



TOWN OF SHARON
15 School Street
Sharon, VT 05065

Selectboard Regular Meeting
August 5th, 2025 FINAL Minutes

In-Person Participants: Kevin Gish, Vice Chair; Allen Wight, Highway Supervisor; Ken Wright, Lister; Nicola Shipman, Town Administrator; John Roe, Planning Commission Chair

Remote Participants: Scott Henkels, Chair; Lucy Pierpont, Finance Manager; Ted Austin, Clerk; Cathy Sartor, Town Clerk; Joe Ronan, Opioid Settlement Appointed Advisor; Deb Jones, Treasurer

1. Call to Order

Kevin Gish, serving as temporary chair for the meeting, called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

2. Review Agenda

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of an executive session for the purpose of discussing pending legal action as item 16f. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment

No members of the public.

4. Minutes

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve the minutes from 7/21/2025 as presented. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Warrants

Kevin Gish made a motion to ratifying payroll for 6/29/2025 – 7/12/2025 to show the corrected dates with the original amount of \$19,624.48. Scott Henkels seconded.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1891 in the amount of \$2775.42. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1892 in the amount of \$1,311.53. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1893 in the amount of \$11,360.74. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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Scott Henkels made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1894 in the amount of \$7,787.97. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1895 in the amount of \$122,169.00. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve warrant 1896 in the amount of \$1,273.50. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve AP Warrant 1897 in the amount of \$14,327.70. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Highway Reports

Allen Wight said they are continuing with the mowing, but that is almost complete. The excavator should arrive by the end of the week, and Allen said he wants to get started on the Grants in Aid work as soon as possible. The grader was down for about a week and a half for an electrical issue, but the machine is back up and running. Also, Allen explained that the Grants-in-Aid deadlines for applications will be changing to better reflect the fiscal years, so the next Grants-in-Aid application will be due in September.

Sand hauling is underway.

We have a Town Highway employee who is working towards their CDL, and he is close to achieving that well within his probationary period, which is great news.

7. Finance Reports

Finance Manager Lucy Pierpont said she is working on the financing for the new excavator and that should be available to sign at the August 18th meeting. When asked how the timing of the machine arrival matches with the financing, Lucy explained that the Town has the cash on hand to pay for the excavator out of the equipment reserve funds, and then the loan will replenish the fund so that it is not depleted.

The Town received the final payment for the TAP Scoping and as well as reimbursement for the Better Roads projects.

Scott Henkels asked about a cash draw email regarding payroll, and Lucy noted that that payroll was high due to changes in the lister's offices as well as special projects for the Vermiculite clean out.



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8. Selectboard Reports

Kevin Gish reported that the Ashley Community Forest Board is having internal challenges related to the follow-up work from the recent logging job that was done.

9. Town Administrator Reports

Nicola Shipman reported that the vermiculite remediation project is complete, and the only remaining scope of work is to put the space back together in a cost-effective way. Given the space is not ADA-compliant and will not publicly accessible, the focus will be to make it functional but not to over improve the space given the limited access.

Nicola said she was working toward a website launch date of September 2nd date. After hearing from Deb Jones, Treasurer, about the upcoming tax deadline on September 17th, we revised the new website launch date with a new date of September 30th. This change will help mitigate any negative impact on the first installment of municipal tax payments.

10. FY26 Municipal Tax Rate

Ken Wright, representing the Lister's Office, joined at 7:10PM. Ken provided insights and explanations for the proposed municipal tax rate.

Cathy Sartor asked when the Town would see the impact of the school bond.

Deb Jones said there will be a delay to the impact on taxpayers as the bond has not yet hit the school budget. Deb said she heard most recent municipal bond rates are in the 4.76% range.

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the tax rate for FY26 based on a grand list of \$1,754,747 and to set the municipal tax rate at \$0.8913 and the Veteran's Off Set at \$0.0025. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved 2-0-1. Roll call: Scott Henkels voting in favor, Ted Austin abstaining, and Kevin Gish voting in favor.

11. Opioid Settlement Update

Joe Ronan brought an update regarding the various opioid settlement cases to the Selectboard and provided background related to the Purdue Pharma Settlement and Manufacturers Settlement cases.

Joe said the Purdue settlement is what is being put forward tonight.

Joe is unable to share how much the Town will receive as those figures have not yet been shared. While the settlement is substantial, only a small of the money that will trickle down to



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the Town. But the settlement money that Joe is asking the Board to act on is related to the Purdue settlement.

Kevin Gish asked if there was any reason the Town would choose not to participate. Joe responded no. It makes sense for the Town to pursue settlement funding in this way.

