

## MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SELECT BOARD

JANUARY 12, 2009

COLE HALL

SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT

**Board Present:** Lon McClintock (Chairman), Bill Pennebaker, Karen Mellinger, Wynn Metcalfe

**Others Present:** Larry Johnson, Henri Billow (Treasurer), Joe Vadakin (Fire Chief), Aaron Chrostowsky (Town Administrator), Susan Swasta (Recording Secretary)

**1. Call Meeting to Order:**

Chairman Lon McClintock called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. He announced that this will be a budget work session. Chairman McClintock noted that there are two separate issues: this year's budget and next year's budget. He asked that the Board concentrate on one at a time.

**2. Announcements:**

Wynn Metcalfe announced that Trevor Mance, owner of TAM, had told him that he will not be able to follow through on the discussion they had because the numbers do not make sense.

**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. Budget Work Session:**

Fire Chief Joe Vadakin came to the table for discussion. Chairman McClintock asked him whether any of the items in his list of equipment for purchase next year could be purchased this year. Chief Vadakin replied that he could possibly buy \$1,000 worth of foam and some partial replacement bunker gear. There was discussion of how much money remains in the equipment fund. After truck repairs, there is \$6,000.

Ms. Mellinger asked about billing insurance companies for fire department services, and Chief Vadakin stated that they can only bill for car accidents. This is already being done, but Vermont does not require payment. Ms. Mellinger said it might be worth bringing this matter up again with the new legislature. Chief Vadakin said he is willing to contact Rep. Alice Miller again. He has discussed this with her in the past.

There was discussion of other fire equipment needs. Chief Vadakin said he will get costs for replacement bunker gear. Ms. Mellinger asked Mr. Chrostowsky to break out fire department cell phone expenses and put them under utilities instead of communications. He will do this for next week. Chief Vadakin reported that the boiler in the main fire house went down and had to be repaired last week. The repairman said it is time for a new boiler, which would pay for itself in increased efficiency. Chief Vadakin will get estimates for the future. He will also get an estimate for programmable thermostats. Chief Vadakin reported that one of the fire trucks needs body work and tires. There was a brief discussion

of this. There were no further questions for Chief Vadakin. They thanked him for attending.

Chairman McClintock asked about Emergency Management Director Jerry Mattison's budget. Ms. Mellinger said that in the past he has asked for the same amount as the previous year, and suggested they do the same this time.

The Board went over the adjustments made to address this year's budget deficit. After a \$10,000 cut in calcium chloride, a \$25,000 cut in paving, and a \$10,000 reimbursement from the landfill reserve fund, a deficit of \$18,845 remains. As had been decided previously, this will be covered with new taxes.

There was discussion of the cemetery fund. Chairman McClintock suggested appropriating \$7,000 instead of \$8,000 because there is already \$7,100 in the account. They will hold off on deciding until the bid for mowing is opened next week. Chairman McClintock also suggested that they could wait until later in the year before releasing \$4,000 in park funds.

Mr. Metcalfe asked why they cannot give taxpayers just one budget format in the Town report. Chairman McClintock said both are needed because last year and this year cannot be compared without using both formats. Otherwise the numbers don't line up. After further discussion, Mr. Metcalfe said that the budget presentation must be as clear as possible, and using both formats is too confusing. He agreed with a suggestion by Mr. Chrostowsky that people be informed that the new format will be available in June.

Ms. Mellinger agreed that it is confusing. She said that it is critical to explain the deficit numbers, and why the Board chose to switch from a cash basis to a modified accrual system, but it is not critical for people to understand how it was done. Mr. Pennebaker also agreed, saying the important thing is that people understand that it doesn't affect the bottom line.

Chairman McClintock said that everyone seems to be on the same page with how to do the budget for Town meeting. He would now like to proceed with adopting the new budget format. He asked for recommendations for changes, stating that they may change it in whatever way makes sense to them. Several changes in names of headings and other terms were made on both the revenue and expense sides. It was decided to break fuel costs out of utilities for each department, and to move tree removal expenses from Tree Warden to the Highway Department. Chairman McClintock asked that education be taken out of the General Fund, since it is a liability.

**Ms. Mellinger made motion approve the new budget format as amended, and to present the budget in the Town Report in the old format, with language explaining the new budget format and informing people that the new format will be available in June. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

## **6. Town Administrator Job :**

Chairman McClintock stated that the Board needs to authorize the issuing of the job announcement. Mr. Chrostowsky went over advertising costs and made recommendations for advertising. There was discussion of the job description, and of what should be emphasized in the ad. Mr. Chrostowsky stated that this requires Board consensus, because this is an important position and they need to be very clear in order to be fair to the new person. Ms. Billow recommended using a shorter ad, and having the ad say to contact the Town office or Web site for more information. Mr. Chrostowsky reiterated that they need to be clear, and recommended that they draw up an organizational chart. Ms. Mellinger said that they need to go forward with this now.

