



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Selectboard Special Meeting
October 21st, 2024 FINAL Minutes

In-Person Participants: Kevin Gish, Chair; Scott Henkels, Vice Chair; Ted Austin, Clerk; Frank Rogers, Road Foreman; Nicole Fox, Fuss & O'Neill; Jake Fowler, Fuss & O'Neill; Rita Seto, TRORC; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Reuben Sotak, resident; Joel Senger, resident; Fran Schmidt, resident; Jacob Steinbeck, resident; Ken Wright, resident; Jeff Demers, resident; Lara Ronan, South Royalton Rescue Advisory Board; Bob Stoddard, South Royalton Rescue Advisory Board; Dave Kimball, South Royalton Rescue; Jerry Barlow, South Royalton Rescue Advisory Board; Deb Jones, OSAC; Jack Jones, Jack Jones Construction; Sue Sellew, resident; Dee Gish, resident; Nic Antal, White River Valley Herald;

Remote Participants: Scott Cooney, Town of Hartford Fire Captain; John Haverstock, Town Manager of Hartford; Cathy Sartor, resident; Joe Ronan, resident; Ashley Denk, Resident

1. Call to Order

Kevin Gish called the meeting to order at 6:04PM.

2. Review/Approve Agenda

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

3. Scoping Study Alternatives Presentation

Nicole Fox of Fuss & O'Neill presented the proposed alternatives for the Town's consideration. The purpose of the study is to identify how the Town might work to calm traffic speeds in the village and provide safer options for walking and biking in the defined study area. The Town will need to select a preferred alternative, so Fuss & O'Neill can complete their final report. Completing a scoping study does not lock the Town into a particular solution as there would still need to be design work completed should the Town decide to move forward with construction. Fuss & O'Neill will also make recommendations for project phasing as well as recommendations for which funding sources could be available to the Town.

There was significant discussion and residents asked several questions about the alternatives including: the value of bike lanes in the village; the value of stop signs at the intersection of Route 14 and Route 132; whether road widening could increase the speed of traffic on Route 14; whether bump outs could be used; the functionality of flashing beacons and whether there are alternatives; the reasoning for stop signs versus traffic lights; whether there was consideration given to the number of entrances to Maplefields; the next steps for the Town and whether there would be grant funding



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available; how to manage potential loss of parking on Route 14; the value of curbing; and the timing for when the alternative would need to be selected.

Together, Rita Seto, Nicole Fox and Jake Fowler provided answers to these and other questions. *

*For more details, a complete [audio recording](#) for this Alternatives Meeting is posted online and the Fuss & O'Neill Alternatives presentation is also [available online](#) or by request

4. Ambulance Service Providers: Town of Hartford/SRR

Representatives of both South Royalton Rescue Squad and the Town of Hartford joined the Selectboard for a discussion regarding ambulance service in the Town of Sharon. Both SRRS and Hartford have contracted with the Town, but the Town of Hartford has a small service area covering ten residents on Sharhart Road and a portion of I-89.

A particular concern expressed by the Town of Harford is the Town of Harford seems to be absorbing an unequal level of what SRRS defines as mutual aid.

SRRS indicated that they are a one-ambulance organization with the desire to expand and add a second ambulance. SRRS leadership noted the SRRS ambulance had been out for repairs for three weeks in July which meant that while SRRS was able to provide first response, they were not available for ambulance transport. The Interim Director of SRRS prepared data with analysis and a written response to the Town's request for information about SRRS services

The Town of Harford Fire Chief Scott Cooney and Town Manager John Haverstock communicated their concerns regarding the number of calls Hartford is responding to outside of their defined service area, but rather inside SRRS' service area.

The Town and both ambulance service providers agreed to further review of actual service provided within the next sixty days, in recognition that there has been significant change in staffing at SRRS and there is an expectation that SRRS service will be more stable moving forward.

5. Driveway Permit Application

Tabled to November 4th, 2024 due to lack of details regarding the length of Deer Meadow Lane.



