

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

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: A motion was put forth by Margaret to approve the minutes of March 13. This was seconded by Bob. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes; Bob – abstain. Motion passed 2-0-1.

Department Liaison Reports:

Highway Department – The crew is cleaning up after the recent storm, which caused a lot of tree damage in the higher elevations of town. Bob said there was a lot of cooperation between emergency services. Andrew said he had heard good comments about the condition of dirt roads following the storm.

Arms Library – Margaret said Dan Alden, of the Arms Trustees, will be attempting to address the issues raised at the last meeting.

Senior Center – Margaret said that Director Juli Moreno is working on marketing and is also developing new programs.

Town Hall – A pre-construction meeting for Bridge Street Phase II will be held on March 29. Later that evening a public shade tree hearing, relating to the project, will be held. The auditors have arrived and will be in Town Hall for most of the week.

Village Task Force – The group continues to meet monthly. They are working with Jessica Attwood of the FRCOG and will soon be working with a new consultant.

Energy Committee – The committee is working on MassSave items. Outreach events will be planned for the summer.

Town Newsletter – The April edition will be out soon.

Pocket Park – The concrete piers are now being installed.

Appointments:

6:00 pm Greg Bardwell, Chief of Police RE: FY'24 Budget Presentation (Deb Andrew, Terri Mitchell, Todd Dubreuil, Matt Popoli, Finance Committee) – Prior to the budget presentation Greg reported that the last of the town's officers is finishing up the Bridge Academy. Once he is done, all Shelburne officers will be certified.

Greg presented two budget options one is "Shelburne only" the other is "shared police service." The Shelburne only budget has not changed much from the previous year. The fulltime patrolman has taken training and is now a detective therefore Greg is proposing a salary increase. That increase is based on figures from the FRCOG and other towns. The shared police budget shows operating expenses that Greg said were somewhat of a "guesstimate" for the first year. With shared services there would be a chief, two sergeants, and three full time patrol officers. Greg said the shared services option would provide better coverage to both towns and should help with officer retention. Terri Mitchell asked if it made sense to offer more than competitive wages, saying that the town wants to keep its police officers. Greg responded that larger departments offer incentives that Shelburne does not offer. That type of thing might be as important has higher wages. Greg said between the two town there are nine part time officers. When they leave, either there will be shifts left uncovered or another full time officer will need

to be hired. Terri asked if it made sense to offer somewhat higher wages now, rather than be hit with a larger request later. She felt police wages were low. Andrew said if police wages were raised, wages for all departments should be looked at as well. Greg said he didn't have the resources to dig deeper into wage comparisons but added he would like to see the town do another wage classification study. Moving on to call data, it seems that Shelburne has had twice as many calls as Buckland. Greg felt that Shelburne was perhaps more efficient in documenting calls and that with shared services the numbers would get closer. He said the police log was on the town website and showed the different types of calls. Margaret felt any wage changes should wait until after the shared services agreement was decided. Some Finance Committee members thought wages should be raised to what they would be with shared services, whether that agreement passes or not. Andrew preferred to focus on shared services this year, do a wage classification study during the year, and focus on wages next year. Terry said the way the budget was structured the town would be voting on the higher amount, whether or not the shared agreement passed. The Town will schedule a Special Town Meeting in the Fall before the tax rate is set to reduce the police budget amount accordingly.

6:30 pm Mark Shippee, Highway Department RE: FY'24 Budget Presentation – The biggest change in the budget was in personnel costs, with two employees getting an additional \$1 per hour. The Finance Committee felt the budget was very reasonable and had no questions. Bob felt the town needed to gradually move the pay scale up. He said one employee was a very good mechanic who had saved the town thousands of dollars. If that employee were paid as a mechanic instead of as laborer, it would mean a lot more money. Bob also mentioned that starting next year it was likely to become harder to find part time help for snow plowing. Terri asked if the costs of maintaining the pocket park were included in the highway budget. Terry explained those costs were covered under Buildings & Grounds. Mark also presented two capital requests for a three-point hitch PTO blower at an estimated cost of \$7,000 and a trailer mounted leaf/debris loader at a cost of \$23,000 to \$25,000. Those items would reduce hand work and the possibility of back injuries while clearing ditches, etc. Both items would get regular use. The Finance Committee and Selectboard had no questions on the capital requests. Terri Mitchell thanked the highway department for its “phenomenal” work during the most recent snow storm.

