**Selectboard Meeting Minutes June 3, 2024 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**: Andrew Baker called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard members Rick LaPierre and Tricia Yacovone-Biagi, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

A motion was put forth by Rick to approve the minutes of May 20. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – abstain. Motion passed 2-0-1.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**FRTA** – Rick attended the annual meeting of the advisory board. The test program of fixed weekend routes has not been completed due to a lack of certified drivers on some weekends. The free fixed route service has been extended for another year. It costs more to collect and process fees, than the fees bring in. The FY’25 budget is up by about $600,000. Service for Shelburne was budgeted at $90,000 for FY’24. It will be budgeted at $100,000 for FY’25.

**Bridge of Flowers Pre-Construction Conference** – Rick attended the pre-construction conference for the Bridge of Flowers project. Construction is to start on June 26, with a completion date of November 22, and punch list items to be done before the end of December. The bridge should be able to open by spring 2025. Details regarding plants, benches, etc. were all settled. The contractors need a place to put an 8’ x 20’ container. The Board had previously voted to not allowed any of the town parking spaces to be used. It is possible the VFW parking lot could be a spot for the container.

**Veterans Services** – May had been spent flagging cemeteries and organizing and attending Memorial Day events. It was announced that Chapter 115, aka Safety Net Program, has been renewed. Shelburne vets facing financial difficulties are eligible for the program.

**Police Department** – The 2019 cruiser was in an accident and has been declared a total loss by the insurance company. The Chief has been authorized to start the replacement process.

**Emergency Management** – EMD Tom Williams and Fire Chief John Taylor have set June 17 as the date for the first emergency operations training session. Members of the committee will be presented with a scenario involving winter conditions to see how they will handle it. Safety vests for the emergency management team have been ordered. One of the publications racks is now at Arms Library, with information for the public on emergency management.

**Town Hall** – Rick recently met with Terry and Treasurer/Collector Angle Bragdon to discuss delinquent taxes and town-owned properties. Currently four town-owned properties are ready to go to auction. By the end of August other properties will also be ready. The best time for an auction would be sometime in September, but the actual decision to auction the properties has not been made. In FY’23 seven more properties are in line for tax taking, though some of those outstanding taxes may still be paid. For FY’24 there ate 255 delinquents right now. Demand notices will soon be sent. It is thought that since two bills are sent at once, people pay the first bill and often forget to pay the second bill when it comes due.

**Highway Department** – A site visit was made to a property on Church Street, where it was found that a retaining wall is on private property and work done on that property should not impact any town-owned infrastructure.

**Pocket Park** – The pavilion project should be finished this week. The next project, possibly done by students, may be getting a sign for the park.

**Appointments:**

**5:45 pm Sylva Smith & Christine Baronas RE: West County Senior Service District** (Angel Bragdon, Collector/Treasurer) – The Board of Managers is complete with Ashfield members, Todd Olanyk and Amy Shapiro, Buckland’s Janice Fleuriel and Regina Purinton, and Sylvia and Christine from Shelburne. Temporary officers are Sylvia as president, Amy as VP, and Janice as secretary. The group’s main focus is on creating a transition plan. They are also crafting an employee handbook. Several people who had been involved in the creation of the district have also been attending meetings FRCOG’s Bob Dean has been helping by looking at insurance and retirement issues. The managers are also working on bylaws for the district, which is a slow process. Shelburne had been the fiscal agent for the consortium. The district could continue using Shelburne as fiscal agent, one of the other towns, or hiring an outside entity. Buckland and Ashfield will also be discussing the fiscal agent role. The goal is to have a transition plan ready to be presented to the three Selectboards by October 1. Andrew suggested that Sylvia and Christine talk directly with Angel about the fiscal agent role and how that role might change compared to how it is done now. Angel said that the district would be a separate entity from the town requiring separate books, bank accounts, payroll account, etc. An outside entity could also be used with the downside being that it would not be familiar with the senior district nor with the involved towns. Further discussion will be held at a future meeting.

**6:00 pm Tanya Campbell, CPA Marcum, LLP & Jim Burnham, Finance Committee RE: FY’23 Audit** – Tanya explained the roles and responsibilities of various parties (auditors, management Selectboard and Finance Committee) regarding the audit. The FY’23 audit resulted in an adverse opinion as the town was not in compliance. GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) requires a complete list of all assets. If not getting a bond, this step is generally not needed. It is a decision the town would need to make. The cost would be approximately $10,000 for an outside firm to assist the Town with compliance. Complying with GASB requirements would also add cost to the audit each year. The audit report was discussed in detail. The town has financial checks and balances in place. The town will not be receiving a management letter because there were no significant findings. A management letter is only sent when required. The auditor only made recommendations, which have been shared. Jim said it was the opinion of the Finance Committee that the full audit of all assets should be done.

**Old Business:**

**Pocket Park Use/Rules for Consideration** – Rick thinks there should be posted rules for use of the park. He looked into what other towns in the area do and found all have rules. Now that there is a full Selectboard, this topic has come up again. Rick felt it was unwise to wait until there is a problem. It’s better to have something in place. Rick has created a list of proposed rules, which he will share with the Board for discussion at a future meeting. Andrew was concerned about enforcing the rules and who would do it. Terry agreed there should be guidelines and will see what other towns do about enforcement.

**Letter to DPU RE: Intent to Purchase Streetlights** (Jeff Boettner, John Walsh) – A letter needs to be sent to Eversource to start the process of purchasing the streetlights. John recommended waiting until after the public hearing regarding removing some of the lights. He said the lights should first be decommissioned, then ask for the purchase of the remaining lights. The public hearing will take place during the next Selectboard meeting.

**New** **Business:**

**Mountain Lodge, 7 Main Street RE: One Year Lease Renewal – Senior Center** – There are no changes to the one year. A motion was made by Rick to renew the lease with the Mountain Lodge of Masons for the Senior Center. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Tricia – yes; Andrew –yes. Motion passed, 3-0-0.

**Hitchcock Brewing Company, LLC RE: One Day Liquor License Requests – August 11 and August 18** – This license would be for events held at Apex Orchard. The paperwork for this is all in order. Hitchcock is a well-known establishment. A motion was put forth by Rick to approve the one-day liquor licenses for Hitchcock Brewing Company, LLC for August 11 and 18. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Tricia – yes; Andrew –yes. Motion passed, 3-0-0.

**Any Other Business:**

**CPC Resignation** – Paul Hollings has recently been elected to the Planning Board. Because of that he will be resigning from the Community Preservation Committee. A motion was made by Rick to accept the resignation of Paul Hollings, from the CPC, with regret. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Tricia – yes; Andrew –yes. Motion passed, 3-0-0. Following an earlier resignation, the CPC is now in need of two more members.

**Replacement of the “Treaty” Sign** – At the last meeting it was mentioned that the sign on the Rod and Gun Club building describing the historic Salmon Falls treaty was in bad shape. Jim Richardson has offered wood for use as a new sign. Rick has located a craftsman who will make the sign and has a contact who would do the engraving to match what is there now. The cost is expected to be minimal. The Rod and Gun Club have agreed to the sign upgrade. Rick will check to see if a building permit is required.

Tricia said another sign that is in poor shape is the one on Route 2 near North South Road, welcoming people to Shelburne Falls. It was thought the sign was placed by the former Business Association. Tricia will look into it.

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting will be on June 17, at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

**Correspondence:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment**: At 8 pm a motion was made by Rick to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary