Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

Meeting Minutes

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Town of Shaftsbury Select Board Meeting

Date of Meeting: Monday, October 6, 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 Zoe Kearl (Chair), Naomi Miller (Vice chair), Mike Cichanowski, and Brad Peacock. Also present was Town Administrator Paula Iken.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement
   There were no conflicts of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes
   Minutes could not be approved due to lack of a quorum.

4. Announcements and Updates
   Ms. Iken announced that the vault installation started today (10/6). It took half the day to unload the truck and the walls should be up tomorrow (10/7).

5. Warrants
   Ms. Kearl called for a motion to approve CWR #20008 for $180,989.22. Ms. Miller moved; Mr. Peacock seconded.
   Items over $1,000:
   21st Century Concrete $5,946 (Grant) Horton Hill bridge project
   BCRC $2,993.96. Dues for the solid waste implementation plan
   G. A. Bove Fuels $1,024.08 and $1,257.62 Oil and diesel
   Brett Mould Construction $3,639.23 Framing in the new building
   CAI Technologies, $3,000.00 Lister's tax maps
   Caterpillar Financial $11,932.87. Loan lease payment on the Cat excavator
   Crik Gravel and Land Development $1,008 (Grant) Horton Hill bridge project
   Green Mountain Windows, $2,620.80 (Paid from funds that were allocated at town meeting) Windows for the new Town Clerk's office
   HSE $1,014 Fire Department equipment- thermal imager
   Innovative Surface Solutions, $5,443.46 Calcium chloride DPW
   Madison Repair Services $1,050 Maintenance on 4 different vehicles
   Matt Morse Excavating $10,000 (Grant) Horton Hill bridge project
   Northeast Municipal LLC $1,026.01 and $1,254.80 Road signs for the Horton Hill bridge project
   Peckham Industries, $1,669.91, and $2,000.00 (Grant), $2,568.41 (Grant), $1,929.82, (Grant), $3,059.60 (Grant), $2,414.06 (Grant) Horton Hill bridge project

RCS Consulting $1,675.45 Work on the new building
Sycamore Landscaping $1,600.00 and $3,208.00 Town buildings and cemeteries mowing and landscaping
Passive (?) $23,700.58. Insurance for vehicles and workman's comp
Vermont Bond Bank, $62,827.50 Loan payment- Town garage
Wallingford Crushed Stone, $1,235.83. Gravel
Warrant approved 4-0-0 without further discussion.
Ms. Kearl called for a motion to consider PRW #03 in the amount of $23,245.60. Mr. Cichanowski moved. Mr. Peacock seconded. Motion approved 4-0-0.
Ms. Kearl then called for a motion to approve PRW #07: $21,224.55 Ms. Iken noted that $9,473.39 of DPW pay will be reimbursed by the Horton Hill bridge project grant. Ms. Kearl stated that $21,224.55 minus $9,473.39 is what this payroll report costs the Town. Ms. Miller moved; Mr. Cichanowski seconded. Motion approved 4-0-0.

6. Public Comments
   Mr. Whitman shared the results of the revised Holiday Tractor Parade survey: 14 people said they would bring tractors, 26 people said they would help. Mr. Whitman thought that with the addition of fire engines and town trucks it would probably be 25 or so vehicles. Insurance, staging area, road use and other details need to be considered and a date set that doesn't conflict with other local parades.

7. Treasurer's Report
   There was no Treasurer's report.

8. DPW Report
   Ms. Iken read the report from Mike Yannotti. The DPW crews finished up the Horton Hill Bridge Replacement Project and the road is open. Temporary safety barrels are still in place until the guardrail is installed, which will be the last week in October. That will complete the project and grant reimbursement can be submitted. Thanks to Jen Holley for posting photos of the project to keep the public informed on progress. DPW crews are now rebuilding the road base on a section of Maple Hill Road just north of the East Road intersection, installing road fabric and gravel, as well as better drainage to improve this area in the future. The DPW will be working on this area all week. Road grading: Shaftsbury Hollow Road and Granger Hollow Road. Roadside mowing: East Road.
   Grants: Mr. Yannotti will be submitting an application for the Vermont Better Road grant to replace a culvert on Cold Spring Road just before the intersection of White Creek Road. This culvert is undersized and has made a lot of erosion at the embankment next to the road surface. This will be for fiscal year 2027, if awarded. The deadline was moved up to October 31st, from December 31st.
   Equipment: Toward the end of the month, we'll be starting to get winter equipment lined up.

