

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

A regular meeting of the Sharon BOS was held on January 25, 2022 In-person and via ZOOM at the Town Hall at 5:30PM. Present were the three Selectmen, Jill Drew, Brent Prindle, reporters Epstein and Hawken and the secretary.

First Selectman Colley called the meeting to order at 5:31.

Mr. Flanagan asked that the solar project for Sharon Center School be added to the agenda as 6e. Mr. Flanagan made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended, seconded by Mr. Jones, with all in favor.

If anyone wishes to speak on an agenda item when the Board gets there, just let Mr. Colley know.

A correction needed to be made in the 1/11/22 minutes: 1<sup>st</sup> page, 7<sup>th</sup> paragraph, 1<sup>st</sup> line, change “conversions” to “conversations”. Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Flanagan, with all in favor.

There has been a discussion on Town Hall technology as a whole, which needs to be looked at and upgraded. When the building was renovated there was no such thing as the internet. A few residents have come forward offering to help with this project. What we need is a third party consultant to look at what we have and offer suggestions. The Board agreed that the technology is outdated and the town needs to do updates to give the employees the best opportunities to get the tools they need to do their jobs efficiently and to have our data secure. The first step is to get a RFP (request for proposal) to address the technology issues. Second would be to get disaster recovery and business continuity plans. Mr. Flanagan offered that there should also be a depreciation schedule on this equipment and perhaps a fund set-up for continued upgrades. Once this whole project is complete, any future IT person will need to keep this updated. The cost for this would need to be determined. It was pointed out that the cost for the consultant could be paid for out of the ARPA funds as cyber security would be part of this report. It was suggested that our current IT person give a report on the status of our technology and that the consultant would work with our current person to get any information necessary in order to provide a complete report. Getting the RFP out as soon as possible was discussed. A resident has expressed interest in helping with this writing. The Board accepted this offer so Mr. Flanagan will contact the individual. There was discussion on whether the BOS will handle any future items or if a committee should be formed with a simple charge that would be on-going to help guide the BOS – prepare the BOS for any necessary action. The Board was reminded that depending on how this is set-up, the group may have to follow FOI requirements. This will be discussed further at a later time.

Updates:

- a. The preliminary Town Hall Parking Lot Expansion plans are available for individuals to review. There is going to be a ZOOM call with the engineer, tentatively set for Friday so that residents who abut the property can express their concerns. Michael Nadeau, a member of SEEC, has some environmental concerns/ideas. These will be shared with the engineer. The potential pass-thru to West Main Street is another issue to be looked at in the future. Mr. Colley has reached out to Eversource to get information on the charging stations. The Road Crew is concerned with the “Green Spaces” on the plan as far as plowing is concerned.
- b. Jill Drew reported that the ARPA Committee continues to meet. The initial assistance applications were due by January 15, 2022. The total of the requests stands at \$500,000 but

this does not include ideas submitted where there were no applications. The Committee hopes to get through all the initial applications by the end of February. There are two applications that the Committee voted to recommend to the BOS for funding which the BOS can act upon at their next meeting: Sharon Audubon \$15,000 and The Hotchkiss Library \$3,000. The basics for these applications was reviewed. The Committee felt that these were time sensitive applications. Mr. Flanagan questioned the procedure and the process in making the recommendations to the BOS as he thought all the recommendations were going to be submitted at once. Some applications may be time sensitive. Mrs. Drew reviewed how the Committee has been looking at the applications. It is ultimately up to the BOS to decide on how the funds will benefit the most residents in town.

- c. Sertex has finished the Broadband engineering analysis and the Committee should be ready to present this to the BOS within the next few BOS meetings. A community meeting will be held after the BOS gets the analysis. Sertex has fully flushed out the needs and will offer different scenarios. The BOS would like to proceed with this sooner rather than later in order to get ahead of the budget schedule.
- d. Everyone is aware of the conditions of the sidewalks in town. The last time they were addressed was 11 years ago. Mr. Colley has been looking for federal grants as well as other potential grants. What makes this project unique is that there are some sewer and water lines that run under the sidewalks and in some areas tree roots. Mr. Flanagan offered that the Board should get resident input regarding the tree root issue if any trees would need to be removed. Work in some areas may need to be coordinated with the Sewer & Water Commission if they plan to replace some lines. The work should also be coordinated with the State DOT paving of Main Street but this work can't be kept being putting off. Mr. Jones questioned the possibility of building-up the existing sidewalks rather than milling them up and replacing them. The Board needs to get input from a sidewalk contractor. Mr. Colley was asked to get the Sewer & Water Commission's schedule for line replacement and a map from them showing the area of these lines. He will also try to get the State's schedule for repaving Main Street. Mr. Jones will see if he can get the name of the contractor who did work in Torrington.
- e. The Town Attorney did go over the contract from CT Green Bank for the proposed solar project at Sharon Center School. The contract has been amended based on his suggestions/concerns. The Board of Education has endorsed the concept of the project as it would be providing power to the school. As the panels would be on town owned property the BOS would sign the contract upon their review. The proposed project would then go to the Planning and Zoning Commission (per State Statute 8-24 as it is a municipal improvement) and then a town meeting vote. This schedule gives the Board of Education a chance to actually approve the project or opt out. Mr. Flanagan offered that before the Board signs the contract, he wants to make sure it is in there that if the contractor fails to get any approval, the contract is null and void.

Budget requests are due by February 16 so budget workshop dates need to be set. The Board agreed to wait til the next meeting to set the dates.

#### Community Update:

The Town Meeting concerning the allocation of \$50,000 to the Hotchkiss Library is Thursday at the Sharon Center School at 6:30PM.

The Road Crew has been dealing with more ice than snow and mechanical breakdowns with trucks.

The Equipment Replacement Plan has been worked on and will be forwarded to the Board of Finance for their input.

Lewis Tree Service has been doing work in town for Eversource.

DEEP has submitted information on tree work they plan to do in the state forest.

With the assistance of our Tree Warden, a lot of tree work was done on Modley Road. There are a lot of roads that have significant tree damage along them. Work on these trees will be paid out of the budget line and the use of State Town Aid Road funds.

With nothing further, Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Flanagan, with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Pitcher, Town Secretary