

**MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SELECT BOARD
SEPTEMBER 15, 2008
COLE HALL
SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT**

Board Present: **Lon McClintock (Chairman), Cinda Morse, Bill Pennebaker, Wynn Metcalfe**

Board Absent: **Karen Mellinger**

Others Present: **Larry Johnson, Alice Miller (VT Rep.), Paul Olmstead, Iris Olmstead, Mike Gleason (Bennington Banner), Aaron Chrostowsky (Town Administrator), Susan Swasta (Recording Secretary)**

1. Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Lon McClintock called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Announcements:

Because last week's meeting was not televised, Chairman McClintock asked that announcements be repeated. Wynn Metcalfe reported again on the successful street dance and on the Grange's recognition of Art Whitman as citizen of the year. Aaron Chrostowsky announced and gave details on Hazardous Waste and Free Tire Day, new access sticker fees, and new brush disposal fees. Cinda Morse reported that the Village Center application has been submitted to the state and is on the agenda for a September 22 meeting which will be attended by herself, Art Whitman, and Phylis Porio.

3. Conflict of Interest Statement:

Chairman McClintock asked if any Board member has a conflict of interest with any topic on tonight's agenda. None did.

4. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

5. Drainage Issue on Hall Property on West Mountain Road:

Chairman McClintock reviewed the discussion that had taken place at last week's meeting. West Mountain Road resident Charles Hall had explained that in 2005 the Town removed two culverts across West Mountain Road, then replaced just one of them. The culvert located higher up the hill from his property, which took 80-90% of the water coming down the hill and allowed it to drain into a hedge row, was not replaced. Mr. Hall had stated that the water now goes into his field and causes erosion, requiring him to put in fill. This second culvert had been put in at the request of Mr. Hall's aunt, who had paid for it. The Town had supplied labor and machinery.

The Board and Mr. Hall had agreed last week to table the decision until Chairman McClintock and Mr. Hall discussed the matter. Chairman McClintock stated that the two of them had talked, and that the Board is now ready to deliberate, either in public session or Executive Session. Board members agreed that there is no reason not to decide this in public session.

Ms. Morse made motion to accept the agreement for Charles Hall to pay one half of the cost of a culvert on West Mountain Road, with the Town paying the other half and installing the culvert. Bill Pennebaker seconded.

Mr. Metcalfe asked where this problem falls in the road priority list that has been developed, and whether addressing it now sets a precedent. Ms. Morse countered that this is totally separate from

the road plan because they are fixing a problem the Town created. Shaftsbury resident Larry Johnson asked about the projected cost and how it will be paid. Chairman McClintock replied that the Town's cost for the culvert will be \$250, and he does not know how much road crew time will cost, but it should be one-half day's work. The culvert budget is overspent, so the money will come from the General Fund.

Motion to accept the culvert agreement on West Mountain Road carried 3-1-0. (Mr. Metcalfe opposed.)

6. Dust Control Plan:

Chairman McClintock stated that Board members had received materials on dust control, but that Road Foreman Ron Daniels could not be here tonight for discussion. Chairman McClintock believes it is a mistake to eliminate calcium chloride entirely from the budget, and that they need to have a plan to use it on a regular basis to maintain gravel road surfaces. Otherwise, they may end up spending more on road maintenance.

Mr. Pennebaker noted that calcium chloride is not currently used heavily enough on Town roads to maintain road surfaces. There was discussion of costs and methods of using calcium chloride, and of the need to identify heavily traveled roads. Chairman McClintock stated that Mr. Daniels needs to be in on this, so they will wait for his input.

7. Current Budget Adjustments Work Session:

Chairman McClintock stated that Karen Mellinger, who is not present tonight, had suggested that Board members look at budget areas to be capped, with the intention to do ongoing reassessment as the year goes on. He said that he has a proposal, and asked for input from other Board members. Mr. Pennebaker reported that there have been good results from methane remediation, and this will free up more money from the landfill fund.

Chairman McClintock said that they should set a target amount that represents the potential budget shortfall. He calculated that the fuel deficit and the projected shortfall in building permit fees comes to \$42,500, so a \$45,000 goal seems appropriate. Ms. Morse asked if he included interest on the tax anticipation note. Chairman McClintock added \$6,000 to the target figure for interest. Ms. Morse noted that there may be a longer delay than usual in receiving tax funds this year, so they may need to carry some of the note longer. She suggested \$10,000 for interest. That would make the target \$55,000.

Chairman McClintock calculated that \$20,000 could be applied to the target amount from the landfill fund. For the rest, he proposed spending freezes on \$5,000 from reappraisal funds, \$1,000 from Development Review Board (DRB) professional services, \$1,000 from tree warden funds, and \$4,000 from the fire department equipment fund. \$12,000 would be frozen until spring from highway department funds, and there would be \$10,000 budget reductions for gravel and for calcium chloride. \$1600 would be saved from the fire department insurance and bond payment.

Chairman McClintock said that these items could be looked at in the spring, and funds liberated if the budget permits. If the \$20,000 from the landfill fund is added in, this totals \$52,500. He proposed that they inform department heads and give them a chance for feedback. Mr. Pennebaker stated that he would like to avoid raising the tax rate this year because he thinks it will be a terrible year for people.

Chairman McClintock noted that they should have spent 25% of the budget by now, and have spent 17%. In two weeks it should be at 25%. He asked Mr. Chrostowsky why they are doing so well, and he replied that department heads have been paying attention and working hard to cut expenses, and should be given kudos. There was discussion of winter overtime, and of the need to set a goal of a forty-hour work week for winter.

