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# Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

## Meeting Minutes

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### Select Board

**Date of Meeting:** Monday, March 3, 2025, at the Shaftsbury Elementary School and remotely via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:15 PM by Mr. Thomas Dailey, moderator. Mr. Dailey reminded those present to check in with the Town Clerk. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, fire exits noted, and reminded non-residents present that they could not speak unless the assembly voted that they be allowed. Mr. Dailey then asked if it was the will of the assembly to allow State Senator Seth Bongartz, a non-resident, to speak when it was time for him to give his report. The assembly agreed. Mr. Dailey then recognized the Select Board and asked for a round of applause for all others working for the town, on boards, as advisors, in the schools etc. He then asked for a motion to dispense with reading the warning. This was moved, seconded, and approved by voice vote. Mr. Dailey asked Ms. Naomi Miller, Select Board Chair, to introduce the Select Board. This complete, he continued with a synopsis of the evening's proceedings: the moderator will state the article, ask for a motion and second and then open the floor for discussion, debate etc. on the article. Articles may be amended by vote.

The first article was to hear the reports of the town officers and take action thereon. This was motioned and seconded. Mr. Dailey noted that there were some reports of importance that would be highlighted with verbal reports. He asked State Representative David Durfee to speak. Rep. Durfee spoke about education reform and the consensus in administration and the state legislature that "we need to make some fundamental changes to the way that we deliver education, how we govern education and how we pay for it." Rep. Durfee went on to ask for citizen feedback. He then spoke about the legislature's concern about the impact on state funding of the possible loss of Federal funds. Vermont receives approximately 3 billion dollars in federal funding for Medicaid, roads & bridges, education, and other smaller categories.

State Senator Seth Bongartz was next to give a report. Sen. Bongartz note that he serves on 2 committees in the legislature: the Natural Resources Committee and as Chair of the Senate Education Committee. He reported that the governor has 2 big concepts: to shrink or collapse the number of supervisory unions and districts from 52 supervisory unions in 119 districts to a lot smaller than that. The governor has proposed 5 districts, but Sen. Bongartz said that was not going to happen. The other is to shift funding to a per weighted pupil formula. Sen. Bongartz assured the assembly that the legislature was being very careful and deliberate with changes and that it was a multi-year process. He ended by saying that we have to think very carefully and not rush because "the only thing worse than doing nothing is to get it wrong."

Next to speak was Tim Scoggins, Shaftsbury's representative to the Southern Vermont Communication Unions district. He reported on the history and continuing work of the CUD to provide internet throughout the district. He concluded with "there is a CUD, and it is functioning. And it is in a position to be governing the network that it's built well into the future."

The moderator then introduced David Mance, Shaftsbury tree warden. Mr. Mance discussed the emerald ashborer. He presented slides of the insect and damage it does. He noted that many of the trees by roads in Shaftsbury were

ash and would be affected by the emerald ash borer and likely fall. Mr. Mance asked for help from townspeople with identifying ash trees before the trees leaf out this year to get an inventory and identify trouble spots. Planning Commission Chair Nancy Burns gave her report, discussing the enhanced energy plan that was formulated to give the town time to take a look at the type of power it wants to meet state energy goals. She concluded with saying that the Planning Commission was now working on subdivision regulations. Select Board Chair Naomi Miller then recognized new and recently retired town employees and their contributions. The purchase of the new town office building was announced along with the discovery of funds for the vault. Article 1 was then voted on and approved. Article 2 A, B, and C and Article 3 were introduced, discussed, voted on and approved. Article 4 "Shall the town appropriate the sum of \$2,972,493 to defray the town's general and highway expenses for fiscal year 2026, the amount of such sum to be raised by property taxes, and to be reduced by non-tax revenues and reserve funds?" was introduced, discussed at length, and the amount found to be inconsistent with line-item totals. There was a motion and second to amend, the amendment passed by voice vote. More inconsistencies were found and there was further discussion, but another amendment was not deemed necessary as the budget with the first amendment covered expenses and would be voted on the following day. Article 4 was moved and seconded for approval and was approved by voice vote. In non-binding business, several representatives of groups with appropriations on the ballot spoke about their organizations. The meeting was adjourned just after 8:00 PM.