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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices

Meeting Minutes

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Select Board

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order on Monday, July 6, 2026, at 6:00 PM at the Town Offices at 677 VT Rte. 7A and on Zoom. Present were Select Board members, Mike Cichanowski (presiding), Marlene Hall, and Naomi Miller (remotely via Zoom and phone call). Also present were Town Administrator Paula Iken and Zoning Administrator Carlyn Mickle (remotely via Zoom and phone call).

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

There were no conflicts of interest with the agenda.

3. Minutes

The minutes for the June 15, 2026, Select Board meeting were reviewed. Mr. Cichanowski called for a motion to accept. Ms. Hall moved. Ms. Miller seconded. Item 15 was amended to correct action item responsibilities. The minutes were accepted with amendment 3-0-0.

4. Warrants

Mr. Cichanowski called for a motion to consider CWR 26030 for \$141,137.31. Ms. Hall moved. Ms. Miller seconded. Mr. Cichanowski read out invoices over \$2500.00 then asked for a vote. CWR 26030 was approved 3-0-0. Mr. Cichanowski called for a motion to consider PW01 for \$22,652.38. Ms. Hall moved. Ms. Miller seconded. PW01 was approved 3-0-0. Mr. Cichanowski called for a motion to consider PW25 for \$21,254.24. Ms. Hall moved. Ms. Miller seconded. PW25 was approved 3-0-0. Mr. Cichanowski called for a motion to consider BW12 for \$28,263.00 of which \$11,974.00 comes from employee payroll. Ms. Hall moved. Ms. Miller seconded. BW12 was approved 3-0-0.

5. Announcements

Ms. Iken announced that there was an organizational meeting on July 7th at 6 PM for volunteers to build the dog park.

Ms. Hall announced that there was a primary election in August and absentee ballots were available.

6. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

7. DPW Report

Ms. Iken gave the DPW report. Mr. Yannotti will be at the July 20th Select Board meeting. There will be paving bids to open then. Bids on the East Rd. paving project are due by noon on July 16th.

The DPW is working on East Rd. cleaning ditches and culverts ahead of the paving. Next week the DPW will start a project on Cider Mill Rd. replacing 7 undersized culverts. This project is covered by a grant with a 20% Town match. They are also preparing materials to replace a culvert on Murphy Hill Rd., tentatively planned for the week of July 27th. Information on the road closure will be posted when dates are determined. Road grading continues on Oak Hill Rd., Myers Rd. and Erich Rd., weather permitting. Roadside mowing is on hold while the mower is being repaired. Mr. Yannotti asked for patience on mowing.

8. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Dexter is on vacation so there was no Treasurer's report.

9. Updates and requests from Planning Commission: Carlyn Mickle & Tim Scoggins

Planning Commission (PC) Chair Tim Scoggins said that he was presenting to the Select Board what the PC had been working on, to answer questions, and to get feedback. He said the procedure for changing bylaws included a PC hearing, 2 Select Board hearings, and then a vote by the Select Board. A particular bylaw change may be put to the citizens for vote, but the State prohibits the Town from sending all bylaw changes to the citizens for vote.

Most of what was being presented had been identified as either potential or current problems and brought to the PC by Zoning Administrator Carlyn Mickle.

The first item was a demolition permit, not intended to determine if demolition was allowed, but to create a means to track buildings that have been removed from a property so that listers cards can be updated and taxes adjusted, presumably downward. It would be a simple form, and no fee would be charged.

The second item was a change to allowed heights on buildings from 30 to 35 feet. This would allow for 3 story houses to be built. Height is determined from the ground to the average between the eaves and the peak.

Changes were made to the Home Occupation bylaws to eliminate definitions for each zone, to define it once and be consistent across all residential zones. Short term rental bylaws have been removed from Home Occupations and given a separate section. The guiding principle for changes is to make it simple and easy for residents to have home occupations. One occupation is allowed per residence, use cannot change the character of the neighborhood, the occupation must be run by one or more residents and no more than 2 employees, the occupation is secondary to use as a dwelling, and total area for home occupation is 30% of the total square footage of the primary residence. In addition, the sign ordinance must be respected, equipment must be screened, setbacks must be followed, and parking must conform with ordinances. A list of Shaftsbury home occupations has been proposed. There will be a small fee, \$50 if the owner signs on to the list of businesses, \$150.00 if they opt out. Currently home occupations go before the Development Review Board and pay \$275.00. This change would move the process to the Zoning Administrator and lower fees.

