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# Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

## Meeting Minutes

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Shaftsbury, VT  
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### Town of Shaftsbury Select Board Meeting

**Date of Meeting:** Monday March 17, 2025, at 6:00 pm, in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom.

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 6:00 PM. Present were selectpersons Naomi Miller (chair), Zoe Contros Kearl, Mike Cichanowski, Tony Krulikowski, and Brad Peacock. Town Administrator Paula Iken, Treasurer Melanie Dexter, Road Foreman Mike Yannotti, and Town Operations Coordinator Jen Holley.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

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

3. Nomination of Select Board Officers

Mr. Krulikowski nominated Ms. Miller as Select Board Chair. Mr. Cichanowski seconded. Ms. Miller accepted the nomination and was voted in 4-0-1. Ms. Miller then moved to appoint Zoe Contros Kearl as Vice-Chair. Mr. Cichanowski seconded and Ms. Contros Kearl was voted in 4-0-1. Ms. Miller asked that the discussion of the Emerald Ash Borer Committee be moved to after the executive session to allow for discussion of that committee's personnel prior to further discussion of the committee. The board members agreed unanimously.

4. Minutes

Minutes were moved to be accepted by Mr. Cichanowski and seconded by Mr. Peacock, with the the spelling of February in Section 4 Announcements to be amended. Minutes were accepted 3-0-2. Mr. Krulikowski and Ms. Contros-Kearl abstained as they were not present at that meeting.

5. Announcements

Town Administrator Paula Iken announced the State's PFAS meeting for residents, specifically South Shaftsbury off East Road, is on April 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in Cole Hall. Information will be posted on the town website and at the Post Office.

6. Warrants

Check warrant #25024: \$100,086 moved to accept by Mr. Cichanowski and seconded by Mr. Krulikowski. Accepted 5-0-0.

Items over \$1000:

- Apalachee Salt: \$5,521.20 (gravel/salt)
- G.A. Bove Fuels: \$2,135.57 and \$1,786.61 (heating fuel at DPW and Cole Hall)
- Casella Waste Systems: \$7,822.96 (waste removal at the transfer station, Cole Hall, and the fire station)
- Dufresne Group:#19531: \$330.00 (permit for pipe replacement) \$165.00 (sewer feasibility site)
- Hathaway Electric: \$1,758.07 (firehouse repairs)

- H. L. Gage: \$1,613.33, \$147.00 (machinery and equipment for parts)
- Limerick: \$7,750 (contract for March)
- Peckham: \$1,384.91 (gravel, winter sand)
- Vermont League of Cities and Towns: \$ 20,973.82 (annual town insurance and coverage payment for buildings and vehicles)

Check warrant #19 for payroll: \$19,379.66 moved to accept by Mr. Cichanowski and seconded by Mr. Krulikowski. Accepted 5-0-0.

The 2 check warrants signed previously due to town meeting were briefly discussed and it was agreed that there was no need for a vote.

#### 7. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

#### 8. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Dexter reported on the cash flow for mid-March 2025 with a lot of delinquent taxes and dog license fees received and some health insurance claims. She noted that the cash balance number that is not exactly the balance in the checking account, that it does diverge a little bit, especially if there are outstanding checks. There are a "fair number" of stale checks which may need to be voided and reissued. Ms. Dexter pointed out that not cashing a check to "give it back to the town" is not helpful. She then went over the reserve fund, noting that the town had planned well for the reappraisal and was in good shape. Ms. Miller then asked Ms. Dexter to speak a bit about the Water Department. \$67,000.00 was paid recently to North Bennington. Ms. Dexter tried, but failed, to avoid water puns because the fund is always underwater as payments trickle in. The discussion concluded with a comment on the unsustainability of the situation and the fact that without the reserve fund, which draws from other funds, the water number would be negative. Ms. Dexter ended with a reminder for everyone to file the HS 122 by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### 9. DPW Report

Mr. Yannotti stated that the Select Board needed to sign documents for the DPW to receive \$180,000.00 in Class 2 and 3 road funds from the State. He brought along the financial plan he was worked on with VTrans. Ms. Miller asked him to explain the \$180,000.00 to the public. He stated that DPW receives \$180,000 every year, based on the mileage of roads in Shaftsbury and the number that is approved for the DPW budget by voters. This is non-tax revenue that is allocated from the \$1,200,000.00 the DPW receives in funds. The DPW needs to annually reaffirm that they are following the State guidelines for roads and bridges. This does not affect the size of teams. Road grading will start as soon as roads dry out a bit more.

