

**Town of Shaftsbury  
Selectboard Special Meeting  
6:30PM  
Monday, November 9, 2015  
Cole Hall, 61 Buck Hill Road, Shaftsbury**

**Selectboard Members Present: Tim Scoggins (Chair), Mitch Race, Tony Krulikowski, Ken Harrington**

**Absent: Art Whitman**

**TA Present: David Kiernan**

**Others Present: Joe Vadakin, Fire Chief**

**SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

**6:30PM Special Meeting**

**Regular Business**

**1. Call to Order**

Tim Scoggins (Chair) called the meeting to order at 6:30PM

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Motion: Tim Scoggins moved to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting on November 2, 2014. Ken Harrington seconded

4-0-0 Motion approved.

**3. Approval of Warrants**

NONE

**4. Conflict of Interest Statement**

Mitchell Race announced that he is on the Solid Waste Alliance but did not believe the budget discussion would constitute a conflict of interest.

**5. Announcements**

Tony Krulikowski informed the Selectboard that he has spoken with Mary Frost, who heads the North Bennington (Grandview) Cemetery Committee. The North Bennington Cemetery Committee would like to turn over the Grandview Cemetery to the Town of Shaftsbury. Mr. Krulikowski reported that the Grandview Cemetery has about \$75,000.00 in their fund for perpetual care. Mrs. Frost will be speaking with Cinda Morse, the head

of the Shaftsbury Cemetery Committee and will also consult with an attorney regarding the possible transfer of the property and maintenance of the cemetery. David Kiernan inquired about the impact this acquisition would have on Ken Coonradt and his crew, as well as how long the funds for perpetual care can actually support the cemetery. Mr. Kiernan pointed out that there are upwards of a dozen private cemeteries in Shaftsbury and the Town cannot afford to maintain them all.

Mitch Race reminded the Selectboard that the Historical Society is accepting nominees for the Ordinary Heroes event. David Kiernan said he would put the notice on the Town's website.

David Kiernan informed the Selectboard that beginning later this week, the Town would be switching phone service and there would be only one main number for the Town (802-442-4038) which would lead to an itemized menu. Tim Scoggins asked if there would be messages on the current individual lines for the transition period and Mr. Kiernan said he would look into it. Mr. Scoggins also pointed out that this change would need to be noted in the Town Report.

Ken Harrington asked about the progress of the culvert on Holy Smoke Road and Tim Scoggins asked that the Selectboard revisit the subject later in the meeting.

## **6. Public Comments**

NONE

## **New Business**

### **7. FY17 Budget Preparation**

#### **a. Animal Control**

ACO wages were increased by \$150.00 to a total of \$750.00 for FY17. David Kiernan said that the wages had been the same for years. The contract services were also up to \$6,000.00. Tim Scoggins asked if there had been an improvement in services and Mr. Kiernan said that communication between the TA and ACO was good and there have been few complaints about service. Mr. Kiernan and Mr. Scoggins lead a brief discussion about pursuing unlicensed dogs in Town. While unlicensed animals in Town present a public health risk, that risk must be weighed against using resources in the Town Office to pursue the owners. Mr. Kiernan did confirm that the ACO checks on licensing when an issue has been brought to her attention.

Tags were up from \$200.00 to \$400.00 and the veterinary costs were projected down from \$1,000.00 to \$900.00.

**b. Emergency Management**

The budget for Emergency Management is remaining level from FY16. Gerry Mattison had indicated to David Kiernan that he would like to attend trainings in FY17 if his schedule allows.

Mitch Race asked about maintenance on the generator at Shaftsbury Elementary School and Tim Scoggins replied that the routine maintenance was the responsibility of the school and anything beyond that maintenance would be handled by the Town. Mr. Kiernan informed the Selectboard that the generator is tested weekly.

**c. Fire Department**

Fire Chief Joe Vadakin began the Fire Department budget discussion by discussing a proposed schedule for replacing the current fire engines over the next decade. Mr. Kiernan reminded the Selectboard that \$40,000.00 would be put into the equipment reserve for FY17 and that additional funds would be available as debt service comes off in 2018 and 2019.

Chief Vadakin had contacted the dealer that had been previously used for the purchase of the engines and received quotes for the replacement of equipment in the year 2021. Similar models to what is been used now (costing around \$300,000.00 today) are projected to cost approximately \$500,000.00 in 2021. Chief Vadakin informed the Selectboard that in the past, the Department had gotten into a scenario where they had bought one truck and leased another at the same time, which is not ideal.