Mr. Cichanowski said that the 30% of total square footage would lower many spaces from 1500 sq. ft. and opposed it because it would make it more difficult for Vermont residents to make a living. Mr. Scoggins said it is not the intention of the PC to take anything away from residents. Mr. Cichanowski suggested that all residential areas be 1500 sq. ft.

After questions from the public, Ms. Mickle noted that agricultural businesses, such as horse farms, and day cares are regulated by the State and would not be affected by these changes.

Mr. Scoggins moved on to the poultry ordinance. He noted that this is addressing complaints about poultry running loose in the village. The poultry ordinance only applies to areas zoned Village Residential and Village Center, and only to lots of less than 1 contiguous acre dedicated to farming and /or raising livestock. Mr. Scoggins read the general bylaws and said that specifics were female chickens only and the number of birds limited to 6.

Mr. Scoggins then brought up the Short Term Rental (STR) bylaws. He stated that the PC does not want to inhibit people's ability to make a living from STRs and that most of the bylaws draw attention to State regulations on STRs. Instituting an annual fee of \$150.00 has been suggested for Shaftsbury residents, \$600.00 for non-residents, due on March 1st. This is to discourage non-residents from purchasing Shaftsbury housing stock for STRs. Owners of STRs must submit to the Town a copy the State form "Short Term Rental Safety, Health, and Financial Obligations". STRs are permitted in all zones except forest & recreation. Paperwork can be handled by the Zoning Administrator except for camps that have special considerations for wastewater. Mr. Scoggins noted that an outhouse might work for occasional use by an owner, but not for STRs. These would be reviewed by the Development Review Board. He continued that there must be an owner or designated manager close by, available 24/7 to handle problems when the STR is in use. This person is responsible for making sure renters are respecting the noise ordinance. Vehicles must be parked off the street or in public parking areas.

Failure to apply for the permit is a \$50.00 late fee. Failure to comply with Shaftsbury ordinances may result in the Zoning Administrator putting an adverse report on the STR platform (Airbnb, VRBO, etc.) If there are repeat incidents, there may be a \$100.00 fine per incident. If there are still incidents, the permit may be revoked. If ordinances are still being ignored, the matter will be turned over to the Town attorney.

A member of the public asked why this didn't apply to long term rentals. Ms. Mickle replied that the Town does not regulate long term rentals, but tenants are expected to comply with the Town's ordinances. The goal is to maintain housing. Long term tenants are regulated in the same manner that an owner is regulated. Ms. Mickle gave some suggestions on who to contact if neighbors aren't complying with the Town ordinances. She outlined the current situation with STRs: they are currently allowed under the Home Occupation bylaws, which are restrictive, and no STRs in town are currently compliant with the bylaws. There are 25 – 30 STRs in Shaftsbury, most run by the owner. The new STR ordinance is a way to create a pathway for current STR owners to more easily come into compliance. If the new ordinance doesn't move forward, the Zoning Administrator must issue notice of violation to all the STRs in town.

Ms. Miller asked to speak. She said that there was no sound on the Zoom call. A recess was called to fix the issue.

The meeting resumed with members of the public voicing concerns about STRs being singled out and the difficulties with long term rentals in Vermont. Ms. Mickle offered to have a conversation with STR owners, individually or as a group, to explain the proposed bylaws and get their feedback prior to the formal Planning Commission hearing.

Mr. Scoggins reminded that there is a survey on the Town Plan, both on the website and paper forms in the Town Offices.

10. Other Business

No other business.

11. Review of Action Items

No action items.

12. Adjournment

Mr. Cichanowski called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hall moved. Ms. Miller seconded. Motion to adjourn passed 3-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.