#### 10. Organizational meeting

The organizational meeting consisted of review of Rules of Procedure, Liaison Assignments, Appointment Policy Adoption, Appointment of Town Officers, Adoption of Select Board Meeting Dates, Discussion of Conflict of Interest Policy, Appointment of a Secretary, and Declaration of Inclusion

#### 11. Rules of Procedure

Ms. Miller went over the rules for Select Board meetings and asked for discussion or changes. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to adopt. Mr. Cichanowski moved to accept, seconded by Ms. Contros Kearl, passed 5-0-0. These are available to the public, posted on the town website.

#### 12. Liaison Assignments

There was discussion amongst board members and several assignments were changed. Emails will be changed to town government addresses. Mr. Cichanowski's first and last names will be corrected on the form.

13. Appointment Policy Adoption

Ms. Miller initiated discussion of who, when there is a vacancy on a board or committee, is responsible for recommendations for new appointees. The policy states that the board/committee is responsible, but the Select Board has been making the recommendations. The board or committee is also responsible for posting vacancies and interviewing candidates, then giving recommendations to the Select Board. Ms. Iken noted that Cole Hall should be amended to municipal offices to include the new town offices. The policy was amended to be factual. Ms. Miller asked for a motion to affirm the amendment. Mr. Peacock moved and Mr. Cichanowski seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

14. Appointment of Town Officers

Town officers already in place were reappointed and Martha Cornwell was appointed as Bennington County Regional Commissioner. Ms. Miller asked for a motion to accept. Mr. Peacock moved and Ms. Contros Kearl seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

15. Adoption of Select Board Meeting Dates

Select Board meetings will continue to be scheduled on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at 6 PM at the municipal offices.

16. Discussion of Conflict of Interest Policy

Ms. Miller noted that there is new legislation that specifies how conflict of interest and ethical policies must be written. The current town policy does not cover all requirements of the new legislation. The necessary liaisons to the government and the public have already been appointed, but Ms. Miller suggested that a subcommittee be formed to look at the legislation and the current ethical and conflict of interest policies to propose the changes needed to bring it up to date. Mr. Cichanowski and Ms. Contros Kearl volunteered to be on the subcommittee. Ms. Miller also reminded that all board and committee members must complete an online training by July 1, 2025.

17. Appointment of a Secretary

The board discussed the appointment of a secretary to write Select Board meeting minutes which are now being written by Ms. Iken. It was confirmed that the candidate could be a member of a town board or committee. A stipend will be provided for services.

18. Declaration of Inclusion

Ms. Miller wanted to clarify that Executive Orders regarding DEI language are not federal laws or regulations. The Town of Shaftsbury is not required to comply with Executive Orders. The town of Shaftsbury Declaration of Inclusion is still in effect as a town policy. Ms. Miller then read the Declaration of Inclusion.

19. Other business

Ms. Iken brought forward a letter from town auditor, Sullivan, Powers and Company regarding changes to the scope of the audit. The Select Board needs to sign the letter so that Ms. Iken can return it. She will provide the Select Board members with copies. Mr. Cichanowski moved to sign the letter with settlement powers, Mr. Peacock seconded, the motion passed 5-0-0.

Ms. Holley discussed switching the internet account from Comcast to Fidium. There were difficulties in closing the account.

The Select Board moved into executive session to discuss the Emerald Ash Borer Committee.

20. Establishment of Emerald Ash Borer Committee

The board reviewed the proposal to establish an Emerald Ash Borer Committee. Several corrections were made. Ms. Miller asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Krulikowski moved, Mr. Peacock seconded, the motion passed 5-0-0.

21. Review of Action Items

Ms. Holley will post a call for volunteers for the Emerald Ash Borer Committee on the Town of Shaftsbury

website and other social media.

Ms. Iken will redo the liaison assignment sheet for an update to the Town of Shaftsbury website.

Mr. Cichanowski and Ms. Contros Kearn will review the conflict of interest and ethical policies and new legislation.

## 22. Adjournment

Ms. Miller asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Krulikowski moved to adjourn, Mr. Peacock seconded, the meeting was adjourned 5-0-0.