

**MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SELECT BOARD
JANUARY 7, 2008
COLE HALL
SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT**

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

Others Present: **Mike Gleason (Bennington Banner), Wade Masure (VLCT), 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 stated that the Board had held a working session on the budget beginning at 5:00 PM, and that this meeting will include a continuation of the session.

2. Minutes:

December 17, 2007 Select Board minutes

Cinda Morse made motion to approve the December 17, 2007 minutes. Karen Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Chairman Metcalfe asked if any Board member needed to recuse himself or herself from discussion of any topic on tonight's agenda. None did.

3. Warrants:

The following warrants were presented for approval:

Payroll Warrant #26:	\$10,189.93
Payroll Warrant #27:	\$ 6,930.41
AP Warrant # 30:	\$67,925.55 (includes sidewalk plans, diesel fuel, engineering design, sand and salt)

Chairman Metcalfe noted that the road crew had done an exceptional job over the holidays.

Ms. Morse made motion to pay warrants. Lon McClintock seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

4. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

5. VLCT Leader Program:

Chairman Metcalfe introduced Wade Masure from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) for a presentation on the Vermont Leader program to promote health and wellness efforts. Mr. Masure said that this is the second year for the program, which Shaftsbury joined last year. Participation has gone from 40 to nearly 80 towns. It includes a variety of safety and health initiatives such as smoking cessation, flu shots, and distributing pedometers. Aaron Chrostowsky is the Town coordinator.

Mr. Chrostowsky said that the Town had done very little last year, and hopes to do more this year. They filled out a questionnaire at the beginning of the year and again in October, and as a result earned some money from the program.

Mr. Masure explained that it is possible to earn up to 4% of health insurance costs. He thanked the Town coordinator and employees, and encouraged additional participation. Mr. Masure presented a check for \$959 earned through the Vermont Leader program. He said they will be starting another similar program for Worker's Compensation.

Chairman Metcalfe asked if there will be new activities added for 2008, and Mr. Masure replied that there will be a February workshop for coordinators to introduce new programs. The Board thanked him for the check and presentation.

Ms. Morse asked what will be done with this money, saying that it's good to offset premium costs, but if the goal is healthier employees it would be good to reinvest some of it in programs. Ms. Mellinger noted that the more the Town does, the more it gets back.

Mr. Chrostowsky pointed out that 4% of Shaftsbury's premium would be \$4,000, and said they could strive for that next year. Chairman Metcalfe suggested that Mr. Chrostowsky and Mr. McClintock discuss this with the road crew. Ms. Morse said they should make sure employees benefit from the funds.

6. BCRC Household Hazardous Waste Days:

Chairman Metcalfe stated that Lissa Stark of the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) has asked Shaftsbury to participate in two regional hazardous waste days this year. Mr. Chrostowsky explained the costs, which would be about \$12,000 for the Town to participate in two collections of hazardous waste and bulky goods.

Ms. Mellinger stated that it is less convenient for Shaftsbury residents to travel to Arlington. Mr. Chrostowsky said it would include bulky goods and electronics, which the Town hazardous waste day does not. He also said he had brought up with Ms. Stark the possibility of adding extra events in the future.

Ms. Mellinger said she is more inclined to stick with a Town hazardous waste day and to talk with Pownal about what they pay for participating. Maybe they could pay more than the current \$1000, or one day could be held here and one in Pownal.

Chairman Metcalfe said that this would not allow residents to get rid of bulky items and electronics, and Ms. Morse agreed that this is a real advantage. Mr. McClintock noted that the lines at the Arlington event had been too long and some people had been turned away.

Ms. Mellinger asked what it would cost to include bulky goods here, stating that perhaps Pownal income could be used for that. Mr. Chrostowsky said it would be about \$3000. Ms. Morse asked how many residents went to Arlington, and Mr. Chrostowsky replied that over 200 went. Around 100 participated in the Town event.