9. Discussion of Recreation Committee Event: Deena Rughe and Sarah Costin
   Ms. Rughe introduced herself and Ms. Costin as members of the Shaftsbury Recreation Committee that is hosting a Howl-o-Ween dog costume contest and parade on Saturday, October 18th from 5:30 to 7:00 PM on the Town Green behind Cole Hall. There is a registration link on the Town website. Ms. Costin noted that as well as being fun, this event was meant to raise awareness of the Shaftsbury Dog Park project. There will be a contact sheet at the event for people interested in helping build and/or fund the dog park. Ms. Costin asked some questions about any other formal requirements for the event. Ms. Kearl said that she, Ms. Miller, and Ms. Iken met to discuss insurance for the event, and it appears that the event will be covered. She will contact the insurance company to confirm. If not, they

will get event coverage. There was some further discussion of the reasons for moving the dog park location to 2.5 acres of Town land near the entrance to Howard Park and possibilities for further funding. Donations will be directed to the Dog Park fund by the Town treasurer.

10. Recommendation of appointment of Tim Scoggins to Planning Commission
Ms. Kearl said the next item was discussion of the recommendation of the appointment of Tim Scoggins to the Planning Commission as an interim member, because the Planning Commission chair, Nancy Burns, is out on extended medical leave. She noted that Mr. Scoggins is the Regional Representative to the Act 250 Commission and has extensive experience with the Town government. Mr. Scoggins said that Ms. Miller had contacted him about joining the Planning Commission to "get over some hurdles" related to the Cornerstone project for senior housing behind Cole Hall. Mr. Scoggins thought he could help with this. He had conversations with the Planning Commission and BCRC about zoning, related to Act 181, and about the sewer system. He found out, at the Planning Commission meeting, that there was some confusion about what was expected of them. The sewer survey is at 60% completion point. The sewer committee polled the surrounding neighborhood about interest in tapping into a community septic system. They got no responses. There have been discussions with Cornerstone about developing senior housing to the north of Cole Hall. Cornerstone needs to know that they will have access to a perked, buildable septic area. Mr. Scoggins said that what makes sense at this point is to direct the engineering company doing the sewer survey to use the remaining 40% to come up with a septic plan for the senior housing out back. He thought that a motion from the Select Board asking the Planning Commission to advise and consent on using the remainder of the 40% of the sewer study for studying the Senior Housing Project by Cornerstone would be helpful for the Planning Commission. Ms. Miller suggested that the Select Board first vote on an interim replacement for the Planning Commission chair. Mr. Kearl called for a motion to appoint Tim Scoggins as an interim member of the Planning Commission. Mr. Peacock moved. Ms. Miller seconded. Mr. Scoggins was appointed 4-0-0.
Ms. Kearl then return to discussion of the sewer feasibility study, the septic, and the remaining 40%. She called for a motion to endorse using the remaining 40% of the sewer study to evaluate a septic system for the possible development of the Senior Living Committee. Mr. Cichanowski moved. Mr. Peacock seconded. The motion passed 4-0-0.
Ms. Kearl then brought up the ongoing discussion about the town opting in to Act 181, Tier 1A. She said that it might be prudent to discuss this at the next Select Board meeting, following the next Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Scoggins went on to discuss Act 181, a modification of Act 250, and the part of it that the Town is interested in: where regional planning commissions, in Shaftsbury's case BCRC, produce their regional plan that presents an option for the Town to opt into 181 Tier 1. This would mean certain things in certain areas are exempt from Act 250 review, which would help Cornerstone, a not-for-profit trying to build multifamily housing. The Planning Commission is now charged by the state with producing a future use map. It is similar the zoning map but doesn't supersede the zoning map. The zoning map and zoning laws remain in place. Mr. Scoggins said the future use map is largely produced. He continued "What's required at this point is for the Select Board to sign a form that says, we wish to opt in to 181 Tier 1A". Ms. Miller asked if this would be done after the Planning Commission makes its recommendation about the changes, or not, to the proposed map from the BCRC. Mr. Scoggins said that the Planning Commission could give feedback to BCRC on changes to that map. BCRC has a map that the Planning Commission has been reviewing and discussing regarding which properties should be exempt from Tier 1 opt-in. Ms. Kearl asked if the Select Board had to go through the feedback process before the Town opts into Tier 1A. Mr. Scoggins said that the general planning process of the town is that the Planning Commission guides the Select

