

Town of Shaftsbury Selectboard Meeting

July 17, 2023

In person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were selectpersons Art Whitman (chair), Mike Cichanowski, Tony Krulikowski, Martha Cornwell, and Naomi Miller. Also present was treasurer Melanie Dexter and town administrator David Kiernan.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes

None were distributed.

4. Warrants

Check warrant #2, \$4250 (the stipend for committee members). Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

Check warrant #3, \$335,559.13. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

5. Announcements

Mr. Kiernan reported that, at present, the PUC site hearing on Shaftsbury Solar is scheduled for this Friday at 2 p.m. Some abutters have appealed the time and it may be changed. The time and parking information will be posted on the town website. The public hearing will begin at 6 p.m. at MAUHS. At 7 p.m., public comments will be taken. The PUC will not respond.

6. Public Comments

There were none.

7. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Dexter discussed the June cash flow, the summary at the end of the fiscal year. She noted the education tax reconciliation and some transfers from the general fund. The cash balance is a little more than \$145,000. She would like to have it a little higher. As for the budget comparison, revenues at the end of the fiscal year were at 101.33% of budget; expenses at 100.75%.

The reserve accounts largely reflect transfers.

The cash flow for mid-July reflects a higher cash position than was the case two weeks ago.

Ms. Dexter noted that at this time of year the Town sometimes needs to get a line of credit to cover potential expenses until the taxes begin to come in. Mr. Cichanowski moved to enter into a tax anticipation note with M&T Bank for a line of credit of \$300,000. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. Three forms required signatures. The motion passed 5-0-0.

• Setting of Tax Rate

Ms. Dexter said once a tax rate is set, she should be able to print and mail out bills in short order, perhaps a couple of weeks ahead of last year's date. She asked for a 0.5137 rate, which includes the town and local agreement taxes. Last year it was 0.4823. The difference is less than the rate of inflation. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve a tax rate of .5137 per \$100 of assessed value. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion. In discussion, Ms. Dexter noted that the local agreement rate is

somewhat lower because the Grange did not complete its forms on times. Seven veterans did not get their homestead exemptions in. The town will carry them until they complete their paperwork. Changes for homesteaders and non-homesteaders are mostly flat. Mr. Krulikowski asked Ms. Dexter to compute how much education money is going to North Bennington that would go to Shaftsbury if those students were educated in Shaftsbury. Ms. Dexter will try to figure it out. The motion passed 5-0-0.

8. Town Charter Preservation

Town Clerk Marlene Hall (who is totally and solely responsible for all town documents) described what a company called Kofile, consulting preservationists, would do to better preserve the charter. They would flatten the document, de-acidify the pages, mend the document as they are able to, and confirm that the glass is appropriate. The total cost would be about \$1000 and would include color copies that could be displayed. Ms. Hall would also like to have the original deed to Cole Hall similarly preserved and copies made for display purposes. Mr. Cichanowski moved to have the charter and the deed preserved by Kofile. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

9. Proposal Goldstone Architecture – Cole Hall

Mr. Kiernan said several proposals to renovate Cole Hall were solicited several months ago. Mr. Kiernan asked that Goldstone be hired at a cost of \$16,505 to create a basic design for the project, which might include installing a Limited Use Limited Access elevator rather than a standard elevator (the cost of which now approaches \$1million). Mr. Cichanowski moved to authorize Mr. Kiernan to sign the contract with Goldstone. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

10. Sheriff Contract

Mr. Whitman said the budget for the Sheriff was already approved at Town meeting, but he'd like an approved motion from the Select Board to that effect. As backstory, Mr. Kiernan noted that he'd received a revised contract from the Sheriff's office in mid-June. He found some of the language regarding liability unacceptable. That language was revised in time to for Mr. Kiernan to sign the contract before the expiration of the previous contract on June 30. Otherwise, the contract is the same as last year's, and is for fifteen hours weekly. Mr. Cichanowski moved to affirm the approval of the Sheriff's contract for FY 2024. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion. Ms. Miller asked about how the deputy's time is allocated. Mr. Kiernan offered examples: recent requests for patrols on Hawks and Grandview, support during a vicious dog proceeding, requests for support on East Rd., Myers Rd. and others. He said in his experience, the office will address problems as they can; they can't always commit ahead of time to be in a certain place at a certain time. With a maximum of fifteen hours weekly covering seventy miles of road, it is unlikely that any one citizen will see the patrol on site. The motion passed 5-0-0. A citizen spoke about Bank Street traffic. Mr. Kiernan noted that trucks driving over a speed table make a lot of noise. He also noted that Hawks Avenue has been a truck road since at least the 1970s.

11. DPW Report

Mr. Kiernan reported that the DPW will work on Buck Hill Rd. for the next two weeks in preparation for paving in August. Roadside mowing is being done on Maple Hill, Cider Mill, and Hidden Valley. Grading has begun on East Rd. and Maple Hill. The "town green" was topsoiled and hydroseeded. A hazard tree was removed on Murphy Hill. Vegetation clearing will be undertaken at Tinkham and Murphy Hill to improve sight lines. Mr. Kiernan spoke about plans to purchase a new tandem at a cost of more than \$200,000. Paperwork to get the purchase underway will be presented at an upcoming meeting.

12. Validation Resolution Phase 1 Water Pipeline replacement

Mr. Kiernan said, re bonding the water line replacement, a newspaper advertisement announcing the action has been retroactively required. A vote of the board to validate the resolution is required. Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the validation of the resolution regarding the phase 1 water pipeline replacement. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-1, with Ms. Miller abstaining.

Mr. Kiernan asked that a declaration of official intent document, which enables the Town to get reimbursed for expenses incurred before the water bond is issued, be approved by the Select Board. Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve “the declaration of official intent to reimburse certain proceeds...” [the document read into the record is hereby referenced]. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

13. Other Business

Mr. Kiernan will be away beginning July 21.

14. Review of Action Items

The Town Clerk will hire the document renovation consultant and affirm with the appropriate parties that items discussed under agenda item 12 were approved.

15. Executive Session – Real Estate

This item was cancelled for lack of new information.

16. Adjournment

Mr. Cichanowski moved to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.