Ms. Morse said that if they work together as a region it may be possible to increase the number of hazardous waste days, and that they should be able to increase efficiency to handle more volume. Mr. McClintock noted that more volunteers would be needed, and Ms. Morse said that with more towns there would be more volunteers.

Mr. Pennebaker said that if they participate in the Arlington events Pownal will be left out, so something needs to be worked out with them. Mr. Chrostowsky said he could ask Ms. Stark about including Pownal, and also talk to Pownal.

Ms. Morse made motion to participate in the two 2008 BCRC regional Hazardous Waste Days instead of holding Town Hazardous Waste Day, contingent on Pownal being permitted to participate, and agreeing to participate. Mr. McClintock seconded.

Ms. Mellinger suggested asking Pownal for \$5000 and doing their own event, using the extra money to include bulky goods. Ms. Morse said that set-up costs are constant, and that if more towns participate the shared cost is lower. Mr. McClintock noted that the state also shares costs, so the Town would have to contract with waste handlers and write a state grant.

Ms. Mellinger said that the Town has set-up costs now that are the same as the costs to participate in the BCRC event. If they get more income from Pownal they could use it to cover bulky goods, so no state funds would be needed. Ms. Morse said that the Arlington events also include electronics and freon. Mr. McClintock said these would have to be factored in. He noted that these calculations would have to be made by next Monday.

Mr. McClintock amended the original motion, adding a contingency that bulky goods and electronics be included.

Ms. Mellinger, Mr. McClintock, and Mr. Chrostowsky agreed to work on this for next week.

Motion carried 3-0-2. (Ms. Morse, Mr. McClintock, and Chairman Metcalfe voted for the motion, Ms. Mellinger and Mr. Pennebaker against.)

7. BCRC SWIP Appointed Representative:

Ms. Morse volunteered to be the SWIP (Solid Waste Implementation Plan) representative.

Mr. McClintock made motion to appoint Cinda Morse as SWIP representative. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

8. Verizon ROW:

Chairman Metcalfe stated that Board approval is needed for a Verizon right of way along East Road. He said that Road Foreman Ron Daniels has no problem with it. Mr. Chrostowsky said that it is located in the area of Waite Farm and the overpass.

Ms. Mellinger made motion to approve the Verizon right of way on East Road. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

9. Heindel and Noyes:

Mr. Pennebaker reported that he had talked with Buzz Surwillo about methane remediation plans. Mr. Pennebaker wants to get an automatic methane monitoring system into the Eastman residence as soon as possible, but has been unable to contact them by phone for a month.

He said he had informed Mr. Surwillo that there has been a slow decrease of methane in the landfill wells and a slow increase at the cap vent. He would like to hold off and see if this trend continues, and Mr. Surwillo has no problem with that.

Mr. Pennebaker further described his system, noting that valves might or might not do the job. He said that if they proceed with active pumping, Mr. Surwillo seems to be OK with putting it on the vent, which would simplify things considerably.

Mr. Surwillo also is OK with them proceeding without consultants, doing the work themselves, so they are on good terms with the state. Mr. Pennebaker will send Mr. Surwillo a report on what he has been doing. Ms. Mellinger said Mr. Pennebaker has been doing an amazing job.

Chairman Metcalfe reported on his conversation with Heindel and Noyes, which preceded Mr. Pennebaker's conversation with Mr. Surwillo. He noted that Heindel and Noyes did express

concerns about the Town's plans. They also said that pumps would be rented.

Chairman Metcalfe said that they need to negotiate a final bill with Heindel and Noyes, and that he was upfront in stating that the Town does not want to pay interest charges or pay \$1500 for a meeting. He will call them tomorrow to negotiate. The Board will have to approve a final agreement.

Mr. Pennebaker said he was upfront with Mr. Surwillo about the fact that he is not a pro, and that Mr. Surwillo seems to have no problem with that. Ms. Morse asked if they can get something in writing to verify that they can proceed on their own and stop with Heindel and Noyes.

Chairman Metcalfe asked if they should negotiate out of their contract with Heindel and Noyes if Mr. Surwillo is willing to send a letter. Board members agreed that they should.