Board in their decisions. He noted that there had been some confusion about whether the opt in was a zoning issue and that it's not a zoning issue, it's a state-level opt in that allows certain projects in certain areas to opt out of Act 250 review. It's meant to address things like trying to build affordable senior housing. The Board thanked Mr. Scoggins for stepping up.

11. Reappointment to Development Review Board: Tedd Habberfield
    Ms. Kearl called for a motion to reappoint Tedd Habberfield to the Development Review Board. Mr. Habberfield submitted his letter of interest to be reappointed to his role. Mr. Cichanowski moved. Mr. Peacock seconded. Motion approved 4-0-0.

12. E-911 address change, 19 Bank Street
    Ms. Kearl brought up an issue of duplicate addresses on Bank St., numbers 19 and 39. This creates a problem for 911. The Zoning Administrator contacted the State E-911 guru who suggested that it would be easier for Shaftsbury to change the addresses because there are fewer lots on the Shaftsbury side. There are 2 options: just change these 2 address numbers or change all the numbers on the Shaftsbury side of Bank St. Ms. Miller suggested that this be brought up at a future Select Board meeting after informing those residents of the issue and pending discussion.

13. Discuss schedule for reports from board liaisons
    Ms. Miller opened a follow-up to about 2 years ago when Martha Cornwell suggested that the Town should have a rotating schedule of quarterly reports from board chairs so that everybody would know what was going on with the various committees. There were a few reports, then it petered because the board and committee chairs were resistant due to the amount of time involved. Ms. Miller proposed that Select Board liaisons complete reports themselves on a rotating basis. The liaison would reach out to the committee chair or read the minutes, find out what's been going on and give a written report, possibly quarterly. Some reports could be short if the Select Board has been discussing the committee's work. Ms. Kearl noted that this lets the public know and creates institutional town memory.

14. Adoption of EAB Committee's revised Mission Statement
    Ms. Kearl said that the Board was going to look at the final revised mission statement of the Emerald Ash Borer Committee. The committee had a draft, then a second draft which was amended their last meeting. Those amendments need to be incorporated. The Board doesn't have a copy of their final mission statement for adoption. The Select Board will review the final revision in two weeks.

15. Feral cat colony update
    Ms. Kearl said that Ms. Iken has been working with West Mountain Animal Hospital on a spay-neuter day for feral cats in Shaftsbury. This could potentially happen on Sunday, October 19th. The Board needs to discuss cost, which is $100 for every male cat and $180 for every female cat. This does not fall under the purview of the Town spending. She noted that this is an opportunity to determine if the Town should create a fund for this cause, and for concerned citizens to outline how many cats there are. Ms. Iken left those citizens a message. Ms. Kearl said that the date is not locked it in because the money will have to come from somewhere, and it will not be from taxpayers. The cost is a comparably affordable rate.

