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*By Linda Amerighi at 1:58 pm, Jan 18, 2024*

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

A regular meeting of the Sharon BOF was held on January 16, 2024 at 6:30PM at the Town Hall. Present were regular members Robertson, Bartram, Fowler, Flaton, Hecht and Duncan; alternates Pastre and Clare; invited BOE members Cahill (Chairman), O'Reilly, Petkov, Vance, Visconti, Martin; First Selectman Flanagan, Selectman Kearcher, Roger Liddell, Doug Rick, Marlene Woodman and the secretary.

Chairman Bartram called the meeting to order at 6:32.

Due to the weather, no one from the Playhouse will be here tonight but will come to the next meeting. Hence, Item # 4 on the agenda will be deleted and Mr. Bartram proposed to combine Item # 7 with Item # 3 (both pertaining to the Board of Education). Ms. Fowler would like to add, if there is time, a brief review of a CCM conference that she and Ms. Flaton attended. Ms. Flaton made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Mrs. Robertson, with all in favor.

There was lengthy discussion with the BOE on the MBR (Minimum Budget Requirement) and the response or lack thereof, from the State after the information was submitted to them by Mr. Cahill concerning capital improvement funding being in the operations portion of the BOE budgets. It was emphasized that perhaps more than three years of budget expenditures should be submitted to the State for further review. It was agreed that everyone is looking for a way to be able to reduce the budget in the future without being penalized. There was agreed discussion that the MBR doesn't fit for the Northwest Corner BOE budgets but the issue still needs to be pursued. Briefly discussed was the topic of heat pumps at the school. The BOE will be looking at their six to seven-year Capital Plan. Mrs. Martin offered to look over the various town BOE budgets to compare them to see where the differences are and see if it can be determined why Sharon has the highest cost per pupil. The BOE members were thanked for coming to this meeting.

There were no public comments.

Ms. Fowler made a motion to approve the minutes of 12/19/23 as written, seconded by Mr. Hecht. Vote taken – Ms. Flaton abstained from voting as she was not at that meeting – all others in favor of motion – motion carried.

The draft Option to Lease for 99 North Main Street was discussed. Mr. Bartram recused himself from this discussion as he is a member of the Sharon Housing Trust Board – he left the room and Vice Chairman Fowler took over this portion of the meeting. The intent of the Lease was to give the Housing Trust a year with an optional three-month extension to see if they could privately raise the funds to renovate the building into four affordable apartments. After this period of time, if found to be doable, a long-term Lease would need to be done. Both of these Leases would need to go to Town Meeting for approval. In approving the first Lease, nothing structurally would be done to the building, but give the Housing Trust the comfort in knowing that the building is exclusive to them and would not be offered to anyone else. The BOF felt that a simple right of first refusal document would be sufficient for the Housing Trust's initial purposes = researching costs for the renovation and fund raising. It was noted that the Option was brought before this Board as a result of the conversation underway concerning contracts and that the BOF does not need to approve the Option before it goes to Town Meeting for approval. The BOS will look into having a simpler document drafted. Mr. Bartram rejoined the meeting.

Ms. Fowler reported on her meeting with the BOS concerning contract processes. The BOS will be looking at their own process as they are a new Board. The current process along with the funding for contracts was reviewed. It was stressed that the BOF is concerned with long term contracts that affect the Town rather than ones for day-to-day operations.

Ms. Fowler and Ms. Flaton reported on topics discussed at the CCM conference they attended: policies & procedures; use of technology; regionalization; form of government; aging communities & the lack of volunteers; and unfunded mandates from the State.

With nothing further, Ms. Fowler made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hecht, with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Pitcher, Recording Secretary

NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 20 6:30PM