

Shaftsbury Select Board Meeting

November 30, 2020

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order remotely via the Zoom platform at 6:30 p.m. Present were select board members Tim Scoggins (chair), Ken Harrington, Joe Barber, and Art Whitman. Also present was town administrator David Kiernan. DPW foreman Mike Yannotti and fire chief Joe Vadakin joined later.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

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

3. Minutes

Mr. Harrington moved to approve the minutes of the water board October 19, the water board November 2, the Select Board November 2, and the Select Board November 16. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

4. Warrants

Payroll warrant #10, \$22,614.57. Mr. Whitman moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Check warrant #17, \$225,216.48. Mr. Whitman moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Check warrant #18, \$25,919.84. Mr. Whitman moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

5. Announcements

Mr. Whitman noted that the Cole Hall Christmas tree has been decorated, but there will be no ceremony this year.

Mr. Scoggins noted there are openings on the Development Review Board. If interested, citizens should email or call Mr. Kiernan or Mr. Scoggins.

6. Public Comments

There were none.

7. Budget discussion

Mr. Kiernan said the goal for FY 22 is to keep any increase as low as possible, given the uncertainty in the economy. The average inflation for the area has been about 1%. The budget is already bare bones. Insurance costs will go up. Fire department communications cost is a new budget item. Listers' professional services will go up, to account for the real costs of a NEMRC assistant. Employee health insurance is up. Equipment maintenance costs will go down, although each vehicle will receive additional funds (as the number of vehicles has gone down). Garage utilities will go up. Fire truck and equipment reserve will both go up, as planned. To cover these additional costs, Mr. Kiernan proposed to postpone certain reserve fund payments, including parks, cemeteries, Cole Hall, and paving. He wondered if a freeze on salaries should be instituted. He listed several other reductions. The result would be a .0137 rate increase. He suggested that reserve fund payments be reinstated beginning in 2023.

DPW foreman Mike Yannotti said he thought the DPW could manage with the budget Mr. Kiernan proposed.

Fire chief Joe Vadakin described the proposal to establish a sinking fund for new air packs. (Several of the department's packs are older than fifteen years, the recommended replacement age. Eight are older than ten years.) Air packs are used for a wide variety of fires. He'd like to establish a \$10K annual contribution to a sinking fund.

Mr. Whitman asked if it made sense to hold a Select Board meeting just to present the budget to the public. The board discussed how the next few weeks should unfold, with the format of Town Meeting up in the air. Mr. Kiernan said he attempted change the budget as little as possible, understanding that voters won't have their usual capability to change the budget at the last minute, in person.

Mr. Kiernan described the ten year capital budgets for highway and fire, and the schedule of payments to the reserve fund and of retirement and replacement of existing highway equipment.

8. Other business

9. Public Comments

There were none.

10. Review of Action Items

- Water board: Josh will talk with state re allocation issue with N. Bennington.
- Get the word out that a budget discussion will be held at the next meeting.
- The Select Board will address the Town Meeting format at the next meeting.

11. Adjournment

Mr. Harrington moved to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.