that the rabies vaccine he received from the dog owner, Danielle Thibodeau, was inaccurate and the rabies vaccine was out of date. Tom was then referred to DHMC to receive the rabies vaccination series which is protocol when bitten by an animal. Tom noted he will need a series of three additional vaccines and nine immunoglobulins. Tom stated he could have avoided treatment if the dog's rabies had been up to date.
9. Kevin Gish invited Board members to ask questions.



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10. Scott Henkels asked a clarifying question regarding the events.
11. Tom Weir presented his testimony in response.
12. Ted Austin asked if this was the first time this had happened to Tom when walking past the house.
13. Tom Weir said it was the first time he had interacted with the dog.
14. Kevin Gish asked if the bite was provoked in any way.
15. Tom Weir said he did not think the attack was provoked, and he had never seen the dog in the road before.
16. Kevin Gish invited Danielle Thibodeau to respond to the testimony presented.
17. Danielle Thibodeau said she was in her front yard behind some lilac bushes, and she was startled when the runners passed. Danielle confirmed that Tom's account was accurate, and that Ziggy did enter the road. Danielle said the lilac bushes blocking the view have been chopped down so there are no more blind spots, and there will be a 5-foot fenced enclosure installed in the front yard. Danielle will ensure the collar for the electric fence will be always charged and on Ziggy. Ziggy was not wearing his electric collar when he left the property.
18. Kevin Gish invited the Board members to ask questions in response to Danielle Thibodeau's testimony.
19. Kevin Gish asked if the permanent fence is in process.
20. Danielle Thibodeau said she would add a permanent fence.
21. Danielle reported that Ziggy has an appointment on August 19th for rabies vaccinations, and all three dogs will be vaccinated and registered with the Town.
22. Scott Henkels asked for clarification regarding the rabies expiration date showing two different months of expiration.
23. Danielle Thibodeau said she was confused as to the date and was expecting the dogs to need their vaccinations in August.
24. Kevin Gish asked if anyone else had any additional testimony.
25. Kevin Gish administered the oath to Laura Tatro.
26. Laura Tatro said she was walking up Fay Brook Road about a year ago with a friend when three dogs surrounded them. Laura said there was a young boy that was screaming at the dogs, but he could not call the dogs off. Laura said it was a scary situation. Laura said she was told these dogs were being trained as "bite dogs."
27. Kevin Gish asked if any members had questions for Laura Tatro.
28. Kevin Gish asked for clarification as to where Laura was when this happened. Laura said she was close to Danielle Thibodeau's home when the dogs left the property.
29. Kevin Gish asked if there were any final comments or questions.
30. Tom Weir said he thinks this was lucky in some ways, as there were no children bitten. Tom also said he is glad there is now an animal bite procedure in place for the Town. Tom urged residents to bring animal concerns to the Town and the Town Animal Control Officer.
31. Kevin Gish asked if there were any final questions or comments from the Board.



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32. Scott Henkels asked Danielle Thibodeau if she has received complaints from others about her dogs.
33. Danielle Thibodeau said she has not had any complaints other than the call from Laura Tatro.
34. Kevin Gish asked if Ziggy is neutered.
35. Danielle Thibodeau stated that Ziggy is not neutered.
36. Ted Austin asked Laura Tatro if it was impression that these dogs are trained as guard dogs.
37. Scott Henkels asked the level of training.
38. Danielle Thibodeau said she had dogs in the past that were being trained as guard dogs, but the three at her home are family pets with just basic obedience training. Ziggy has had basic obedience training.
39. Kevin Gish noted the options available to the Selectboard are to adjourn the hearing to a future date and time or to close the proceedings with a motion and enter a private deliberative session. The Selectboard will then need to issue a written decision within thirty days of the hearing.

Scott Henkels made a motion to adjourn the Vicious Dog Public Hearing to enter private deliberations. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Susan Root asked a question regarding the Animal Control Ordinance.

Kevin Gish stated that there are two questions to be resolved including whether the attack was provoked or unprovoked.

8. Resume Regular Meeting

Kevin Gish noted that with the adjournment of the public hearing, the regular meeting reconvened at 7:41PM.

9. FY25 Tax Rate

Head Lister Galen Mudgett presented the options for tax rates to the Selectboard members.

Kevin Gish asked if people do not file their Homestead Declaration, does the Town need to raise additional funding to offset the Veteran's Offset? Galen Mudgett confirmed.

Deb Jones noted that \$0.8548 was the projected municipal tax rate used for FY25 budgeting purposes.

Kevin Gish asked Galen Mudgett for confirmation that the Selectboard would be voting on the municipal tax rate and the veteran's offset tax rate.



