



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Selectboard Regular Meeting
March 17th, 2025 DRAFT Minutes

In-Person Participants: Scott Henkels, Chair; Kevin Gish, Vice Chair; Allen Wight, Highway Supervisor; Ted Austin, Clerk; Nicola Shipman, Town Administrator

Remote Participants: Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; James Coe, Coe + Coe; Deb Jones, Treasurer

1. Call to Order

Scott Henkels called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

2. Review/Approve Agenda

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

3. Public Comment

No public comment

4. Coe + Coe Presentation

James Coe of Coe + Coe met with the Selectboard to review the existing conditions, discuss the preliminary plans as presented, as well as the preliminary budget for a six-bay Town Highway Garage.

Discussion was focused on the needs of the Highway Department while paying attention to the obligation to find solutions that will be palatable to the taxpayers. The Town is attempting to look at the project from a variety of angles. Solutions will need to be nimble, creative, and cost-effective to be able to accommodate the machinery, the equipment and the staff while also considering the constraints of the parcel.

Ted Austin asked if there were industry standards for the kind of building requirements particularly as it relates to a Town our size.

James noted that he typically sees buildings that are 4 or 5 bays, and construction costs range from \$250 - \$300 per square foot.

James also estimates that retrofitting the existing building is not recommended as the cost of that is likely to be 80-90% of the cost of a new building but with inferior results and less adaptable to the future needs of the Town.



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The Selectboard asked James to provide the Town with:

- A narrative/cost analysis to quantify why Coe + Coe does not recommend the rehabilitation of the existing garage structure
- A draft plan allowing for a 4-bay new build combined with relocating the sand pile and repurposing the existing garage to allow for heated equipment storage to minimize costs and maximize taxpayer funding
- A new seven-bay garage building, which would be overbuilt but has the correct number of bays to accommodate all machines that are currently protected over winter

Together, the array of proposed alternatives will give the Town a sense of the possible pathways available as well as the associated costs. The Selectboard will need to review the alternatives, even those which are not likely to be realistic or appropriate, such as doing nothing or building a seven-bay garage, for example.

5. Highway Access Permit: Double C Enterprise

Allen Wight reported sight lines and location was appropriate and in accordance with the existing Highway Policy. The sight has not yet been staked out due to the snow cover. After a brief discussion, the Selectboard asked Nicola Shipman to reach out to the property owner to request that the driveway is staked for visibility so the Selectboard can review the location and to ensure the property owner can also provide the exact measurements so the permit can be approved.

6. Dump Truck Load Proposals

Ted Austin made a motion to approve a \$160,000 loan and to authorize Lucy Pierpont to secure a bank loan with Community Bank NA at a 5.3% interest rate for a 10-wheel dump truck that is to be delivered to the Town. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

7. Level 3 Assistant Supervisor Job Description

Nicola Shipman presented a revised job description for Selectboard review.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Level 3 Assistant Supervisor job description as presented. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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8. **Executive Session: Personnel**

Scott Henkels made a motion to enter executive session with attendees to include: Selectboard Members, Allen Wight, Nicola Shipman, and Lucy Pierpont. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

9. **Resume Open Meeting**

Scott Henkels made a motion to exit executive session at 7:40PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to accept the resignation of Mark Earle effective March 7th, 2025. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. **Executive Session: Personnel**

Scott Henkels made a motion to enter executive session at 7:41PM with attendees to include: Selectboard Members, Allen Wight, Nicola Shipman, and Lucy Pierpont. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

11. **Resume Open Meeting**

Scott Henkels made a motion to exit executive session at 8:14PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

No public action taken.

12. **Appointments and Vacancies**

Ken Wright met with the Selectboard to discuss the challenges the Listers' Offices is currently facing including the need for technical assistance with parcel mapping, the need for additional support in the Lister's Offices given the vacancy created with the unexpected passing of Galen Mudgett, Jr. as well as the kind of work that will need to be done moving toward the filling of the Grand List and meeting requirements for Homestead Declarations as well as keeping up with Current Use reporting. Ken also presented a more long-term view of what could be happening at the State level and how it could affect the Town Listers based on the current draft legislation in discussion. Ken and the members also discussed the vacancy in the E911 Administrator role.



