**Selectboard Meeting Minutes December 19, 2022 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**: Andrew Baker called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard members Bob Manners, Margaret Payne, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

**Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** A motion was put forth by Bob to approve the minutes of December 5. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**Senior Center** – The Boards of the Senior Center and the Senior Center Foundation have had a joint meeting. Margaret is awaiting a report. The District plan is moving through the legislature. Sylvia Smith is doing a lot of advocacy.

**Town Hall** – Terry is concentrating on budget preparation and relicensing businesses.

**Highway Department** – Bob said the crew made it through the recent storm, which was an elevational storm with a 6 to 8 inch difference in snow amounts between the high areas and the village. The upper end of Mercy Anderson Road was closed due to a fallen tree. The Highway Department was called to assist a trailer truck which had made a wrong turn and had to back all the way down to Route2. The new employee is working out well. The reduced winter hours at the Transfer Station have started.

**Village Task Force** – Andrew said that Whit Sanford had reported on the Shelburne Falls Initiative, the group that has taken over handling the Shelburne Falls Cultural District grant. Whit reported that the grant money will be used for the development of a pocket park and an art installation in Buckland. Andrew objected to this, feeling that both sides of the village should benefit from the grant. He plans to address this at a Buckland Selectboard meeting. Andrew said the Buckland representative to t Village Task Force has been absent most of the year. The task force has been getting grants for both sides of the village. He wished the Buckland representative would attend Task Force meetings so everyone could be on the same page. The Task Force has been trying to salvage ShelburneFalls.com, which is a key portal for information on the area. The cultural counsil funding could have been used to help with that project.

**Police Department** – Police Chief Greg Bardwell and Andrew met with Barry Del Castilho of Buckland and people form the Collins Center about the shared services project. The next public forum is tentatively planned for February16. An inter-municipal agreement is being drafted. Andrew would like to see such an agreement brought to the voters. Town Counsel has said this can only be done with a financial article as the Selectboard has the authority to enter into agreements. A non-binding article could be brought to the voters.

**Planning Board** – Andrew attended the most recent Planning Board meeting to begin a conversation about affordable housing and the tax title lots. In order for affordable housing to be constructed on the non-conforming lots bylaw changes would be needed. Town Counsel has approached the Attorney General’s office to see if non-conforming lots could be used for public purposes. There has been no response so far. Short-term rentals were also discussed and Andrew had shared a Williamsburg bylaw that addressed that.

**Appointments:**

**5:45 pm Town Clerk, Joe Judd RE: Public Hearing to Opt Out of Vote by Mail for Town Election** – Cancelled due to illness.

**6:00 pm Jim Kessler, Memorial Hall Assoc. RE: Mass Cultural Council Grant** – Jim, the President of the Memorial Hall Association, said a grant of up to $200,000 is available from the Mass Cultural Council for cultural facility expansion or redevelopment. The town would need to be the applicant, but Jim said the Memorial Hall Association would be willing to do most of the work in applying. The grant requires a match. The town has previously said it would fund up to $150,000 for renovations. So far, $90,000 has already been set aside. Fundraising would still be needed. The time frame for fundraising would be 18 to 24 months. Jim is confident that the funds can be raised. The total budget being looked at would be between $400,000 and $500,000. A lot of projects need to be done at the hall and the association is trying to come up with the best one. The grant application is due on February 3. It is hoped that FRCOG would help with the bidding process. Terry said she was agreeable to the extra work the grant application would create, since any improvements would benefit both the town and the association. Bob said he was not opposed to applying but would like to see a scope of work. Jim said it is hoped that the floor and seats could be done with the grant but quotes are still needed for those things. Andrew said a few years ago an architect did a comprehensive plan for renovating the hall, In addition to flooring and new seats, work needs to be done on the green room, the stage needs to be handicap-accessible, sound, lighting, and HVAC systems need upgrades. Andrew added that other ways to pay for some of that should be considered. Block grants, Green Communities grants, and CPA funds might all be available as part of a larger renovation plan. Andrew said the town would not be obligated for any more funding than has already been planned. Fundraising will be used to make up the difference. A motion was put forth by Margaret to authorize the Memorial Hall Association to start the process of applying for a Mass Cultural Council grant, pending more complete information regarding funding be provided by January 30. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. Andrew mentioned that the association had applied for this grant about 11 years ago and was unsuccessful, possibly because there had not been a lot of support from the town. This time the town has pledged to fund part of the work. Jim said he would also be asking some community members for letters of support

**Old Business:**

**375 & 379 Main Street RE: Demolition Update –** Terry reported that 375 has been demolished as has the barn and shed at 379. The landfill is requiring additional testing before it will accept demolition material from 379. The demolition of 379 is now scheduled to happen between December 26 and 28. The town now has two years to do something with the property. Andrew plans to reach out to Megan McDonough of Habitat for Humanity to see if that group has any interest in building on the tax title lots. Margaret mentioned that the merger between the Shelburne Housing Authority and the Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority has been approved and signed by the Governor. The new entity will be an on-going partner in the quest to develop affordable housing.

**Relocation of Veteran’s Memoria at BSE** – Bob said that the Historical Society might be interested in having the memorial relocated to its property. Local veterans hope that the memorial goes to a visible location.

**Proposed Pavilion at 19 Bridge Street** – Terry and Andrew have spent two evenings at a ZBA hearing and have been granted both a variance and a Special Permit for putting the pavilion on the lot at 19 Bridge Street. The variance will run concurrently with the lease. There is a 20-day appeal period. It is hoped the concrete piers can go in the ground soon. The town will work with the Tech school on design concepts for the pavilion.

**New Business:**

**F.C. Solid Waste Management District RE: Designating Representative as Special Municipal Employee** – The solid waste district director feels this procedure is the cleanest way for town representatives to the district to separate themselves from their other town positions and avoid conflicts of interest. Town Counsel questioned whether Selectboard action was needed or if this could be done by calling the state Ethics Commission. All towns in the solid waste district would need to approve this special employee designation for it to happen. Terry is Shelburne’s representative and explained this came up because of issues in another town. She also explained that the designation is given to the position, not the person. The discussion helped to clarify the Board’s questions. A motion was made by Bob, seconded by Margaret, to adopt the designation of special municipal employee for the town’s representative to the solid waste district. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. A motion was put forth by Bob, that if Shelburne ever has an alternate representative to the solid waste district, that position will be designated as a special municipal employee. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**FY’23 Tax Rate Approved by DOR** – The town’s tax rate for FY’23 will be $13.65. This is down from the current tax rate of $14.47. No action is needed by the Board, it was simply informational.

**Annual Town Meeting Date – May 2, 2023?** – It makes sense to move Town Meeting back to its normal date of the first Tuesday in May, after having been changed to a Saturday in June, due to COVID. A logistical challenge for holding Town Meeting at Memorial Hall is that the elevator is in need of repair. It is functional but will not pass state inspection. Alternates to Memorial Hall might include the BSE cafeteria or going back to an outside June meeting.

**Any Other Business:** None

**Correspondence:**

**Letter from Treasurer** – Treasurer Angle Bragdon would like the Board to consider a higher salary increase for all town employees. The Board would like more time to study Angel’s data, so this will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting would normally fall on January 2, which is an official holiday. Instead, the Board will meet on Wednesday, January 4.

**Public Comment:**

Roger Weld attended the meeting and said he was “just visiting.” He has been serving on the Shelburne Housing Authority and may decide to continue only the newly merged housing board,

**Adjournment**: At 6:42 a motion was made by Margaret to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Bob – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary