

**MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SELECT BOARD**

**DECEMBER 15, 2008**

**COLE HALL**

**SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT**

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

**Others Present: Larry Johnson, Peggi Price (Ancient Roads Committee), 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:

**Wynn Metcalfe commented that last week's freezing rain is more expensive for road crews to deal with than snow, because it is necessary to keep going back to salt and sand roads. Chairman McClintock stated that they are now doing grading and are spot treating some areas with gravel. They are also checking culverts due to high water.**

**Aaron Chrostowsky thanked the Garden Club for a successful holiday tree lighting. Chairman McClintock thanked Kent Coonradt and the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.**

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. Town Administrator Position and Recruitment:

**Chairman McClintock stated that the Select Board recently received a letter of resignation from Town Administrator Aaron Chrostowsky, effective February 27, 2009. He expressed appreciation for all of the hard work Mr. Chrostowsky has done for the Town and wished him success.**

Cinda Morse made motion to accept, with regret, Mr. Chrostowsky's letter of resignation as Town Administrator. Mr. Metcalfe seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

**Chairman McClintock stated that they should begin the process of hiring a new Town Administrator. Mr. Metcalfe suggested that this be moved to the end of the meeting, so that those who are waiting on other agenda items can go ahead. All agreed.**

6. Ancient Roads Update:

Ancient Roads Committee Chairwoman Peggi Price came to the table for discussion. She reported that the Committee has been transcribing hand-written documents on Town roads. They took field trips over the summer. The Committee created a color-coded map showing roads from old maps that are not on the highway map. Ms. Price put this map on the table for examination. She said they now need to find documentation on these roads. Committee members have walked a number of them, and found that many are observable. They will go through Town records to seek documentation on why the roads were dropped from the highway map.

Chairman McClintock asked what deadlines the Committee is working under, and Ms. Price replied that they have received a one-year extension. Chairman McClintock asked if they would tentatively like to see any of the roads studied preserved as trails. Ms. Price replied that there are many observable roads they would like to preserve as trails. The problem is in identifying non-observable roads. They are working on that now.

Ms. Morse asked if observable roads will end up back on the map. Ms. Price replied that they will have to prove the Town has rights to them. There is not as much time pressure on observable roads, so they are concentrating on unobservable ones. Mr. Chrostowsky said that observable roads won't continue as legal trails even if they are continued as trails. They will come off the map as legal rights of way. Ms. Price disagreed, saying that in her opinion observable roads are not covered by Ancient Roads legislation. The situation is not clear. She noted that two roads have been closed off to the public, and they need to find out if that is legal.

Chairman McClintock asked if the Committee will finish identifying roads by summer, and she replied that they probably have to finish by then. Ms. Morse said it is important for them to be clear on what roads need to go back on the map, and by when. They need to be sure what is covered. Ms. Price said they have asked for clarification, but have not received it. The Committee asked Town Attorney Rob Woolmington about a legal interpretation. They believe there is no timeline on observable roads.

Ms. Mellinger asked if this should be run by an expert on Ancient Roads, so they can be sure. Mr. Chrostowsky said that money is set aside in the grant to pay a consultant. After discussion of possible consultants, it was decided that Mr. Chrostowsky and Chairman McClintock will work with Ms. Price to identify an authority, and the Board will then sign off on their choice. They thanked Ms. Price for the Committee's work.

#### 7. Paving:

Mr. Chrostowsky stated that some paving projects that had been scheduled for this past season had been canceled because of water project and sidewalk work. The Board had also taken \$30,000 in paving money out of the budget to help meet the deficit. He explained that there are two types of paving projects. Class 2 roads are funded by paving grant money, with an 80%-20% state allocation and Town match. Using a \$58,000 grant, Church Street was paved this fall and there is money to pave Cleveland Avenue.

Non-class 2 roads are paved with money from the paving reserve fund. This fund also covers grant matches. Mr. Chrostowsky went over the paving work and grant matches paid out of the fund last year. He stated that the fund is now short \$11,000 for scheduled projects, and recommended putting \$15,000 in the fund for next year. There was discussion of paving costs, and it was decided to put \$15,000 in the paving reserve fund and \$15,000 in the General Fund for paving.

#### 8. Health Insurance:

Chairman McClintock stated that Mr. Chrostowsky and Ms. Mellinger had met with a Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) representative on health insurance. They were told that there is the potential for a 16%-17% increase with the current plan. Ms. Morse asked if they can still change plans at this stage, and Ms. Mellinger replied that they can change before December 19.

Mr. Chrostowsky went over the proposed cost increases with the CIGNA plan. He stated that they could change to a high deductible health reimbursement plan (HRA) at a lower annual cost. There was discussion of how a health reimbursement plan would work, and how the Town and employee shares of the deductible amount would be handled.

Ms. Mellinger explained that they would choose the Town's share of the deductible, and no longer deduct money from paychecks, but let employees know they will be responsible for their deductible amount. She is not sure if it would be possible for the Town to have an HRA, and employees to have Health Savings Accounts (HSA). The cost for an HRA would be \$105,000 for the Town, as opposed to \$120,000 for the current insurance plan. Ms. Morse noted that HRA money can be rolled over if not used. If employees are healthy, money is saved.

There was discussion of meeting the Friday deadline, and it was decided that Ms. Mellinger and Mr. Chrostowsky will speak with the company representative tomorrow to get questions answered. Chairman McClintock will try to take part in the phone call. The Board will meet Wednesday morning. Mr. Chrostowsky said he has a meeting scheduled with the company representative and Town employees on Thursday morning.

Mr. Metcalfe asked if the Town has the option of deducting money from paychecks so that employees have money put aside to meet deductible medical costs. There was discussion of whether the employee share should pay for the insurance premium, the deductible, or a combination. Ms. Morse noted that if employee money funds only the premium, it will reduce the "donut hole" before the deductible is met.

Chairman McClintock noted that HRA's and HSA's are intended to make consumers aware of health care spending, and if they take that away, people lose that awareness. Ms. Morse suggested it may be possible for employees to have a choice, or for there to be a transition process. Ms. Mellinger said they might consider a bonus for saving money. Ms. Morse stated that she thinks they need to go with an HRA or HSA because of costs. It was agreed that the Board will meet Wednesday or Thursday to make a decision.

5. Town Administrator Position and Recruitment: (cont'd.)

Chairman McClintock said he has the description of the town administrator position from the web site and from the last hiring process. He also received a letter from VLCT on recruitment. They will need to decide whether to involve VLCT in the hiring process.

Ms. Morse said they need a full job description, a budget, and a timeline. She suggested that a part time bookkeeper may be needed as well as a full time administrator. She suggested that they email back and forth on the job description, and be ready with a plan at the beginning of the year.

Mr. Metcalfe stated that they need to figure out what they want before writing a job description, and noted that they may not be able to afford what they want. Some want a bookkeeper, some do not. He suggested holding a working session to discuss what they want. It was agreed to hold a work session next week, after the budget session.

There was discussion of working up a budget for the search process. Mr. Chrostowsky suggested that they do not need to pay \$6,000 for VLCT services when much of this is advertising, and there are cheaper ways to advertise. He suggested some. Mr. Metcalfe stated that they did not pay anything close to that last time, and had had a good field of candidates. He suggested using VLCT only if they do not like the candidates they get.

9. Other Business:

Chairman McClintock stated that they all received a report on winter maintenance from Mr. Chrostowsky. Ms. Morse said that they do not need to automatically spend the amount allocated

on overtime. She does not want to present it as a monthly allocation, but would like a 40-hour week as a basis. Chairman McClintock said that the form is not intended to say "we have this to spend," but to make them aware of how quickly it is being spent so they can watch it.

Review and Approve Meeting Warrants:

**The following warrants were presented for approval:**

**General Warrant AP#25: \$ 32,786.58 (reappraisal, salt, sand, gravel, health insurance, tires)**

Ms. Morse made motion to pay AP Warrant #25. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

**General Warrant AP#26: \$ 1,584.00 (gift certificates, postage, employee expenses)**

Ms. Morse made motion to pay AP Warrant #26. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

**Payroll Warrant PR#24: \$ 9,454.37**

Ms. Morse made motion to pay Payroll Warrant #24. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

**Ms. Metcalfe stated that they need to have a discussion with Peckham about the section of Airport Road between their pit and the paved part. He said it is impassable, and this is caused by their trucks.**

**Ms. Mellinger reported that there is a dead tree across from Angie Abbatello's house that was supposed to be taken care of. Mr. Chrostowsky said that CVPS has to wrap wires before the work is done, and he was told this cannot be done for a month. Mr. Chrostowsky said he told CVPS this is not acceptable, and that he has communicated with the Town's contractor about it. Mr. Metcalfe noted that CVPS trucks are tied up after the recent storms.**

Ms. Morse made motion to adjourn. Mr. Pennebaker seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Susan Swasta**