

Selectboard Meeting Minutes January 22, 2024 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm

Call to Order: Andrew Baker called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard member Rick LaPierre and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz. Selectboard. Sadly, Chair Bob Manners lost his battle with cancer and passed on January 19.

Before starting the meeting, Andrew expressed his sorrow over Bob's passing, calling him a "true servant of Shelburne for his whole life" He said while he and Bob had their disagreements there were far more areas where they did agree. "Bob often persuaded me with his knowledge," said Andrew. Rick asked for a moment of silence to reflect in Bob's honor. Terry said that it had been a pleasure working with Bob, who was first elected in 2004. She noted that he did not have a lot of experience in the beginning but, he became quite a leader. He truly loved Shelburne and was committed to his role as a Selectboard member.

A motion was put forth by Rick to approve the minutes of January 8, as amended, it having been noted that a vote had been omitted. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 2-0-0.

Department Liaison Reports:

Bob had been the liaison to the highway department, the senior center, and FRCOG. Andrew volunteered to be liaison to those groups.

Town Hall – The assessors have reached out concerning the possibility of hiring a consultant to revalue the town's share of the three dams on the Deerfield River. The consultant's fee would be covered by the expected increase in tax revenues. Andrew noted that the downside of this could be an appeal by the utility company. The Assessors will present the cost of the dam revaluation during their budget presentation.

Veterans District – Rick said the FY'25 budget has been finalized, with Shelburne's share to be \$5,682. It was noted that claims had doubled over the previous year. The district handles \$2 million in benefits per month.

Pratt Library Committee – Andrew reported that the committee is reviewing building maintenance needs and capital needs. The two largest capital needs are replacement of the elevator and replacement of the large, curved windows in the rear of the building. Andrew said the committee had suggested perhaps using CPA funds to build up enough capital to replace the windows. The old, creaky elevator is still working but it is time to start setting aside funds for its replacement, perhaps a mini reserve fund to be added to over a few years. In the meantime, replacement options can be researched.

Cowell Gym – John Walsh reported that the wire cages have been installed over each mini-split unit in the gymnasium. He said there were some issues with the bleachers. The handicapped bleachers have been damaged and need to be repaired or replaced. The rest of the bleachers can be used. People have been happy with the temperature in the gym. Andrew said the basement storage area needs to be reorganized. Terry said a meeting of all the groups that store items in the basement will be held to come up with a more efficient storage plan.

Appointments:

6:00 pm Jeff Boettner RE: LED Streetlight Committee Update – The committee has been working with Real Term Energy. There are six tasks involved with the project. The first is an

audit of all streetlights, which has been completed. The committee has some suggestions for adding some lights and removing others. About 15% of the lights could be eliminated according to the committee. Other tasks include acquisition of the lights, selection of equipment and installers, and an investment grade audit report. Real Term will provide a simplified audit by February 2, with a worst-case scenario as to the final cost. Jeff assured the Board that a full investment grade audit would be provided and he would negotiate with Real Term to make sure the cost does not exceed the \$9,100 that had been approved. John Walsh felt the Board should look at the agreement since it seems that Real Term is proposing more than the town expected and at a greater cost. Rick felt the contract could be left alone for now as long as the investment grade audit is provided at no extra cost. Andrew hoped the list of lights to be added or removed could be presented to the Board soon. If the Board considers turning off any lights, there would need to be a public hearing where everyone could attend and comment. Jeff said he would be willing to hold an information session for residents prior to a hearing. Rick commented on how impressed he was with the work of the Streetlight Committee so far.

Old Business:

Proposed Solar Array for Highway Pole Barn Roof (Draft RFP) – John Wash had adapted a RFP from Montague as a draft RFP for Shelburne. Andrew had several suggestions for changes to it. A working meeting will be scheduled to review the entire draft which is more than 30 pages in length when John returns from vacation. Meanwhile, it seemed necessary to have an engineer's stamp for the pole barn. A motion was put forth by Rick to have Mark Shippee pursue getting an engineering stamp, from David Vreeland, for the pole barn at a cost not to exceed \$400. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 2-0-0.

Cowell Gym RE: Proposed Oil Tank Replacement – Two bids have been received. John Walsh had recommended using the low bidder, Maple Row Farm & Ouimette Plumbing at first however, the Board was concerned that the bidder had no experience with oil tanks. Rick had looked at the two tanks and said they were in terrible condition and needed to be replaced right away. There was evidence of oil on the floor from a prior over fill that also needs to be addressed. He felt it would be better to use someone with experience. Sandri Energy's bid was only about \$1,750 higher and that company has experience with tanks and fuel oil. Terry said that both bidders had made a site visit prior to submitting a proposal. A motion was made by Rick to award the oil tank replacement project to Sandri Energy for a bid of \$6,250. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 2-0-0.

New Business:

Mohawk Athletic Association RE: Iron Bridge Dinner Request – 7/28/2024 – The procedure for allowing this event on the state-owned bridge starts with getting Selectboard and police approval, which is part of the MassDOT application process. A motion was made by Rick to approve the Iron Bridge Dinner on July 28, 2024. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 2-0-0.

Any Other Business: None

Next Meeting – The next Board meeting will be on January 29, at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: At 6:50 a motion was made by Rick to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 2-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary