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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices

Meeting Minutes

PO Box 409
677 Vermont RTE 7A
Shaftsbury, VT
05262-0409
(802) 442-4038

Water Board

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM on Monday, September 21, 2026, at the Shaftsbury Municipal Offices. Present were Water Board members Zoe Kearl, Mike Cichanowski, Marlene Hall, Eamon Mulligan, non-voting member Art Whitman, Water Dept. Superintendent Josh Brace, Town Administrator Carlyn Mickle, and Town Treasurer Melanie Dexter.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

There were no conflicts of interest with items on the agenda.

3. Minutes

Minutes from the August 17, 2026, meeting were reviewed. Ms. Kearl asked for a motion to accept. Ms. Hall moved. Mr. Cichanowski seconded. The minutes were accepted 4-0-0.

4. Announcements

There were no announcements

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments

6. Phase 1 Water Pipe Replacement Update

Ms. Kearl said the Town had received an invoice in the amount of \$372.50 from the Dufresne Group related to an application for approval of work to be done at the railroad crossing. Approvals need to be in place prior to starting the project. The project is in the permitting phase.

7. Other business

Mr. Brace said that he sent out a letter to all ratepayers on the water system. There was a mistake in that letter: The 1 ERU rate of \$235 is annually, not quarterly. The correction will be posted on the Town website, Facebook page, and Front Porch Forum. Ms. Dexter will also include the correction on an insert with the water bills that go out in October. Mr. Brace explained the billing amounts. Mr. Brace had applied for a leak detection program which has now been completed. 2 technicians spent 3 days surveying for leaks and only 1 suspected leak was found, on Cleveland Ave. It appears to be minor. Ms. Kearl noted that leak detection was part of continuing discussions with the North Bennington water department. This is the second leak survey that has not found a significant number of leaks. She said this indicates that the difference between water going through the meter and water being billed is likely due to something else. Mr. Brace suggested that aging meters could be partially responsible.

Ms. Kearl said there would be a Water Board meeting on Monday, October 5th to discuss communications with the North Bennington water department and the results of investigations into the leak on Cleveland Ave.

Ms. Dexter brought up tax sales related to non-payment of water bills. She said that of the 3 letters that went out, 2 had resulted in payment plans. Ms. Hall said that she had, as Town Clerk, received 1 request for abatement on a water bill. She checked with the State and found that municipal utility bills could be abated. She will provide the person with forms. Ms. Kearl noted that this would also be discussed at the October 5th meeting.

8. Review of Action Items

Mr. Brace will investigate the leak identified on Cleveland Ave.

9. Executive Session: Personnel, Legal- Response to North Bennington Water Board Letter

Ms. Kearl asked for a motion to move into executive session. Ms. Hall moved. Mr. Mulligan seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0 and the select board entered executive session at 5:12 PM. The board came out of executive session with no actions after discussing a personnel matter, quarterly billing, and a letter from the North Bennington Water Board.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Kearl called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hall moved. Mr. Mulligan seconded. Motion to adjourn approved 4-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 PM.