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Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the FY25 Municipal Tax Rate of \$0.8520 and a Veteran's Off Set Rate of \$0.0028. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Corporate Resolution

Deb Jones presented corporate resolutions for the Baxter Memorial Library. As treasurer, Deb requested Selectboard authorization for a Corporate Resolution naming the Treasurer as the authorized representative, so Deb is able to manage the stocks held in Trust for the Library.

Scott Henkels made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign six Corporate Authorizations Resolutions for Vodafone, AT&T, Lumen, and Teradata for the Town of Sharon Successor Trustee Baxter Memorial Library. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

11. Baxter Memorial Library Bid Review

Kevin Gish provided background on the history of the drainage project.

Scott Henkels made a motion to award the contract to Chase Site Services for the 2024 Baxter Memorial Library Drainage Project with Bid Alternate with a total not to exceed \$68,322.00. Ted Austin seconded.

Motion was rescinded due to technical difficulties.

Scott Henkels made a motion to award the contract to Chase Site Services for the 2024 for the Baxter Memorial Library with Bid Alternate with a total not to exceed \$68,322.00. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved 2-0-0 with Ted Austin not present.

12. Road Erosion Inventory Letter of Intent

Kevin Gish made a motion to sign a Letter of Intent. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved 2-0-0 with Ted Austin not present.

Ted Austin rejoined the meeting at 8:16PM

13. Resolution to Appoint Municipal Liaisons

Kevin Gish made a motion to sign the resolution to appoint Municipal Liaisons to the 2024 Paving Contract. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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14. Local Economic Recovery Grant Funding

Scott Henkels made a motion to authorize Nicola Shipman to submit the Local Economic Recovery Grant Funding Application on behalf of the Town. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

15. Change Order for Old Town Hall ADA-Ramp

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the change order as requested by Green Mountain Mowing to accommodate materials and labor required for adaptations of the ramp design in the amount of \$778.80. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

16. Painting Contract Extension

Scott Henkels made a motion to sign the amendment to extend the Exterior Painting Contract with Lacallades Professional Painting and Power Washing, LLC to Sept 30th, 2024 as presented. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. Selectboard Member Reports

Kevin Gish reported that Old Home Day is scheduled for August 10th, 2024 and the Sprouty is scheduled for the second Saturday in September.

Windsor County Sheriff's Department will be providing traffic control for both of those events.

Kevin Gish noted that the Food Shelf now has a no trespass order against an individual with an apparent weapon involved. Six police cars and nine troopers arrived within a short window to support.

18. Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers said the Road Crew has been conducting summer maintenance, including preparation for the 2024 Paving project.

Frank also said the crew has corrected an issue at the bottom of Academy Drive and installed an underdrain in preparation for paving the cutout.

Frank said the Road Crew is waiting to finalize the Better Roads funded ditching and culverts on Town Farm Road



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19. Finance Reports

Lucy Pierpont said the first part of the pre-audit started today. Lucy said she has ordered a credit card payment swiper today in preparation for in-office credit card processing so that the Town Clerk, the Treasurer and the Finance Manager have capacity to process credit cards. Lucy also reported that the Town has received \$7,000 of total Opioid Settlement funding since 2023.

20. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Nicola Shipman reported that Towns no longer are required to submit renewal requirements for Village Center Designations.

Nicola reported that she submitted two projects for Hazard Mitigation funding through the State, both located on Quimby Mountain Road.

Frank Rogers and Nicola noted there is a retaining wall and wing wall failing at Bridge 9 and recommend the Selectboard consider how to fund repairs at this location to prevent structural failure.

21. Executive Session

Kevin Gish 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) with attendees to include Selectboard members and Frank Rogers at 8:43PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to exit executive session at 8:52PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

22. Minutes

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the minutes from July 15th, 2024 with changes as noted. Kevin Gish seconded. Kevin Gish voted in favor, Scott Henkels voted in favor, Ted Austin abstained.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the minutes from July 30th, 2024. Scott Henkels seconded. Scott Henkels voted in favor, Kevin Gish voted in favor, and Ted Austin abstained.



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23. Warrants

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1695 in the amount of \$5,196.63. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1696 in the amount of \$23,975.91. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1697 in the amount of \$3,173.22. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1698 in the amount of \$6,241.65. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1699 in the amount of \$833.29. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1701 in the amount of \$10,169.45. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1700 in the amount of \$45,900. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1702 from the Old School House fund in the amount of \$220.00. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve payroll for the period 7/14/24-7/27/24 with a cash draw of \$19,588.43. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

24. Upcoming Meeting Dates/Topics

The next regular meeting is Monday, August 19th at 6:30PM.

25. Adjourn

Scott Henkels made a motion to adjourn at 9:12PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicola Shipman