**Ms. Mellinger made motion to formally begin the process of recruiting for a Town Administrator replacement by placing advertising as recommended by the present Town Administrator. Mr. Pennebaker seconded.**

Larry Johnson confirmed that the advertising money will come from the General Fund. Ms. Mellinger asked if they should take out the ad section on responsibilities. Chairman McClintock said that they can pare it down. Mr. Chrostowsky will send out an email of the description for comment before sending it.

**Motion to begin the Town Administrator recruiting process by placing advertising for the position carried 4-0-0.**

## **7. General Budget Deliberations:**

Mr. Metcalfe stated that it makes sense to look at estimated cash flow to see how far in the hole they are. Ms. Mellinger said there is a \$99,290 shortfall if no money comes in from the state. Chairman McClintock said that he believes they will get 75% of the state money, which would still leave a \$51,000 shortfall for the year. Mr. Metcalfe asked if they will try to take that amount out of the budget, or add it to the \$18,000 deficit to be covered by taxes. Mr. Pennebaker said he suspects they will do both. Mr. Metcalfe said that even at 50/50, this would mean cutting major services.

Chairman McClintock suggested that they could run a deficit to be paid by taxes or by economic stimulus revenue. Ms. Mellinger suggested that two different scenarios could be presented at Town Meeting, but Mr. Metcalfe and Chairman McClintock responded that the Board's job is to do the budget. Mr. Metcalfe said that people will get riled up over deficit numbers. He asked if they want to reduce the budget by \$55,000. Chairman McClintock recommended that they meet again on the budget before Monday. They agreed to meet Saturday at 8:30 AM.

Chairman McClintock went over Highway Department sand, salt, fuel, and overtime figures. No overtime was added last week.

#### **8. Town Administrator Update:**

Mr. Chrostowsky suggested increasing dog license fees.

**Ms. Mellinger made motion to increase the Town surcharge on dog license fees by \$3.00. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

Mr. Chrostowsky asked Board permission to have a car parked on Town property towed after informing the owners it will be towed. Board members approved. He asked about cars parked in the road during snowstorms and snow being dumped in the road. Mr. Metcalfe said this is covered by state ordinance. Ms. Mellinger suggested putting a notice in the paper. Mr. Chrostowsky stated that he needs Board approval of the health reimbursement account (HRA) resolution. Chairman McClintock read the resolution.

**Ms. Mellinger made motion to approve the health reimbursement account (HRA) resolution. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

#### **8. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes:**

##### January 5, 2009 Select Board minutes

Approval of the January 5 minutes was postponed because not all Board members had read them.

#### **9. Review and Approve Warrants::**

The following warrants were presented for approval:

Reserve Warrant:           \$   60,000.00

**Ms. Mellinger made motion to pay Reserve Warrant. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

Appropriations Warrant:   \$   53,964.00

**Mr. Pennebaker made motion to pay Appropriations Warrant. Ms. Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

General Warrant AP#29:   \$   88,305.50 (salt, sand, gravel, diesel, reappraisal)

**Mr. Pennebaker made motion to pay AP Warrant #29. Ms. Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

Payroll Warrant PR#28:   \$   9,059.33

**Ms. Mellinger made motion to pay PR Warrant #28 Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

**11. Other Business:**

Noting the recent shooting in Albany, Mr. Metcalfe stated that Town Constable Dave Hertzfeld should not be doing car stops. Others agreed.

Mr. Metcalfe stated that the Town Plan may require a thirty-day notice, not a fifteen-day notice. Mr. Chrostowsky said that it is a fifteen-day notice. It is noticed for January 27. Chairman McClintock said that the Select Board will need to hold two public hearings. He also said that the Board does not now have the authority to approve the Town Plan, so it will have to go on the Australian ballot. This means that Board members should email any changes to the Planning Commission by January 27. This will be the only time for substantive changes.

Ms. Mellinger reported that she has two grant proposals going in Thursday, and that one page needs to be signed by an authorized official. She asked Board approval to act as an authorized official.

**Mr. Metcalfe made motion for Karen Mellinger to be named an authorized official for the grant application. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

**Mr. Pennebaker made motion to adjourn. Ms. Mellinger seconded.**

**The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Swasta

-