

**MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SELECT BOARD
OCTOBER 15, 2007
COLE HALL
SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT**

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

Others Present: **Mike Gleason (Bennington Banner), Henri Billow (Town Treasurer), Tyler Resch, Mark Bolhardt, Aaron Chrostowsky (Town Administrator), Susan Swasta (Recording Secretary)**

1. Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Wynn Metcalfe called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He asked if any Board member needed to recuse himself or herself from discussion of any topic on tonight's agenda. None did.

2. Minutes:

October 1, 2007 Select Board minutes

Cinda Morse made motion to approve the October 1, 2007 minutes. Bill Pennebaker seconded.

The following corrections to the October 1 minutes were requested:

On page 6, under item 7 (Other Business), in the fifth paragraph, first sentence, "Mr. McClintock" is changed to "Chairman Metcalfe."

On page 6, under item 9 (Discuss Budget Process), in the third paragraph, second sentence is changed to:

She asked if they want to use zero sum budgeting, rather than having department heads start with last year's budget and add increases -- perhaps 3-5%.

Motion to approve October 1, 2007 minutes as amended carried 5-0-0.

3. Warrants:

The following warrants were presented for approval:

AP #18 -	\$ 13,967.73	General Warrant (includes stone and gravel)
PR #15 -	\$ 6,597.51	Payroll Warrant
Retirement Wt. #16-1 -	\$ 6.31	Retirement Warrant

Ms. Morse made motion to pay warrants. Karen Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

4. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

5. Treasurer's Report on Taxes:

Town Treasurer Henri Billow came to the table to give the Treasurer's Report.

Chairman Metcalfe asked her to talk about the new tax bill, which reflects the change of tax prebates going to the Town instead of to individual taxpayers. Ms. Billow said that there is an extra line on tax bills now to show the prebate amount.

She reported that the Town has received \$577, 812 in rebates from the state, and because of this has not had to take out a tax note. The money was put into certificates of deposit with a slightly

higher interest rate.

Ms. Billow stated that the Town has received \$120 from late filers and \$657.50 from the 1% late fees. Interest earned from July to September is \$3,608.63. Since \$2500 was budgeted as an expense, this will not have to be spent.

Chairman Metcalfe noted that the Town had made about \$5000 between interest and budgeted money they did not have to spend. Ms. Mellinger asked what the impact will be from the increase in the veteran's exemption.

Ms. Billow replied that the state has voted to increase the exemption to \$20,000, and may vote to increase it to \$40,000. She said that Shaftsbury has ten veterans now at the \$20,000 rate, so this can be multiplied by the tax rate to get the amount. Ms. Mellinger would like to get the figure so they can know the impact in advance.

Lon McClintock asked if the Grand List can be broken down by commercial, industrial, and residential. Ms. Billow replied that they could probably get that from the listers. Mr. Chrostowsky will ask them for that break-down.

Ms. Morse asked about reappraisal, and Chairman Metcalfe said that they will have the head lister come in and talk to the Board about reappraisal.

6. Discussion of Parties on Ballot:

Tyler Resch, chairman of the Shaftsbury Democratic Committee, came to the table for the discussion. Mr. Resch stated that when he served on the Select Board, they had thought it would reduce political partisanship to get rid of political labels on ballots, and they had done so.

At that time, few other Vermont towns used party labels. He now regrets the action, and thinks that candidates should run on party labels.

Mr. Resch said that he thinks it would be informative for the public in terms of letting voters know who is more conservative and who is more progressive. He stated that [Vermont Secretary of State] Deb Markowitz said party labels can be used, and noted that the Democratic caucus has voted to reinstate them.

Ms. Morse asked if other towns have gone back to using labels. Mr. Resch replied that he does not know, but that it was a strong Shaftsbury tradition before it was stopped.

Ms. Morse asked if, given that it was stopped because of political divisiveness, they want to go back there. Mr. Resch said that people would still have the option to run independently. He thinks it would be good to go back.

Chairman Metcalfe stated that he wants to hear from the Republican caucus on this. He personally thinks it has worked well not having labels. Ms. Morse suggested that when the Republicans are invited to come in, that Mr. Resch also attend so that everyone is here at the same time.

7. Transfer Station Update:

Mr. Chrostowsky asked for questions on the transfer station report. Ms. Mellinger asked what months are included in the management fee, and Chairman Metcalfe replied that May, June, July, and August are included. He said that solid waste removal expenses also includes May. Ms. Mellinger asked if revenue includes May, and was told that it does not.

She remarked that it looks like Pay As You Throw (PAYT) expenses are more than revenue, but that is because of the extra month in expenses. Mr. Chrostowsky agreed, and said it is also because the Town is paying for two hours a week of methane readings. Some of that will be reimbursed by the state. So they are actually closer to breaking even.

Mr. Chrostowsky stated that he has discovered that they are paying \$100 a month for electricity for the shed, and will check to see what the problem is, since there is clearly something wrong.

He noted that attendance figures show that Tuesday is a busier day, but they are open longer that day. Mornings are a little busier.

Mr. McClintock asked if the amount of waste is dropping off, and Mr. Chrostowsky replied that it is. Mr. Pennebaker stated that this is because TAM no longer brings in waste. Mr. Chrostowsky said that it is also dropping off apart from this. Mr. McClintock said it would be interesting to see if recycling is increasing.

8. Other Business:

Mr. Pennebaker reported that he is still working on an automated methane recording system. He said that it would now work for the Eastman's, but not for the Town wells because of the moisture in the wells. He is working on a way to trap moisture.

Ms. Mellinger brought up the noise ordinance and said she would like to figure out where they want to go with it. Chairman Metcalfe asked Mr. Chrostowsky to get copies of the ordinance to Board members and put it on the next agenda.

Ms. Morse said they had scheduled a follow-up meeting for zoning bylaw language for October 23 at 5:00 PM.

Mr. McClintock said he had been informed by Dave Newell that the fireman's accident medical expense benefit is now \$5000. The next level would be \$10,000, at an additional \$140 in premiums. They may want to think about it for next year.

Mr. McClintock reported that he had talked to attorney Jim Barlow about the concept of intended functional use, and Mr. McClintock's sense that it involves size and capacity. He stated that Mr. Barlow had said that he does think it incorporates the concept of size and capacity, but that there has been no Supreme Court decision on it.

Chairman Metcalfe stated that there will be a budget time line next week. He reported that there will be a discussion of the work camp on October 24 at 5:00 PM. He is still waiting to hear back from two people. Ms. Morse asked that the Economic Development Committee be informed of the meeting, and Mr. Chrostowsky said that Art Whitman was told.

Chairman Metcalfe asked Mr. Chrostowsky to find out if Cleveland Avenue will be closed for Halloween.

Mr. Chrostowsky said that brochures from Neighborworks of Vermont were put in Board mailboxes. He has invited Neighborworks to give a presentation at the November 5 meeting. He thinks it is a good program for residents to know about.

Mr. Chrostowsky discussed the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) wellness program. He said some employees are interested in the weight loss and physical fitness challenge. He asked Board members to let him know if they want to participate.

Ms. Mellinger noted that there is a health insurance rebate for those in the program. Mr. Chrostowsky asked if the Board approves paying \$2 for employees to participate, and they agreed that this is OK.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Swasta