Old Business:

Relocation of Veteran's Memorial at BSE – Nothing new to report.

Proposed Pavilion at 19 Bridge Street – The students from Franklin Tech are expected to start construction on April 10 providing that the building permit is approved.

West County Senior Services District Board of Managers Appointees – Penny Spearance and Sylvia Smith have expressed interest in the positions. Margaret said she is waiting to hear from Ashfield and Buckland about where they are in the process.

Hager's Farm Market RE: Lease of Land – Hagers Farm Market has been notified of the change in the lease. There has been no response thus far. Terry will call them.

Towns E-Newsletter Content RE: Advertising on Behalf of Local Businesses – A request has been made to include church news in the newsletter. Now that the town is funding the email and server for the newsletter, the Division of Local Services recommended limiting content to municipal items only. If the newsletter were run independent of the town, content would not be limited. Andrew wondered if the newsletter would be better off not having a town email address. That way it could include church and business news. Margaret said she would like to see the

scope of the newsletter expanded to include some events from neighboring towns. Andrew said expanding coverage would be a function of how much time volunteers are willing to put in. A motion was made by Bob that while the town newsletter is using a municipal email address and server, it should contain only municipal news until a decision can be made about whether to expand its coverage. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes; Bob – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Franklin County Tech School Seeks Shelburne Representative to Serve on District Committee – So far, no one has stepped forward for this position.

New Business:

Proposed Solar Array Proposals for Highway Pole Barn – Cost & Funding – Andrew proposed adding an article to the Annual Town Meeting warrant asking voters if they wanted solar on the 20' x 80' south-facing roof of the new pole barn. Five installers had been asked for quotes, with two of them responding. Terry's concern was how to fund a solar array if an article is going on the ATM warrant. Solid numbers will be needed. The most detailed quote, so far, was from PV Squared with a preliminary estimate of \$95,000, not including 3-phase power. After tax credits the cost would drop to about \$57,000. Bob and Margaret both felt that the solar array in the roof should move forward. The electricity generated by the array could pay for itself in about six years. Discussion followed on whether the remaining ARPA funds should be used for the project. Bob said a generator for the municipal building was another item that could use the ARPA funds. Several grant applications for a generator have been unsuccessful. Until quotes are received it is not known if there is enough ARPA money left to buy a generator. Terry will try to get sense of what bringing 3-phase power to the pole barn might cost. Meanwhile, she will add the solar proposal to the Town Meeting warrant and the capital spreadsheet.

Efficiency & Regionalization Grant RE: Steering Committee Participant – The steering committee will meet four times between April and June. Terry already feels over committed. Andrew agreed to be the town representative.

Bridge Street Phase 2, GEG Construction Change Order #1, Contract Time Extension – Due to the delay in receiving materials. The change order would extend the deadline for completion of the project 124 days to November 1, 2023. This would be for the completion of all work. The actual construction should be completed by mid to late June. A motion was put forth by Bob to accept change order #1 as presented for Bridge Street Phase 2 construction. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes; Bob – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Any Other Business: None

Next Meeting – The next Board meeting will be on April 10, 2023.

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: Tom Johnson expressed concern about the installation of LED streetlights, saying all wattages produce glare that sometimes extends into the windows and yards of nearby homes. He felt the lights would change the atmosphere of the town and that there was no plan for shielding or ways to direct the lights downward. Tom hoped the town would consider extending the time for citizens to comment, perhaps even bringing it up at Town Meeting. Andrew said this

should have been discussed under any other business. He also had meant to discuss the idea of holding a candidate's night before the town election. Bob and Margaret did not want to discuss these items at this time. Terry reminded the Board that it had voted at the last meeting to have Eversource go ahead with the light conversion. Lights have been ordered, materials are in, and installation is scheduled. Andrew said in the future if citizens had complaints the installation of shields could be considered.

Roger Ward felt the snow removal at Cowell Gym and the Historical Society was "pretty poor" following the last snow storm and that people were forced to walk in the street. He also realized that town resources were stretched during the storm.

Adjournment: At 7:30 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