Mr. Pennebaker noted that Heindel and Noyes had not mentioned rented pumps as part of operating costs. Chairman Metcalfe asked Mr. Chrostowsky to photocopy the original scope of services for Mr. McClintock to look at.

Mr. Pennebaker agreed to email Mr. Surwillo a draft of a letter, and Mr. Chrostowsky will call Mr. Surwillo.

10. Budget Work Session - Continued:

Chairman Metcalfe asked if SWIP costs have been included in the budget, and Mr. Chrostowsky replied that they have. The Board discussed employee benefit costs. Ms. Morse and Chairman Metcalfe asked Mr. Chrostowsky to speak with road crew members about whether they intend to elect changes in the retirement plan, so that they can get a final number for the budget. Retirement benefits costs are up 13%.

Mr. Chrostowsky verified that the health plan cost is up 5%. The Board asked why disability has gone from \$1500 to \$2500. Mr. Chrostowsky will check on this.

Ms. Mellinger stated that the Town could participate in a new vision plan which would cost \$1491. The plan would increase the deductible by \$50, saving \$1388, so the cost increase would be \$107. She suggested that Mr. Chrostowsky discuss adding the vision plan with Town employees.

Ms. Morse asked about the Town covering the increased deductible, and Ms. Mellinger said she would rather not get into that complexity. She said it may be worth it to them to get the vision benefit. There was further discussion of the vision plan.

Ms. Morse suggested using the VLCT wellness refund to pay the increased deductible. This would let employees know that the more they participate in the wellness program, the more they benefit. Mr. McClintock said that he would like to look at the numbers, and that maybe employees should pay the increased deductible for an increased benefit. He also said they need to make sure the Town is paying a livable wage.

Mr. Chrostowsky will talk to employees, and they'll follow up next week. Ms. Mellinger and Mr. McClintock will participate in the discussion, to be held Wednesday morning.

Chairman Metcalfe asked if anything needs to be added or subtracted to the budget for outside revenues. Ms. Morse suggested adding \$1000 for the wellness program. Board members agreed.

There was a discussion of Pay As You Throw (PAYT) revenues. Mr. Chrostowsky will look at the figures and get back to them next week. He said that he had talked with Trevor Mance about the possibility of decreasing costs by canceling one day a week that the transfer station is open.

Mr. Mance thought savings would be minimal because if you cancel one day, more people will come on other days. Management fees would not decrease. It might be possible to change hours that the transfer station is open to make it more convenient for residents.

Chairman Metcalfe stated that in order to reduce the budget increase to 5-6%, it will be necessary to cut \$100,000. He said that they all need to come up with ideas. The Board will have their regular 7:00 PM meeting next Monday, and will try to have a light agenda in order to spend time on the budget.

Ms. Morse said that they have good information at this point, and asked if it is their plan to lay out the big picture at Town Meeting and begin discussion of a bond. She asked if, as they look at having to cut the budget, there is anything that could be included in a bond.

Chairman Metcalfe said he could see presenting some of these things at Town meeting and asking what people think. Ms. Morse said they need to give examples of what they could accomplish with a bond, and give the Board's thinking on higher priority items. Chairman Metcalfe said he would like to complete the budget in two weeks, then have the Facilities Committee back for follow-up discussion.

Ms. Morse asked if it is possible to collaborate with neighboring towns on anything to save money. Chairman Metcalfe said there is already a highway foreman's group. Ms. Mellinger noted that they do share some equipment.

Ms. Morse asked if collaboration is being done elsewhere in Vermont or in the country. Mr. Chrostowsky said that joint purchasing is done in Connecticut. He said he can talk to the BCRC about this.

Mr. McClintock said it would be good to have a conversation at Town Meeting, but that they also need to have a formal presentation so that people know what needs and costs are. He does not think most people realize the condition of the Town garage. Ms. Morse noted that it will be important to present all issues.

11. Other Business:

There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Swasta**