Kevin Gish made a motion to

- 1) accept the terms of the Purdue bankruptcy agreement and the settlements with each of the manufacturers, to authorize the Town's participation in the settlements**
- 2) authorize the execution of the releases required**
- 3) delegate to the Chair of the Selectboard the ability to collaborate with outside counsel to enter into agreements and sign all documents presented by the Town's outside counsel so the settlement with the Town can move forward.**

Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish thanked Joe for his continued participation in this process and supporting the Town's efforts.

Deb Jones noted there had been a good response to the application for Opioid Settlement Grant funding, and the OSAC members will be reviewing those applications at their next meetings.

Deb Jones and Joe Ronan exited the meeting.

12. Ashley Community Forest Contract Extension

Kevin Gish provided background related to the timber harvest contract extension for Ashley Community Forest. According to Kevin, the logger was waiting to do final cleanup which has been delayed due to equipment failures. This means the contract needs to be extended to allow the contractor to finish the original scope of work. The ACF anticipated the final cleanup work will take place between August 14th- 16th, at which point contract will be fulfilled.

Scott Henkels made a motion to sign the Forest Services Contract Extension as presented and to authorize Kevin Gish to sign the contract extension on behalf of the selectboard.

Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

13. Sharon Historical Society Lease Agreement

Kevin Gish made a motion to approve the Sharon Historical Lease Agreement as presented. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.



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Nicola Shipman will present the Lease to the SHS for review. If the Historical Society board members have changes, they would like to make, this will come before the board at the August 18th meeting for follow-up.

14. Chapel Hill Road

Tabled until later in the meeting for Executive Session.

Allen Wight exited the meeting at 7:35PM

15. Encampment/Overnight Camping Ordinance

The Selectboard members discussed their most important considerations including the exclusion of camping at the Broad Brook access in addition to the historical district and wished to consider how we might limit camping on municipal land within a certain distance of a body of water that is not otherwise within the village district. The Selectboard would also like to allow the Fire Warden to be able to issue permits for events hosted on municipal property and to accommodate short rest stops at pull outs.

Cathy Sartor exited at 7:53PM.

16. Executive Session

Kevin Gish made a motion that premature public knowledge of the legal situation would necessitate the executive session and therefore enter executive session for the purpose of discussing confidential client attorney information with attendees to include the Selectboard members, John Roe (Planning Commission chair) and Nicola Shipman at 7:55PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Kevin Gish made motion to exit executive session at 8:36PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

17. Resume Open Meeting

Ted Austin lost connection to the meeting.

Scott Henkels made a motion to delegate Kevin Gish as the point of contact to act on behalf of the town with the Town's counsel as it relates to a pending legal action. Kevin Gish seconded. Motion approved 2-0-0. Scott Henkels in favor, Kevin Gish in favor and Ted Austin absent.



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18. Staffing/Appointments/Vacancies

In the absence of the need for an executive session to discuss the hiring of a Planning Administrator, the board agreed to forgo the executive session.

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint a Planning Administrator, Alexandra Babick, to a three-year term effective August 4th, 2025 and ending in March 2028 with an effective pay rate of \$23.00/hour. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

19. Executive Session: Personnel

Kevin Gish made a motion to enter executive session at **8:40PM for the purpose of evaluating an employee per 1 VSA § 313(a)(3) with attendees to include the Selectboard members and Nicola Shipman and Lucy Pierpont. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved 2-0-0 with Scott Henkels and Kevin Gish in favor and Ted Austin absent.**

20. Resume Open Meeting

Kevin Gish made a motion to exit executive session at 9:06PM. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved 2-0-0 with Scott Henkels and Kevin Gish in favor and Ted Austin absent.

Lucy Pierpont exited the meeting at 9:07PM.

No action needed.

21. South Royalton Rescue Advisory Board

Kevin Gish made a motion to appoint Becky Owens to the South Royalton Rescue Advisory Board for a three -year term effective immediately with an end date of March 2028. Scott Henkels seconded. Motion approved 2-0-0 with Scott Henkels and Kevin Gish in favor and Ted Austin absent.

22. Upcoming Meetings/Dates/Topics

- a. **Monday, August 18th:** Regular Meeting (3rd Monday)
- b. **Monday, September 1st:** Labor Day (No Regular Meeting)
- c. **Wednesday, September 3rd:** Special Meeting (6:30PM)
- d. **Monday, September 15th:** Regular Meeting
- e. **Wednesday, September 17th:** Municipal Taxes First Payment Due



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23. Other Non-Binding Business

None.

24. Adjourn

Kevin Gish made a motion to adjourn at 9:09PM. Ted Austin seconded. Motion approved unanimously.