Tim Scoggins asked how many trucks the Department currently has in use. Chief Vadakin replied that there are three (3) engines with water tanks and another brush truck which is shared with the Fire Warden. The brush truck is budgeted for separate from the Fire Department's allocations and consists of a removable box that can be transferred to a new cab as needed. Of the three engines, two were purchased in 2006 (the "twins") and one purchased in 2013. Chief Vadakin and David Kiernan said that moving forward, they would like to get on a schedule where an engine is replaced every five (5) years by selling an engine after fifteen years of ownership by the Town. Chief Vadakin hopes to sell one of the twins in 2021, while extending the life of the remaining engine purchased in 2006 another five years to begin the regular proposed replacement schedule.

Ken Harrington asked how State regulations may influence the replacement of fire engines. Chief Vadakin said that the only significant change may be in emissions standards but that the current trucks met those standards and are ahead with the required water capacity.

Tim Scoggins then asked Chief Vadakin about the potential sale price for a fifteen year-old truck. Chief Vadakin said that the last engine the Town sold (to the White

Creek, New York Fire Department) was twenty years old and had been sold for \$60,000.00. The original purchase price was \$180,000.00. Mr. Scoggins then asked if it was worth extending the life of each Town truck to twenty years before resale. Chief Vadakin said that he had a report from the National Fire Protection Agency that analyzed this particular issue and that he would try to provide a copy to the Selectboard and Town Administrator. It was determined that with the projected reserves, plus the significant amount in debt service coming off in the next few years and the possible resale value of equipment, the five-year replacement schedule was a reasonable plan.

Tim Scoggins then reviewed the remaining line items in the Fire Department budget. The Fire Chief stipends were each increased \$50.00 for a total of \$2,600.00. Firehouse Maintenance (for two buildings) was level at \$7,000.00. Chief Vadakin said that he was pricing siding for Firehouse #2 (from the FY15 budget) and hoped to purchase it soon with work being done on the building in the spring. Firehouse #2 also needs additional insulation and new doors. Chief Vadakin said that over the past two years his focus had been on improving the facilities with interior painting being done in both firehouses.

Chief Vadakin then informed the Selectboard that he had obtained a quote from Beaudoin Paving for the paving of the parking lot on the east side of Firehouse #1. Beaudoin will also be paving the lots at Shaftsbury Elementary and the quote reflects the cost of doing the two areas at the same time. The estimate is \$15,840.00. Ken Harrington asked if the lot needed repaving or if could just be resealed. Chief Vadakin said that when the lot was originally put in, tree stumps were simply covered over and as they rot, potholes develop in the lot. David Kiernan and Tim Scoggins appeared to have different understandings of when the paving would be done at the school (FY17 versus FY18) based on conversations that they had respectively had with the principal and a school board member.

A brief discussion followed among the Selectboard regarding where the funds to pave would come from. David Kiernan said that he would re-examine the proposed budget to find the almost \$16,000.00 needed to complete this project. Tim Scoggins said that raising the taxes 1/3 of a cent to fund the project was a possibility. Mitch Race objected strongly to this proposal and advocated for finding funds elsewhere in the budget to spare an increase.

Upon a return to the review of the Fire Department budget line items, Mr. Kiernan and Chief Vadakin indicated that the Fire Truck Maintenance portion of the budget would be raised \$500.00 to a total of \$6,500.00. The remaining line items would all remain level from FY16, with the exception of the Extrication Equipment which was reduced \$5,000.00 to \$2,000.00 as a large lot of the equipment was replaced in FY16. Overall, the proposed Fire Department budget was down 5.7%.

At the conclusion of his remarks to the Selectboard, Chief Vadakin suggested to Mitch Race that Charlie Decker, a Fire Department member, be nominated for the

Shaftsbury “ordinary hero” in recognition of his many years of service to the Town. Mitch Race encouraged Chief Vadakin to submit Mr. Decker’s name to the Historical Society for consideration.

Chief Vadakin also offered very positive comments regarding the conditions of some of the dirt roads in town such as Trumbull Hill and Potter Montgomery and asked the Town Manager to pass along thanks to the road crew.

**d. Fire Warden**

David Kiernan informed the Selectboard that after a discussion with the Fire Warden, Gerry Mattison, he had some changes to the proposed budget for this department. Mr. Kiernan said that Mr. Mattison had asked that the Operating Supplies be reduced by half to \$250.00 but the Vehicle & Equipment line item be adjusted to \$1,500.00 (from \$0.00). Mr. Kiernan said that this requested increase would be used to purchase radios, an electric motor for the hose reel and some lightweight fire-resistant clothing. Mr. Kiernan stressed that these requests were based on personal safety concerns.

**e. Law Enforcement**

Sheriff Services were estimated to increase 5.5% but David Kiernan said he would need to speak with Sheriff Chad Schmidt before finalizing the number for this category.

Overall, the Public Safety portion of the FY17 Budget was down 1%.

**f. Solid Waste Facility**

Mitch Race began the discussion regarding the Solid Waste Facility budget by announcing to the Selectboard that the Solid Waste Alliance would be meeting next week and would have a clearer picture of their needs following that meeting.

David Kiernan pointed out that the significant reduction in this portion of the budget was due to the Hazardous Waste Day(s) being rolled into the SWIP Agreement.

Mr. Kiernan proposed increasing the Attendant Wages to \$13.00 an hour in FY17. The Management Contract was increased based only upon a cost-of-living adjustment. The Methane Well Monitoring is now set up to be conducted by the Town dropping from \$2,500.00 to \$750.00. The remaining items in this budget category remained the same as FY16 and are based on existing contracts.

Tim Scoggins inquired if the actual for this year had been established and Mitch Race replied that those figures would be determined at the previously-mentioned meeting.

**g. Parks and Recreation**

David Kiernan raised the hourly wages for the Parks Superintendent to \$12.50 per hour in hopes of attracting a new employee if and when the current Superintendent sells his home and leaves the area. Tim Scoggins asked about a previous discussion where this position was to be combined with an Assistant in the Water Department and Mr. Kiernan said he had looked into it but it would likely cost the Town too much to create another full-time position. Mr. Kiernan did say that perhaps adding another member to the road crew for this type of work would be feasible. Mr. Kiernan also informed the Selectboard that Jim McGuinness was discussing the possibility of hiring a worker from the North Bennington Water Department to fill in as needed in Shaftsbury.

Ken Harrington asked if the Parks Superintendent position would put out to bid. David Kiernan said that the position involved more than just mowing at Howard Park, it also includes maintaining the tennis courts, cleaning the bathrooms and maintaining the Tillnger Path and parking lot. Tony Krulikowski asked if the Town was intending on replacing the gate at the entrance of Howard and Mr. Kiernan replied that the park would remain open until it snows and then the plows would be pushing snow to block the entrance.

A number of cameras are now operational on the premises of Howard Park. Tim Scoggins inquired if the VTel signal would reach the park in order to transmit those images remotely. Mr. Scoggins informed the Selectboard that he would look into that possibility.

With the exception of an increase in Operating Supplies (to \$1,000.00), the remainder of the Parks and Recreation Budget stayed level from FY16.

**h. Cemetery Expenditures**

David Kiernan began the review of the Cemetery Expenditures by highlighting an increase in the wages for the Cemetery Commissioner to \$4,200.00 (from \$4,000.00). The Cemetery Committee has also asked for an Assistant, adding a line item to the budget for a position estimated at 4 hours per week at \$14.95/hour. Contract Services were also up as a month of mowing was added per the discussion at the November 2, 2015 Regular Meeting regarding the proposed bid request for the landscaping services. Mr. Kiernan also reminded the Selectboard that \$5,000.00 would be going into the Cemetery Reserve fund for the construction of the road at Maple Hill Cemetery.

Tim Scoggins pointed out that there was a 17% increase in the overall Cemetery Budget for FY17, with most of those funds accounted for in the addition of the Assistant position.

i. **DRB and Planning Commission**

The only change seen in the budget for both the Development Review Board and the Planning Commission was a \$1,000.00 increase in the Zoning Administrator wages. All other items remained level.

8. **Other Business**

Mitch Race informed the Selectboard that the Development Review Board had received a letter of interest from a current alternate member, Michael Day, to serve in the vacant full-time member position. Tim Scoggins said that the application would be discussed at the Regular Meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup> and at that time, letters of interest from individuals seeking the alternate position would be considered.

Tim Scoggins reminded the Selectboard of the proposed solar field on Buck Hill Road and asked if the Selectboard members had a chance to review the proposal. Tony Krulikowski asked if it was worth commenting on as the Selectboard really does not have the power to veto such a project. Mitch Race inquired if the neighbors of the project agreed and had "signed off" on the plan. David Kiernan said that the power lies solely with the Public Service Board to deny this project. Tim Scoggins did point out that the proposal stated that the project is only visible from one area on Buck Hill. However, Mr. Scoggins proposed that the Selectboard take no action on this item and not issue a comment on the project.

Upon a review of the Action Items from November 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ken Harrington asked if any progress had been made on the culvert and stumping project on Holy Smoke Road. Tim Scoggins replied that the answer would lie with the road crew and David Kiernan further informed the Selectboard that the interested Board members would likely need to meet again at the site and with the citizen(s) whose property would be ~~effeted~~affected to reacquaint themselves with the main points of the proposed improvements.

Tim Scoggins and David Kiernan looked into the formation of ad hoc committees (in reference to the yet-to-be-formed Cole Hall Second Floor Renovation Committee) and it was determined that all that was needed was a motion by the Selectboard to form such a committee.

9. **Adjournment**

Tim Scoggins adjourned the meeting at 9:00PM