16. Other Business
    Ms. Kearl introduced Gina Jenks, Town Assessor who had an error and omission that needed to be approved by the select board. The Assessor's office received a property transfer tax return with

incorrect information. The acreage was wrong. The landowner brought it to Ms. Jenks's attention when he received his tax bill, because much higher acreage was listed than he owns. The grand list will be changed, and Ms. Jenks needs the Select Board's approval to change it to the correct information. Ms. Kearl passed the information to the Board members for review. Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the changes. Ms. Miller seconded. Motion to change was approved 4-0-0. The changes were signed.
Ms. Jenks next business was reporting on reappraisals. She thinks they are about 80% done with data collecting on 7A, 67 West, and 67 East still to do. Postcards ready for North Road and other roads that have smaller numbers. These should be done by the end of October. The bigger routes like 7A should be done in the beginning of November. Ms. Jenks reminded people who have been visited by the assessors but didn't have interiors done to call her and set up an appointment. Interiors are done on Wednesdays with the last appointment at 3:00 PM. If Wednesday is a major issue the assessors could possibly do a different day, towards the end of reappraisals. People are not required to allow assessors into their homes, but Ms. Jenks noted that the Town has not had a reassessment since 2010, and assessors are finding mistakes in favor of the owners. She also noted that the State has mandated assessments every 6 years now. If as many interiors as possible are done now, it won't be as difficult in 6 years. Ms. Kearl asked how people know if the assessor has visited. Ms. Jenks said that the assessors leave a door hanger with a code. Ms. Jenks continued to discuss next steps with the reassessment and options that residents have for grievance or adjustments. There is information on the Town website Assessor's page or call Ms. Jenks.
In further business, Ms. Iken said that there is a quote of $26,893.08 for approximately 4000 square feet of flooring for the new building, including installation. There is a 30% discount on material from Bennington House of Tile and Carpet. The product is a vinyl that looks like hardwood floor. It's extremely durable with a 15-year warranty. Vinyl flooring was chosen over carpet, because it lasts longer, is healthier, and is easier to clean. Ms. Iken passed around the quote and tallied up what was spent so far. $375,000 was spent on the new building leaving approximately $173,000 for renovations. The Town has been acting as general contractor and only $33,529 has been spent. This includes all the demo, all the floors removed, all the new space framed out, and the new windows for the clerk's office. Flooring, paint, and wiring are left to do. After some discussion, it was decided to get 2 additional quotes for the same product and installation, keeping in mind that order times could hold up moving to the new building. Ms. Iken will also discuss this at the next CCDC meeting. The Select Board will have a brief Zoom meeting next Monday to discuss further.

17. Review of Action Items
Ms. Iken will call about Howl-o-Ween event insurance
Ms. Kearl will share the E-911 information with the rest of the Board
Ms. Iken will email the lists of Select Board liaisons
Ms. Kearl will write out information that the Board needs to know about the Tractor Parade, then the Board will decide who will take care of what.

18. Executive session: personnel policies
Ms. Miller moved to enter executive session. Mr. Cichanowski seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0.
The Board left executive session at 7:32 PM.
Ms. Kearl asked for the Board to consider a temporary increase in HRA benefits. This year, the town decided to switch healthcare providers in a cost-saving effort. In doing so, the town overlooked the fact that this would negate the deductible, so employees end up with two deductibles, one from the previous policy, and one from the new policy mid-year. This results because the town moves on a fiscal schedule, and healthcare companies move on a calendar year schedule. As a result, there are several

employees who have significant medical expenses, not resulting from illness, but from deductibles having doubled. It is now challenging for them to make some of these payments, because of a mistake on the part of the Town when considering all the factors that come into play when making a mid-year decision. What is being asked is to increase HRA amounts temporarily until the end of the year from $2000 to $3250 for an individual, and from $4000 to $6,500 for a group or family structure. Ms. Kearl noted that this is within the budget. It's a reallocation of the budgeted amount; it doesn't increase the budget, but it does change the way that it's structured.
Ms. Kearl called for a motion to approve the increase of HRA amounts to $3,250 for the individual and $6,000 for the family, etc. effective until the end of this calendar year. Ms. Miller moved. Mr. Cichanowski seconded. The motion passed 4-0-0 without further discussion.

19. Adjournment
Ms. Kearl called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cichanowski moved. Mr. Peacock seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM.