**Selectboard Meeting Minutes August 26, 2024 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

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

A motion was put forth by Andrew to approve the minutes of August 12. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**Highway Department** – Andrew reported that the Cooper Lane reclamation project is to start on September 1, with paving to begin on September 9. Fiske Mill Road will be paved next. Andrew walked the project area on Old Greenfield Road with Highway Superintendent Jeff Johnson. Warner Brothers expects to start work no later than the end of September and will be finished by early November.

**Memorial Bench** – The Board had previously suggested placing a bench donated in memory of Frank Rozelle near the visitor’s center. Representatives of the Shelburne Falls Area Information Center notified the Town that they would prefer that the bench be placed elsewhere. Terry will work with the family to identify a suitable location for the bench.

**Pocket Park** – The sign listing park rules has been installed.

**Emergency Management** – Tricia attended a meeting with EMD Tom Williams and Nathan Moreau where the town’s emergency management plan was discussed. It will be updated to include the feedback from that meeting. A table top exercise has been scheduled for October 24, from 9 am until noon. Selectboard members and Town Administrator are expected to attend. This exercise will be a test of the emergency management plan. Tom Williams met with Joe Judd, who is the public information officer. A public information team will be formed. Tom had a table with emergency information ta the Shelburne Grange Fair. Information is also available at the Arms Library, the Town Hall, Fellowship Hall, and at the Shelburne Fire Station.

**Town Hall** – Server migration is scheduled for August 30. Once the work is complete, Terry will look for third party vendors who specialize in security audits to ensure that the Town is up to date with the latest threats, best practices, and technologies.

**Police Department** – Rick indicated that Terry and Greg developed standardized criteria that will be included in a Request for Proposal document. Once finalized, the document will be sent to a handful of firms who conduct Wage and Classification Studies.

**Appointments:**

**6:00 pm West County Senior Services District RE: Proposed Transition Plan** (Sylvia Smith, Christine Baronas) – The Board of Managers has been meeting monthly since the beginning of the year. A draft of a transition plan from the Senior Center Consortium to the West County Senior Services District was presented to the Board. The Managers will be meeting with each Selectboard to gather feedback on the transition plan. The plan includes a timeline for personnel, budgeting, and bylaws. It is hoped that a joint meeting of the three Selectboards could be held in late September to discuss the plan and listen to everyone’s comments and concerns. For the present time, Shelburne will continue to be the fiscal agent and employer for the senior center staff.

**Old Business:**

**Knotweed Eradication RE: Old Greenfield Road** – Cynthia Boettner reviewed New Hampshire’s best management practices material circulated by Jeff Johnson. Cynthia said the knotweed coming up near Old Greenfield Road is new growth, which unlike a well-established site, would be easier to control with herbicides. She didn’t think the smothering with tarps technique would be appropriate at that site. Cynthia had contacted a former colleague from UMass Extension who visited the site. He recommended a meeting with the Selectboard and Conservation Commission and indicated that hand-pulling the invasive weed could also be an option. Andrew said since a part of the problem was on private property, an agreement would need to be reached with the landowner. He added that negotiations about control methods could take a while and did not want to delay the road construction project. Andrew suggested using the smothering method to see if it could work, then possibly using chemicals if it didn’t. Cynthia’s colleague asked if the project had been permitted by the Conservation Commission and felt that best practices were not being followed, regarding fill. It was later found that the project had been permitted by the Commission on June 25.

**ARPA Fund Update** – Terry reported that the balance of uncommitted ARPA funds is $51,037.71. Two suggested uses for the funds would be for the pocket park and/or repairing the glacial potholes viewing deck. Tricia suggested using some funds for items mentioned in the energy resiliency study. Andrew said the pocket park was already funded for $10,000, with $7,000 remaining following the construction of the pavilion. He would like another $25,000 for landscaping. He said the pothole deck might be eligible for CPA funding and was willing to do an application for CPA funds as well as get cost estimates for landscaping at the park.