Ms. Morse asked about a \$3000 mower tractor expense, and Mr. Chrostowsky replied that it was for repairs to the mower, which is used for spot mowing in problem areas. Ms. Morse said she is concerned about cutting \$10,000 for gravel and would like to look for other budget areas that money could come from. Chairman McClintock noted that they have not budgeted for income from brush disposal, and Mr. Pennebaker added that there will be income from access stickers. Mr. Chrostowsky said that this money is helping meet the projected shortfall in transfer station management fees.

There was discussion of the possibility of pushing more brush into the empty area at the landfill where the brush pile was moved. This could save on the \$4,000 budgeted for tub grinding. Mr. Pennebaker will ask Buzz Surwillo of the Agency of Natural Resources about this. Ms. Morse noted that they have spent \$11,000 of the \$20,000 allotted for highway construction and maintenance subcontracting. \$6,000 will be needed for grading, so \$2,000 might be saved. Chairman McClintock said that the landfill cap debt payment was \$1500 less than budgeted.

It was agreed that department heads should be given the dollar amounts to be cut and it should be their decision what to cut. They should come in for discussion next week. All Board members agreed on suggested cuts

8. Howard Park Capital Campaign Committee:

Chairman McClintock asked the Board to authorize the appointment of a committee to determine whether it's viable to conduct a capital campaign for Howard Park. He said he has discussed the situation with trustees. The park's Recreation Fund has \$92,000 which may be used as the Board sees fit. The trustees have been paying the income from the fund to the Town for park maintenance, retaining and reinvesting the capital gains. Some of the principal has been used over the years, but it is not known for what.

Chairman McClintock noted that yearly Fund income is \$4,000, while park maintenance and programs total \$13,750, so \$7,000-\$8,000 per year has had to come from the General Fund. He would like to try to raise money in the community to build up the Recreation Fund.

Mr. Pennebaker made motion to authorize appointment of a committee to explore a Howard Park capital campaign. Ms. Morse seconded.

Ms. Morse asked why this needs to be authorized by the Select Board. She said that it would have been nice to have the trustees and the Recreation Committee at the table so all could ask questions and have a conversation. Chairman McClintock said the reason for a motion is so that people feel they have the formal support of the Board. Ms. Morse said that they should make sure the Recreation Committee is in on this because it is important for all to work together.

Larry Johnson asked where this initiative is coming from. Since no one from the Recreation Committee is here, it seems as though the Select Board is taking it upon itself. Mr. Chrostowsky and Chairman McClintock explained that the Select Board has oversight, and that year after year they were passing budgets with a deficit for Howard Park maintenance. Last year they increased the budget to reflect actual spending on the park. Chairman McClintock stated that people have good feelings about the park and he thinks many would want to support it.

There was discussion of what capital campaign funds would be used for and how much should be raised. Chairman McClintock said these would be matters for the committee to decide. Alice Miller said she had given a grant application to the Recreation Committee, but Mr. Chrostowsky noted that there is no money for matching funds. Rep. Miller said she would be happy to explore possible state support.

Motion to authorize appointment of a committee to explore a Howard Park capital campaign carried 4-0-0.

9. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes:

September 8, 2008 Select Board minutes

Ms. Morse made motion to approve September 8, 2008 minutes. Mr. Pennebaker seconded.

The following corrections to the September 8, 2008 minutes were requested:

On page 3, Item 8 (Budget Deficit Reduction Plan), paragraph three, the following sentence is inserted after the first sentence:

He had emailed all Board members summarizing what took place in the special August 20 Board meeting.

On page 4, Item 10 (Set Tax Rate), first paragraph, second sentence is changed to:

The rate will be .5091 per hundred, which is an increase of 4 to 4.5 cents, or about 7.8%.

Motion to approve September 8, 2008 minutes as amended carried 4-0-0.

10. Review and Approve Warrants:

The following warrants were presented for approval:

Transfer Warrant: \$ 19,804.32

Ms. Morse made motion to pay the Transfer Warrant. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

General Warrant AP#10-3: \$ 1800.00 (Highway Dept. pickup truck)

Ms. Morse made motion to pay AP Warrant #10-3. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

General Warrant AP#10-2: \$ 540.00 (postcards and reappraisal expenses)

Ms. Morse made motion to pay AP Warrant #10-2. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Payroll Warrant PR#11: \$ 8,489.59

Ms. Morse made motion to pay PR Warrant #11. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

11. Town Administrator Report:

Mr. Chrostowsky reported that he, Henri Billow, Mert Snow, and Ms. Mellinger pulled together paperwork for consultant Bill Hall of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, for his work on the accounting change. They should hear back from him next week.

Mr. Chrostowsky stated that bond vote article language had been completed and sent to the printer. He reported that the swap shed will be ready for October 1 opening. There will be a sign and a public announcement so operating rules are clear.

Mr. Chrostowsky reported that landfill mowing should be completed this week. He reported that plans are complete for work on the methane remediation project, which will involve digging a

trench and burying a conduit.

12. Other Business:

Ms. Morse reported that the Solid Waste Implementation Plan will have a new coordinator, but the same company will be retained.

Mr. Pennebaker reported that the Planning Commission has almost the first draft of the Town Plan revision. The Select Board will be invited to comment.

Chairman McClintock asked if Mr. Chrostowsky found out whether firemen are covered by Town insurance for the coin drop. Mr. Chrostowsky will check on this.

Ms. Morse made motion to go into Executive Session (Personnel). Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.

The meeting went into Executive Session at 8:52 PM.

The meeting went out of Executive Session at 9:15 PM.

The Board discussed whether we should meet weekly. The Board agreed to meet next Monday to work on the Town Administrator's evaluation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Swasta