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The Selectboard reviewed the following slate for appointments:

2025 Town of Sharon Selectboard
Appointments for March 17th, 2025

Animal Control Officer

Reappoint James Armbruster as Animal Control Officer for a one-year term through 2026

Ashley Community Forest Board

Reappoint Kevin Gish to a three-year term through 2028

CDL Trainer for the Town of Sharon

Appoint Allen Wight as the CDL Instructor for the Town of Sharon

Conservation Commissioners

Reappoint Dick Ruben to a four-year term ending in 2029

Green Up Day Coordinator

Reappoint Dick Ruben / Conservation Commission as Green Up Day Coordinator for a one-year term through 2026

Planning Commissioners

Reappoint John Roe to a three-year term ending in 2028

Liaison to the Regional Energy Coordinator

Reappoint Ryan Haac for a one-year term through 2026

Energy Committee

Reappoint Ryan Haac and Dee Gish for a one-year term through 2026

TRORC Regional Board Alternate Representative

Appoint Dee Gish as the TRORC Regional Board Alternative Representative to serve for a one-year term through 2026

Transportation Advisory Committee

Reappoint Nicola Shipman to a one-year term through 2026

Tri-Valley Transit Sharon Representative

Appoint Michael Livingston to a one-year term through 2026



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Recreation Committee

Appoint Diane Putney to the Recreation Committee for a 1-year term through 2026

Emergency Management Director

Reappoint Nathan Potter to serve a one-year term through 2026.

Emergency Co-Coordinators

Appoint Becky Owens and Keith Lyman, Jr. to serve a one-year term through 2026

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the appointments as presented. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Additional appointments will be included on the agenda for the April 7th meeting.

13. **Highway Reports**

Allen Wight provided a report on the current road conditions.

14. **VTrans Submittals**

The Board tabled approval of the Annual Financial Plan for the next meeting.

Ted Austin made a motion to sign the Certificate of Compliance required by VTrans. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Class 2 Paving Grant application to be submitted to VTrans. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

15. **Groundskeeping Contract Amendment**

Ted Austin made a motion to sign the 2025 Groundskeeping Contract Amendments with Pine Hill Cemetery Association as presented with a 2025 hourly rate of \$110/hour and a maximum contracted amount of \$3,300 for the 2025 season ending October 31st, 2025. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

16. **On Demand Operators Extension**

Kevin Gish made a motion to extend the One Demand Operator Positions from March 31st, 2025 until the end of the 2025 Winter Season as determined by the Highway Supervisor. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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17. Baxter Memorial Library Agreement

Ted Austin made a motion to sign the amended Baxter Library Agreement for March 2025 through March 2030. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

18. Selectboard Reports

Kevin Gish provided an update on the OSAC meeting with guest speaker Kristi Lenart-Rikert.

Ted Austin reported on the progress so far on a situation with a long-term sagging communications line in the Town's ROW on Route 132. Ted has been in touch with GMP and intends to contact the Communications companies responsible for the lines. Ted said he will continue to push as the current conditions are unsatisfactory and a hazard.

19. Finance Reports

Lucy Pierpont noted the Town is currently owed \$52,000 in taxes, which is significantly better than in past years, and she did report that payments are still coming in.

Lucy pointed out that electricity seems higher than budgeted. She also reported that while the overtime in the highway department is getting higher, that is expected as there have been reduced staffing levels in the department.

Lucy shared there appears to be an entry error that she is in the process of correcting related to the Highway Insurance line in the budget.

20. Town Administrator Reports

Nicola Shipman reported that she had filed the MRGP Report as required by the State, and she expects the draft scoping study for the TAP program to be finalized soon as the VTrans comment period had closed.

21. Minutes

Tabled until the next meeting.

22. Warrants

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1813 from the Old School House Fund in the amount of \$1,572.66. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1814 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$100. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1815 in the amount of \$18,734.23. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1816 in the amount of \$10,248.70. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1817 in the amount of \$10,388.53. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to sign AP Warrant 1818 in the amount of \$291,355. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to ratify the HRA reimbursement for the period 2/1/25-2/28/25 in the amount of \$1,371.96. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratify payroll for the pay period 2/23/25-3/8/25 with a cash draw of \$26,101.26. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

23. Upcoming Meeting Dates/Topics

- **March 24th, 2025: Special Meeting** (Personnel; Annual Financial Report for VTTrans)
- **April 7th, 2025: Regular Meeting** (Public Hearing for Flood Hazard Bylaw Amendment)
- **April 21st, 2025: Regular Meeting:** (Readopt LEMP)

24. Adjourn

Ted Austin made a motion to adjourn at 9:35PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.