**New** **Business:**

**Transfer Station Operations RE: Proposed Changes** – Amid ongoing concerns about the transfer station, the Board discussed possible ways to make the operation go more smoothly. Ideally there would be two attendants, but that has proven difficult to implement. Three changes were suggested. The first was to start requiring that residents have a sticker or decal on their vehicles which would help assure that only Shelburne residents used the transfer station. Other towns in the area require vehicles to have stickers. The second suggested change would be to stop selling bag stickers at the transfer station. The stickers could instead be sold at Town Hall or at local businesses. This would remove the responsibility from the transfer station attendants, allowing them to concentrate on other things. The third change would be to require residents to place their bag stickers around the ties on the bags. That would make them more easily visible. None of these changes would be started right away. Another idea is to go back to the use of town trash bags. The price of bags and stickers will be researched and a comparison of the costs will be made.

**Weston & Sampson RE: Energy Resiliency Study** (John Walsh, Jeff Boettner, Tom Johnson) – The study examined the feasibility of moving town-owned buildings off the use of fossil fuels. The plan listed specific ideas of how to use greener energy for Cowell Gym and Memorial Hall. The Energy Committee will review the report and come back to the Board with its recommendations. Jeff said Green Community grants might be possible for some of the changes. Andrew wanted to be sure the Memorial Hall renovation plan to replace the HVAC system was considered. The next step will be to decide which part of the study might be implemented.

**FY’22-23 CDBG Project Extension Request RE: Highland Village Kitchen Renovation** – The project was awarded to Larochelle Construction of South Hadley. Given the delays that occurred during the bid process, Linda Overing is recommending that the Town seek a contract extension thru December 31, 2025 in order to provide the contractor enough time to complete the job. A motion was made by Tricia to submit a request to the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities to extend the FY’22/23 CDBG to December 31, 2025 in order to complete the Highland Village Kitchen Improvement project; and pending EOHLC’s approval of this extension, extend the performance period of Shelburne’s subgrantee agreement with the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority to December 31, 2025; and extend the performance period of Shelburne’s CDBG administrator, Breezeway Farm Consulting, Inc., to December 31, 2025; and authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign all contract documents associated with these extensions. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes; Rick – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. This will be the last project administered by Linda Overing as she is retiring. Various departments (highway, water, sewer, etc.), as well as Linda, will be consulted as to whether any CDBG-eligible projects are coming up. If so, the town will need to look for a new grant administrator.

**Any Other Business:**

**Mass Save Letter** – Mass Save has requested a letter of support from the Board for their letter to the public which explains Mass Saves programs of energy assessments. Rick will sign the letter once Tricia has had an opportunity to review it.

**Selectboard Office Hours** – Tricia learned at a recent training that in order to be really accessible to citizens, Selectboard members should hold office hours. Tricia indicated that she would like hold office hours so that she could be available to answer questions and build relationships within the community. Although Andrew didn’t object to the idea of office hours in principal, he indicated that in practice, he was not eager to do it. Rick stated that he was opposed to one member holding office hours. He felt that the Town Administrator was doing a fine job answering questions and fielding concerns to the appropriate Selectboard liaisons when necessary. Rick also felt that the concept of office hours for one member was a “slippery slope” and wanted to run the idea past Town Counsel. Tricia felt having a face and a name was important as not everyone knows the Selectboard members. While no formal decision was reached Rick suggested that Tricia work with Terry to make the Selectboard’s webpage more inviting for citizens in the event they wish to contact Selectboard members directly.

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting will be on September 9, at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Public Comment:**

Jeff Boettner said he had been working with Town Clerk Joe Judd recently, and noted that Joe’s computer was outdated. Terry said that three computers were scheduled to be replaced this year and three more next year. Joe’s was not one of them.

**Adjournment**: At 7:15 pm a motion was made by Andrew 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