

Town of Shaftsbury Select Board

January 16, 2024

In person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Water Board meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 6:03 p.m. Present were selectpersons Art Whitman (chair, presiding via Zoom), Martha Cornwell, and Mike Cichanowski. Also present was town administrator David Kiernan.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes

Mr. Cichanowski moved to accept the December 4, 2023 minutes. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

Ms. Cornwell moved to accept the December 18, 2023 minutes. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

4. Executive session

Ms. Cornwell moved to enter executive session to discuss legal matters. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

5. Adjournment

Ms. Cornwell moved to adjourn at 6:22 p.m. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

Select Board meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 6:31 p.m. Present were selectpersons Art Whitman (chair, presiding via Zoom), Martha Cornwell, Naomi Miller, and Mike Cichanowski. Also present was town administrator David Kiernan. Mr. Whitman announced that two items on the agenda, the budget and the town meeting warning, will not be discussed. In an addition, he will ask the board to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel issue.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes

There were none.

4. Warrants

- Check warrant #27, \$28,627.04. Ms. Miller moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

- Check warrant #28, \$463.25 (a 25% deposit for repairs to the roof). Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.
- VMERS warrant #3A, \$15,008.56. Ms. Cornwell moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.
- Payroll warrant #14, \$26,394.09. Ms. Miller moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.
- Payroll warrant #13, \$29,349.31. Ms. Cornwell moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

5. Announcements

Mr. Whitman noted that all petitions are due to the Town Clerk by January 29.

Committee members are needed for Cole Hall, Town Green, Economic Development, and Sewer Feasibility committees. If interested, please send a letter of interest to Mr. Kiernan.

Mr. Kiernan noted that the BCRC will host its monthly meeting at Cole Hall on Thursday January 18 beginning at 5:30 p.m. Light dinner will be provided. Public hearings will be held on the Woodford and Sunderland Town Plan. Ms. Cornwell will provide an update on the Shaftsbury economic development committee's activities. Other items will also be addressed.

6. Public Comments

There were none.

7. Treasurers Report

Ms. Dexter reported that an arrangement with a 2023 taxpayer has been successfully closed. The cash balance is lower than usual because Ms. Dexter hasn't yet moved monies from Reserve funds. Voter approved transfers from the reserves were accomplished.

8. Screening Ordinance for Solar Projects

The board was unable to bring up a copy of the revised version. (Computers, the internet, and iPhones were causing significant problems this evening.) The item was therefore tabled.

9. Host town agreement with Shaftsbury Solar

Mr. Whitman asked for a motion to reopen the discussion tabled at the last meeting. Ms. Cornwell moved to reopen the previously tabled discussion. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0. Mr. Whitman said at the last meeting it was agreed that statements regarding which parts of East Road can be used should be entered. They are now covered, Also, item 6b was further clarified. Mr. Whitman said the Town Attorney reviewed the revised version and sent it to Shaftsbury Solar, which signed it. It is that signed version, sent out to Board members around 4 p.m. today, that under discussion. Mr. Whitman noted that the version makes no reference to neighbor issues but instead leaves them for the neighbors to pursue. Mr. Whitman asked for a roll call vote, which ensued as follows: Mr. Cichanowski: aye; Ms. Cornwell, aye; Ms. Miller, aye; Mr. Whitman, aye. Mr. Whitman will have copies of the document made, will sign it, and will send it along to the Town Attorney. Ms. Miller thanked the Town Administrator for his work on the agreement.

10. Committee appointments

Ms. Miller reported that Emily Cowperthwaite, who formerly served on the Economic Development committee, has applied to serve on the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission recommends that the Select Board appoint her to the Commission. Ms. Cornwell also supported Ms. Cowperthwaite. Mr. Cichanowski moved to appoint Emily Cowperthwaite to a three-year term on the Planning Commission. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Ms. Cornwell reported that Shari Miller, who has a background in web design and fundraising, has expressed an interest in joining the Economic Development committee. Ms. Cornwell recommended that the Select Board so appoint her. Ms. Miller moved to appoint Ms. Shari Miller to the Economic Development committee. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

11. Real estate purchase

Mr. Whitman reported that the Town has a signed contract with owners of 43 Buck Hill Road, the structure behind Cole Hall. The contract stipulates that the contract will come into effect as of April 15, at which time the occupants will move out. He said he will share this announcement again at the next two Select Board meetings, to give citizens a chance to comment.

12. DPW report

Mr. Kiernan said the crew was very busy last week responding to the wind storm, and at present is dealing with the snow storm. Mr. Whitman noted that the storm highlighted the need to be proactive in managing roadside trees.

13. Town Administrator exit planning

Mr. Kiernan clarified that Ms. Cornwell will be contact for ARPA. Mr. Kiernan will have RCS Consulting create a new email address to which all town administrator emails will be forwarded for the near future. He said Mr. Krulikowski should be in charge of distributing such emails to board members, and of checking Mr. Kiernan's phone messages (it can be done remotely). Mr. Kiernan will notify all affected of whom the board and staff contact persons are for each task. Mr. Whitman will create each agenda by the Wednesday morning previous to the next Select Board meeting. The Zoning Administrator will get the agenda and meeting materials out. The January 29 meeting will be essentially to pay bills. The budget and town meeting balloting meeting must be held no later than Monday January 22.

14. Other Business

Mr. Kiernan noted that Joan Vargo is leaving at the end of the month. He proposes to contract with Toni Roan, for \$850 monthly for a minimum of two months. Ms. Roan has her own accounting and tax document preparation business and is very experienced. Mr. Cichanowski moved to hire Toni Roan Accounting and Tax Services for a minimum of two months at \$850 monthly. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Mr. Kiernan reported that the Town pays thousands of dollars annually to service a generator located at the Elementary School, but the School is not an official emergency shelter. He recommended that going forward the School be in charge of maintaining the generator.

Mr. Cichanowski said twelve persons have submitted resumes for the Town Administrator position. Mr. Kiernan said the ad closes on January 29. Interviews should start the second week of February. The new administrator should be in place by May.

15. Review of Action Items

- Mr. Whitman will sign the host town agreement and send it to the Town Attorney.
- Mr. Kiernan will ensure the real estate purchase contract is appropriately filed.

16. Executive session, personnel issue.

Ms. Miller moved to enter executive session on a personnel matter at 7:27 p.m. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.