

SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Draft until approved at the next regular meeting

A regular meeting of the Sharon BOS was held August 25, 2020 via in-person and Zoom at 5:30PM at the Town Hall. Present were the three Selectmen, John Perotti, Jill Drew, Brent & Barbara Prindle, Harding Bancroft, Miriam Jones, reporters Hawkin and Epstein; and the secretary.

First Selectman Colley called the meeting to order at 5:30.

Mr. Jones made a motion to adopt the agenda as submitted, seconded by Mr. Flanagan, with all in favor.

Mr. Perotti asked to be able to make comments on Item #5 – storm – when the Board gets there.

Mr. Flanagan made a motion to approve the 7/28/20 minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Jones, with all in favor.

Mr. Colley gave a brief history of the current STEAP Grant application process and requirements. The Board of Selectmen reviewed three options for a 2020 STEAP Grant. Funding requests came from the Broadband Task Force(feasibility study for town wide fiber optic network coverage), the Hotchkiss Library(design plans and engineering for an addition) and an option for the Town would be Projects A and B on the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (Town Hall parking lot with paving/lighting. He thanked the members of the Broadband Task Force and the Hotchkiss Library individuals for all their efforts in this process of trying to see if any of their projects could be considered. After lengthy conversations with Maria Horn and Martin Heft, of OPM, it was found that only one application per town can be submitted and the dollar amount of an award would be only \$128,000 and the project must be ready to start. The Task Force and the Library should not give up on their ideas but the only project that is ready to start is the expansion of the Town Hall parking lot. These plans were drawn up years ago and have been on the Five Year Capital Plan for years. Hopefully in the future a “pathway” connecting the parking lot with access to West Main Street can be done. This requires consent, easements of some sort with private property owners. The Library individuals were advised to contact the CT Trust for Historic Preservation to look into a possible Grant. The parking lot project would have to go out to bid and the steps to be taken if and when the application is approved were reviewed (the acceptance and expenditure of the funds must go before the BOF and Town Meeting as the funds need to be spent before reimbursement is received from the State). With all questions answered, Mr. Flanagan made a motion that the Town submits a STEAP Grant application for the expansion of the Town Hall parking lot to include grading, lighting and drainage, seconded by Mr. Jones, with all in favor.

The Board reviewed the storm that impacted everyone in town for several days and the fact that there were no accurate answers from Eversource during and after the event. Clean-up by the Road Crew and outside contractors was difficult as it was unknown if wires in downed trees were live or not. It was stressed that Eversource needs to communicate better with town officials and have local crews and resources available. The Local Emergency Planning Committee has met and reviewed the whole situation, reviewed the Emergency Plan and options for the future. It was emphasized that the Fire Department and Ambulance Squad stepped up to help as they always do and did a great job. Mr. Colley told the Board how Ed Wilbur helped Eversource with key information on their system as he has a lot of knowledge and experience with the system.

Community Update:

Miriam Jones, our Social Service Agent reported: CT residents receiving unemployment compensation will receive \$300 in addition to their current compensation retroactive from August 1, 2020; Eversource clients with electric as their primary heating source will receive a \$250 credit on their electric bill if they received a CELP Grant last year (this is a special Cares Act Grant); Acting through the Department of Housing and the CT Housing Finance Authority, the State has created the Temporary Rental Housing Assistance Program to respond to the housing issues associated with the advent of COVID-19. This program is available as of July 15, 2020; the CT Energy Assistance Program (fuel assistance) is starting early this year. She reviewed the financial guidelines for this program; and the Operation Fuel Program will be starting as well. The financial guidelines were reviewed for this program as well. Some of these applications can be done on line for privacy but Ms. Jones is available to help with the applications.

With nothing further, Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Flanagan, with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Pitcher, Town Secretary

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SHARON TOWN CLERK