



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Selectboard Regular Meeting
November 18th, 2024 FINAL Minutes

In-Person Participants: Kevin Gish, Chair; Scott Henkels, Vice Chair; Ted Austin, Clerk; Allen Wight, Highway Supervisor; Nicola Shipman, Selectboard Assistant; Pirrette Maillet, Resident; Scott Chesnut, Conservation Commission Chair; Dan Daneen, Conservation Commission

Remote Participants: Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Jennifer Walker, Resident; Ryan Haac, Energy Committee Chair; Galen Mudgett, Head Lister

1. Call to Order

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

2. Review/Approve Agenda

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of Item 16. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment

Pirrette Maillet commented on the TAP Scoping Study and wanted to communicate whole-hearted support for sidewalk improvements.

4. Warrants

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1755 in the amount of \$15,249.18. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1756 in the amount of \$1,638.15. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1757 in the amount of \$4,091.30. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1758 in the amount of \$12,296.60. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1759 in the amount of \$6,316.94. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1760 from the Old School House Fund in the amount of for \$1,140. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve HRA Warrant 10/1/2024 – 10/31/2024 in the amount of \$1,591.02. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve the Payroll Warrant for the period 11/3/2024 – 11/16/2024 in the amount of \$15,288.03. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Minutes

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the minutes from 11/4/2024 with changes. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Selectboard Reports

Kevin Gish reported that the Ashley Community Forest is moving forward with their management plan.

7. Highway Reports

Chair Kevin Gish welcomed Allen Wight, the new Town of Sharon highway supervisor.

Scott Henkels asked whether there were any roads closed for winter. Allen confirmed that the Carpenter Road end of Dyer Road had been closed off to traffic, but there are no other roads that have authorized closures.

Ted Austin said he visited the Town garage and was impressed with how clean and well organized everything was. Ted felt the level of organization in the building reflected well on the team, particularly considering the challenges of the space and the issues they face due to the aging infrastructure.

Allen said everyone in the department understand the workspace needs to be organized to be efficient and effective.

8. Finance Reports

Lucy Pierpont highlighted that overall expenditures for FY25 were as expected and on track for the fiscal year, and she opened up opportunities for questions.



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Lucy also noted that the Town received the Class 2 Paving Grant funding reimbursement from VTrans for just over \$107,000 for the Route 132 paving project.

9. Selectboard Assistant Reports

Nicola Shipman shared that the Town received an estimate for repairs required for the Old School House heating system to ensure consistent heat to the building. These repairs are paid for directly from the Old School House fund, which is specifically designed for these kinds of systemic maintenance and repair costs. The fund reduces taxpayer burden as the funds come directly from the rental income.

Nicola reported that the Town did not receive any of the MERP funding for energy efficiency improvements to our municipal buildings, which was not a surprise based on the metrics used for funding awards, but it means there is no additional funding source identified to assist with the Town Highway Garage.

The Selectboard, when Nicola raised the question, agreed that the Town would absorb the cost of sidewalk clearing for the proposed sidewalk extension which will be installed during Park and Ride improvements. The cost quoted was \$50/per occurrence for the additional 200ft of sidewalk.

Nicola said the Town received the 50/50 matching funds for the ADA ramp from the Vermont Arts Council for the ramp that was installed at the Old Town Hall. Nicola reported she is still waiting to hear from Green Mountain Mowing regarding drainage on north side of the building. Nicola anticipates additional moisture remediation will be needed since the building is still showing high humidity levels.

Nicola reminded the attendees that the Cannabis Opt-In Reconsideration Vote is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10th. There will be time during to the December 2nd agenda to address questions if needed, and Nicola will generate an informational handout to help explain the reconsideration vote.

Nicola also raised the question of Legal Notice Fees brought forward by the Planning Commission. The Selectboard encouraged the Planning Commission/DRB to resolve this independently of the selectboard.

Nicola said that the Planning Commission has set a January hearing date for the public hearing required for their proposed Flood Hazard Bylaws changes.

Nicola provided an update on cybersecurity, particularly the importance of staff training in how to identify and avoid phishing and ransomware scams. Nicola also shared that the website migration is moving forward.



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The Baxter Library Drainage project is nearing completion, and Nicola is working on an easement through Town's counsel between the Town and Seven Stars.

