



**TOWN OF SHARON**  
**15 School Street**  
**Sharon, VT 05065**

**Selectboard Regular Meeting**  
**May 23rd, 2025 DRAFT Minutes**

**In-Person Participants:** Scott Henkels, Chair; Nicola Shipman, Town Administrator; Kevin Gish, Vice Chair; Ted Austin, Clerk; Allen Wight, Highway Supervisor; Vince Gross, Resident; Deb Jones, Treasurer

**Remote Participants:** Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Greg Chase, Double C Enterprises; Austin Soule, Vermont State Police

**1. Call to Order**

Scott Henkels called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

**2. Review Agenda**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the agenda with the Animal Control Officer report removed. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

**3. Public Comment**

Nicola Shipman read the following statement from Peter Anderson for inclusion in the public comments per his request:

I want to express my concerns about the environmental impact of the extension of Chapel Hill Road.

About fifty yards upstream from our driveway a deep ditch has been cut into the downstream edge of a small wetland. This wetland is the headwaters of Mitchel Brook. The deep cut means that the stream channel flowing out will erode its way back into the wetland, drying it out. I hope you will observe this area carefully during your upcoming site visit.

Because the road grading project has not been seeded, the surface erosion will continue unnecessarily. I urge you to please get it seeded soon.

**4. Vermont State Police**

Sargeant Austin Soule of the VSP Royalton Barracks joined the Selectboard meeting. There was discussion as to how the VSP can support the efforts of the Windsor County Sheriff's Department, who provides contracted services to the Town.



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### **5. Highway Equipment Planning**

Allen Wight and Lucy Pierpont presented initial information regarding the costs of renting, leasing, or purchasing an excavator as a tool for the highway department. One of the factors Allen asked the Selectboard to consider is that the cost of a replacement backhoe exceeds the cost of an excavator in today's market. Additionally, Allen noted that there are currently three members of the highway department who could operate an excavator. Additionally, the specifications for ditching required by the State are more readily achieved with an excavator and an operator with an excavator can perform those tasks more efficiently than with a backhoe.

Vince Gross asked how much the machine would be running given the short construction season in Vermont given the number of projects on the municipal list including the grading, the raking and mowing that all must happen in the season.

The backhoe is not on the Highway Equipment replacement schedule, so there has not been a budgeted line for a replacement for a backhoe nor has there been an excavator included in the budget, so the Selectboard asked for additional analysis, so they can understand the impact to the budget. The Selectboard is looking to quantify the expenses and wants to see a comparison of the actual costs of running the backhoe versus the projected costs of running an excavator for a season so they can understand the financials.

Lucy and Allen will do additional analysis and bring forward numbers to help quantify the costs and potential efficiencies so the Selectboard can evaluate the pros and cons of the different machines and understand the budgetary impact to the Town.

### **6. Highway Reports**

Allen Wight noted that the team continues to perform well together. He highlighted that Bill Gray has already earned his CDL permit and is on his way to earning his CDL license.

Allen has been conducting grader operation training with employees, so more staff members have opportunity for career growth and to create more flexible scheduling within the department. Also, Allen is collaborating with Rita Seto of TRORC to identify priorities for ditching and culvert projects in town, including areas which were only recently brought to his attention.

### **7. Finance Reports**

Lucy Pierpont reported that the first step of the town's audit was completed (the internal controls testing), and the second phase is scheduled for November (the field work). Lucy said the audit went well.



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Lucy said the budget to actuals showed that over all the general fund and the highway fund were looking to be on track for the year.

**Kevin Gish made a motion to accept the Internal Financial Controls document dated 5/12/2025 as presented. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **8. Treasurer's Report**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Municipal Checklist for Internal Controls as presented. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **9. Selectboard Reports**

Kevin Gish noted that Malcolm McShinsky has offered to attend the Community Meet up. Kevin also indicated that the Sharon Connects group is exploring ways to formalize their status as an official entity.

Scott Henkels reported he attended the Windsor County Selectboard meet up during which time he was able to meet with Selectboard members of other towns and learn about the issues other Towns are facing, many of which are like the issues we see here in Sharon. Also, Scott said he was engaged with wildlife control to get support with a garbage pile that was attracting bear activity at a residence on Harlow Road. Scott thought the trash had since been cleaned up, but the Town will continue to monitor and collaborate with the owners of the property, who have been very responsive to the Town's concerns.

### **10. Town Admin. Reports**

Nicola Shipman reported that the Town received an assessment from Nate Gustav which includes specific remedies for building moisture. Nicola said she is working with Jack Jones Construction to produce cost-effective solutions for installing a vapor barrier, so the project can continue to move forward. Jack anticipates the Town should be able to purchase the vapor barrier materials and can bring in additional resources to help with the installation. If we can do the project under our existing contract or if the total cost of the project is under \$5,000, this will eliminate the need to go out to bid. Currently, we estimate the building will be able to reopen early August.

Nicola indicated there were delays with the radio communications expansion project, but that is working to secure the appropriate documentation with landowners.

