

Town of Shaftsbury Select Board by teleconference  
April 20, 2020

- 1) Call to order  
The meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m. Present via teleconference were selectmen Tim Scoggins (chair), Art Whitman, Joe Barber, Tony Krulikowski, and Ken Harrington. Also present were town administrator David Kiernan, treasurer Melanie Dexter, emergency manager Paul Dansereau, representative David Durfee, and town clerk Marlene Hall.
- 2) Conflict of interest statement  
The selectmen were polled and none had a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.
- 3) Legislative report  
Regarding a state law that towns are in effect liable for school system taxes, representative David Durfee, via telephone, reported that the legislature is aware that some education taxes may not be collectable. The legislature is seeking a solution, which may involve federal support. Mr. Durfee expected developments in perhaps a few weeks.
- 4) Minutes  
Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the April 6, 2020 minutes. Mr. Barber seconded the motion, which passed by roll call 5-0-0.
- 5) Warrants  
Payroll #20, \$21,897.08. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed by roll call 5-0-0.  
Check warrant #3, \$10,787.26 (the retirement warrant). Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed by roll call 5-0-0.  
Check warrant #28, \$53,904.54. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed by roll call 5-0-0.
- 6) Announcements  
Mr. Whitman said Tom Paquin, former Boy Scout treasurer, called to report that the now-defunct troop maintains significant resources if someone should wish to reorganize a troop. Anyone so interested should contact Mr. Whitman, whose contact information is on the town website.
- 7) Public comments  
There were none.
- 8) Treasurer's report  
Ms. Dexter pointed out that two quarters of state highway funds had indeed been received. The cash balance is therefore, in her opinion, at a much more comfortable level. Ms. Dexter reported that the state pushed back the deadline for the homestead declaration to July 15. She suggested the Select Board may wish to waive the penalty for a late-filed homestead declaration this year. If so, that vote should probably be taken at the first meeting in the new fiscal year.
- 9) Emergency manger report by Paul Dansereau  
He reported that the state is optimistic on the spread rate of COVID-19. Today, the total number of cases is 816. The number of cases in the county is 38. Social distancing seems to be working. Three hundred to 450 tests are done daily. A test requires a doctor's referral. He described Governor Scott's recent loosening of restrictions that apply to outdoor workers, single-professional offices, and many others. All local emergency responder units remain fully operational. The revised local emergency operations plan was drafted over the past weekend. The deadline for submitting a related document to the state is May 1. Mr. Kiernan said he'd be sending off a draft of the new plan to the Select Board shortly.

As an aside, Mr. Kiernan described a requirement for signatures from at least three board members on several routine documents. It was suggested that those documents should be left on the table on the second floor at Cole Hall. Mr. Whitman, Mr. Scoggins, Mr. Barber and Mr. Krulikowski volunteered to be such signatories.

Marlene Hall, town clerk, reported that she hopes to offer appointments to researchers two days a week, one person at a time, with sanitizer and cleaning to accompany all activities. This is the time of year when the real estate industry warms up. Ms. Hall said other routine activities such as paying dog licenses would continue to take place only remotely. A sneeze guard has been ordered for the front desk. Ms. Hall will send out an announcement to attorneys, realtors, appraisers, and others who may need to research that she will take appointments on Mondays and Wednesdays. Cole Hall will remain closed to the public.

10) Ralph Meima, Green Lantern solar project, Murphy Hill Rd.

Mr. Meima asked the Select Board to sign a letter of support for a proposed solar site on Murphy Hill Road, designating it a "preferred site." He described his company. Most of their projects are in the one to five acre range, up to 500 KW, all over Vermont. The company proposes a 150 KW net-metered array on Murphy Hill Road.

Mr. Scoggins noted that the Select Board is inclined to support any solar proposals in town. He said the Board had earlier expressed concerns with a proposed access driveway. Mr. Meima reported that comments from neighbors had convinced the company to largely redesign the project, addressing both access and visibility, including burying the lines underground to avoid additional power poles. The Board reviewed the new plans. Mr. Meima described the application process, which will begin shortly with the forty-five day pre-application notice. Throughout the process, comments can be shared by all. Mr. Harrington asked if the soils were prime agricultural soils and commented on solar arrays elsewhere in the state on prime agricultural land. At the same time, he said he supports solar energy.

Mr. Whitman moved to designate Green Lantern's Murphy Hill Road site as a "preferred site." Mr. Harrington seconded the motion, which passed by roll call 5-0-0.

11) Roads report

Mr. Kiernan said the road crew is doing spring maintenance, including ditching and grading. Most of the town west of Route 7A is complete; the east side is underway. Rainy day operations (including machine maintenance) will continue as required by CDC and state guidelines. COVID protocols are not affecting DPW priorities at present.

Mr. Whitman said he would be talking with Dave DeLurey about the old tandem - whether it is worth pouring more money into or whether it should be replaced earlier than planned (in two years). (DeLurey repaired the truck this winter.)

12) Town operations update

These items were covered under item 9.

13) Contingency Operations: "Shall the Shaftsbury Selectboard appoint Tim Scoggins and Art Whitman to individually approve and sign orders for payroll, operating expenses, and VMERS payments for a period of one year from the annual organizational meeting on March 16, 2020." Mr. Harrington so moved. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion. Mr. Kiernan clarified that after being signed by either Mr. Scoggins or Mr. Whitman, the matter under question would be presented to the Select Board at the next board meeting. The motion passed by roll call 5-0-0.

14) Other business

Mr. Kiernan clarified that he'd wait until the next meeting to seek signatures on two documents. Only Mr. Scoggins's signature is needed on the solar letter. There is therefore no need for any selectman to stop by Cole Hall.

15) Review of action items

Mr. Whitman will take with Dave Delurey re the old tandem's prospects.

Mr. Scoggins will announce adjusted town operations on the website.

16) Adjournment

Mr. Harrington moved to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed by roll call 5-0-0.