Nicola said the line striping on Route 132 was completed thanks to VTrans District 4.

Finally, Nicola shared an update regarding the future of the Lebanon landfill. Nicola attended a virtual meeting hosted by VitalCommunities on behalf of the City of Lebanon. The purpose of the meeting was to start the conversation about the current conditions at the Lebanon landfill, the phased improvements/changes as well as what might be happening regionally/statewide in New Hampshire. The City also noted they anticipate projected cost for waste disposal at Lebanon's municipal landfill due to the cost of infrastructure investments required to keep the landfill functional and safe.

10. Fire Department Budget

Tom Lober brought forward the FY26 Fire Department Budget and raised questions about future capital improvements needed including siding repairs to the front facing side of the building and the garage doors. All five doors are original to the building and large.

Tom Lober raised the question of repaving the parking area at the Fire Station as there are drainage issues and likely it would not be best to pave over existing asphalt without first looking to solve the drainage issues.

11. Driveway Permit Application

The Selectboard reviewed the permit application submitted by Tamara Pinette and Jennifer Walker of 1816 Beaver Meadow Road.

The Town has identified trees the landowner will need to remove to improve sightlines. Allen Wight will mark the trees that need removal.

Scott Henkels wanted to make sure that the drainage from the driveway would not create any unintentional damage to the neighboring parcel. When he asked about culverts, Allen said no driveway culvert would be required as there is already a cross culvert that will minimize any water flow to the neighboring parcel.

Nicola Shipman will generate an addendum that outlines the permit conditions and send to the Selectboard for signature.



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Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the driveway application at 1816 Beaver R01176.R with as yet undetermined E911 address and under the following conditions: 1) all trees marked by the Highway Supervisor will be removed prior to permit issuance; 2) the Selectboard is allowing access due to the location of a gully that inhibits access via a shared driveway. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

12. FY26 Departmental Wages and Appropriations Requests

Lucy Pierpont presented proposals for FY26 Departmental Wages and the FY26 appropriations requests.

The only increased appropriations request came from the Sharon Health Initiative. The group will send a representative to the December 2nd meeting to discuss the appropriations request and the rationale for the increase.

13. TAP Scoping Study Alternatives

The Selectboard and meeting participants further discussed the proposed alternatives, identifying perceived strengths and weaknesses of the alternatives.

Dan Daneen, a bus driver for the school district, made a comment regarding traffic patterns and the challenges navigating the Route 14/ Route 132 intersection particularly when drivers park facing the in front of the Trading Post at night, as the sightlines become difficult.

Nicola Shipman will bring forward the questions raised to TRORC, Fuss & O'Neill and VTrans to see if she can get further clarity for the Selectboard and residents.

Scott Henkels made a motion to move forward with Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for the TAP Scoping Study project with the caveat that a three-way stop presents perceived challenges for motorists and pedestrians. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

14. Change to 2024 Grand List

Scott Henkels made a motion under the authority outlined in 32 V.S.A. § 4261, to approve changing parcel R05030R from an active parcel to an inactive parcel on the 2024 Grand List as requested by the Board of Listers. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Selectboard adjusted the agenda to discuss the Conservation Fund donation next since two Conservation Commission representatives were in attendance.



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15. Conservation Fund Donation to the Upper Valley Land Trust

Ted Austin made a motion to appropriate \$2,000 from the Town of Sharon Conservation Reserve Fund to the Upper Valley Land Trust as a restricted gift in support of the MyWalden fundraising effort. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

16. Building Maintenance/Service Contracts

Scott Henkels made a motion to sign the 2024-2025 Contract for Limited Services with Jack Jones Construction, Inc. as presented with note of gratitude that rates for the Old Town Hall Flooring project will remain at the 2023-2024 contracted rate. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to authorize repairs to the heating system at the Old School House as proposed. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. Upcoming Meeting Dates/Topics

- **December 2nd at 6:30PM-FY26 Budgeting; Appropriations**
- **December 7th at 8:30AM – 11:30AM Special Budget Meeting**
- **December 10th Special Vote for Reconsideration of Cannabis Retail Opt-In**

18. Adjourn

Scott Henkels made a motion to adjourn at 8:54PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.