The Town also received updated garage plans from Coe + Coe earlier in the day, so Nicola will be sure to provide those documents to the board in time for the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, and she will work with James Coe to arrange a time for him to meet with the Selectboard.



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Nicola noted Kyle Austin held a pre-bid meeting for the vermiculite remediation on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, which is the first step in the RFP process.

Nicola strongly encourages the Town to continue to find a way to hire support for the Planning Commission/DRB and noted that a Planning Administrator will be an essential hire moving forward, along with continuing to find a Health Officer with capacity to support the Town.

Nicola is waiting for a draft agreement. She thought it might arrive in February, but to date it has not yet been sent to the Town. Nicola reached out to Ryan Terrill on May 13th, and he said he would ask his board when the agreement would be available to the Town for review. The existing agreement expires June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Nicola suggested the Board should consider OSAC to be more of a permanent standing committee as the opioid settlement funding will filter down to the Town over the next several years. Nicola also recommends the committee identify a regular meeting schedule and establish its operational procedures.

Nicola will follow up to understand if the Town should rescind the 2010 Code of Conduct policy or if it should remain in place.

Nicola also raised the question of how the Town might approach the design/construction of Phase 1 on Route 132 particularly to improve pedestrian safety at the crosswalk from the Lighthouse to the Congregational Church and the village green.

**11. Double C Driveway Permit Application Review**

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Permit Application for R22278.LR for the proposed Lot 2 related to 3104 Chapel Hill Road as submitted by Double C Enterprises. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Permit Application for R22278.LR for the proposed Lot 3 related to 3104 Chapel Hill Road as submitted by Double C Enterprises on the condition that the access be used for forestry only. Any future change in use would require a new access permit. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**12. Grand List Extension Request**

Kevin Gish made a motion to sign the 2025 PVR-4342 for a 30-day extension of the Grand List filing per 32 VSA 4342 as submitted by the Lister's Office. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**13. LEMP Readoption**



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Kevin Gish made a motion to adopt and sign the 2025 LEMP and NIMS documentation as presented. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

### **14. Alliance Service Agreement/Delta Dental**

Kevin Gish made a motion to sign the Alliance Service Agreements for the Old School House, the Baxter Memorial Library, and the Town Offices. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to continue to pay 100% of premiums for employee Delta Dental plans at the stated pricing effective July 1, 2025 – June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

### **15. Personnel/HR**

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify the payment of a \$1,000 retention bonus for a full-time employee for the 4/20 – 5/3/2025 pay period. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

### **16. Executive Session: Personnel**

Scott Henkels made a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of the evaluation of an employee per 1 VSA § 313(a)(3) at 7:58PM with attendees to include the Selectboard. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

### **17. Resume Open Meeting**

Scott Henkels made a motion to exit executive session at 8:15PM. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

No action taken.

### **18. Executive Session: Legal Counsel Local Health Concerns**

At 8:18PM, Scott Henkels moved that premature public knowledge of confidential legal counsel would place the municipality at a substantial disadvantage; therefore, the Selectboard will enter executive session to receive confidential attorney-client



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**communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body. 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1) with attendees to include the Selectboard and Nicola Shipman. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **19. Resume Open Meeting**

**Scott Henkels made a motion to exit executive session at 8:42PM. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

No action taken.



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### **20. Appointments**

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint Dee Gish, Shana Ronayne Hickman, and Eileen Lanza as representatives on the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify the signature of the Board of Listers Clerk offer letter as presented. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

### **21. Warrants**

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify

AP Warrant 1839 in the amount of \$12,888.36.

AP Warrant 1840 in the amount of \$4,316.94.

AP Warrant 1841 in the amount of \$1,948.77

AP Warrant 1842 in the amount of \$61,603.22.

AP Warrant 1843 in the amount of \$11,909.14.

AP Warrant 1844 from the Old School House fund in the amount of \$2,377.41

AP Warrant 1845 from the Recreation Fund in the amount of \$733.00.

Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve HRA Reimbursement for April in the amount of \$592. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify payroll for 4/20/2025 – 5/3/2025 with a cash draw of \$1,016.87. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to ratify payroll for 5/4/2025 – 5/17/2025 with a cash draw of \$19,838.78. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

### **22. Minutes**

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the 5/5/2025 minutes with revisions. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ted Austin made a motion to approve the 5/8/2025 minutes as presented. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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**Ted Austin made a motion to approve the 5/19/2025 minutes as presented. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

### **23. Upcoming Meetings/Dates/Topics**

- a. **Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup>**: Offices Closed for Memorial Day
- b. **June 2<sup>nd</sup>**: Regular Meeting
- c. **June 16<sup>th</sup>**: Regular Meeting
- d. **July 4<sup>th</sup>**: Independence Day (Friday)
- e. **July 7<sup>th</sup>**: Regular Meeting

### **24. Other Non-Binding Business**

None.

### **25. Adjourn**

**Kevin Gish made a motion to adjourn at 9:02PM. seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**