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6. Employee Health Insurance

Lucy Pierpont presented several different options to the Selectboard where she highlighted the different plans available to employees, the cost increases for 2025 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont health insurance plans, as well as practical solutions for cost sharing between employees and the Town.

7. Ashley Community Forest Board: Timber Sale Contract

Scott Henkels made a motion to sign the 2024 Timber Sale Contract with Robert Wilson, sole proprietor. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Old Town Hall Flooring Options

Jack Jones presented information regarding the Old Town Hall flooring renovation.

The Town and the SHS agreed to proceed with the plan to restore the Old Town Hall flooring to the original wide pine flooring and to maintain a display of the tongue-and-groove flooring to document the historic changes over time.

Sue Sellew of the Sharon Historical Society presented a service agreement for rigger services to move the safe in the Old Town Hall.

Ted Austin made a motion to authorize payment from the Old Town Hall Capital Campaign funds for a total of \$2,508.00 for services provided by Cote Riggers. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. OSAC Funding Request

Deb Jones presented a proposal for creating Necessities and Resources Backpacks with items included as suggested by the OSA Committee.

Scott Henkels made a motion to release Opioid Settlement Funding of up to \$1,300 for the Necessities and Resources Backpack projects as proposed by the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Cannabis Opt-In Vote Results

The October 15th, 2024 Cannabis Retail Opt-In vote resulted in 135 votes in favor and 137 votes opposed. Nicola Shipman reported that the Town received a petition today (10.21.2024) for reconsideration of the vote held on October 15th. This new petition was submitted within the 30-day period allowed and has been reviewed by Town Clerk Cathy Sartor as well as the Town's



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legal counsel. The Town has been advised it will need to hold a vote for reconsideration within 60 days of October 21st, 2024 to comply with State Statute.

11. Capital Budget Deadline: Extension Request

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve and sign Amendment #2 extending the deadline for the Capital Budget and Program Service Agreement to March 21st, 2025. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. Website Upgrade

Scott Henkels made a motion to sign a four-year agreement with Revize, LLC for municipal website services with an initial start-up cost of \$4,750 for the first year and \$2,200 per year for subsequent years, plus up to \$3 per page for content migration over two hundred pages, as outlined in the service agreement. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

13. Warrants

Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1743 in the amount of \$11,089.29. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1744 in the amount of \$12,108.26. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1745 in the amount of \$11,331.66. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1746 in the amount of \$5,147.20. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1747 from the Old School House Fund in the amount of \$260. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1749 in the amount of \$214.93 from the Town Clerk Grant Funding. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratify the HRA distribution for the period 9/1/24-9/30/24 in the amount of \$44.99. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve Payroll for the period 10/6/2024 through 10/19/2024 in the amount of \$17,216.54. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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14. Minutes

Tabled to the next meeting due to time limits.

15. Selectboard Reports

None.

16. Road Foreman Reports

Frank Rogers reported that there would be a crew member returning from leave on Monday next week, but another will be out for a three-week leave starting Wednesday.

Frank also provided an update on the Baxter Library Drainage project and tree removal.

17. Finance Manager Reports

Lucy Pierpont reported on the budget to actuals for FY24 and YTD as well as updates regarding postings for a vacancy in the Highway Department.

18. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Kevin Gish made a motion to sign a service agreement for annual generator maintenance with Brookfield Services with a not to exceed amount of \$443.00 per the agreement. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Nicola Shipman briefly reported on price changes at the Lebanon Landfill that the Town received as well as reminding that the Selectboard is entering the leadup to Town Meeting. Nicola has drafted a schedule for deadlines which she will present at the first meeting in November.

19. Upcoming Meeting Dates/Topics

November 4th at 6:30PM-Items for consideration: FY26 Budgeting; Carpentry Contract (11/30 expiration); Personnel; Highway Policies

November 5th GENERAL ELECTION DAY

20. Adjourn

Scott Henkels made a motion to adjourn at 9:30PM. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.