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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

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Meeting Minutes

Town of Shaftsbury Select Board Meeting

Date of Meeting: Monday June 2, 2025, at 6:00 pm, in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom.

1. Call to Order:
   The meeting came to order at 6:00 PM. Present were selectpersons Naomi Miller (Chair), Zoe Contros Kearl (Vice-Chair), Tony Krulikowski, and Brad Peacock. Also present were Town Administrator Paula Iken and Treasurer Melanie Dexter.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement:
   No one expressed a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes
   The minutes from the May 19th Select Board meeting were reviewed. Ms. Contros Kearl had one amendment: correcting a name from Numeric to NEMRC. Mr. Krulikowski motioned to approve, Ms. Contros Kearl seconded. The minutes were accepted with amendment 4-0-0.

4. Announcements
   Ms. Contros Kearl said that she is looking into a Vermont State tax relief program for seniors who are having difficulty paying property taxes. She will continue to investigate.
   Ms. Iken reminded dog owners that dog licenses are past due and will go up to $10.00 on July 1st. She also said that reappraisals are continuing.
   Ms. Iken then announced that work had begun at the new town building with flooring removal. Ms. Miller said the next step will be removal of some walls. Ms. Iken noted that the vault payment was in the warrants.

5. Warrants
   Check warrant report 25029: $200,154.26
   Ms. Miller asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Mr. Peacock seconded. Motion approved 4-0-0.
   Items over $1000:
   AFLAC: $1,594.00 Supplemental insurance for employees.
   Bennington County Sheriff's Dept.: $6,851.25 Monthly fee
   Bove Fuels: $2,089.80 DPW fuel
   Crik Gravel and Land Development: $1,792.00 DPW sand
   Fire Tech and Safety of New England: $375.00 Fire Dept. equipment
   Green Mountain Power: $1,042.46 electric bill
   Harrison Shrader Enterprises: $10,000.00 From Fire Dept. Equipment Fund for extraction equipment
   NEMRC: $7,751.00 June reappraisal
   Peckham Industries: $1,740.00 Gravel
   Sycamore Landscaping: $1,600.00 and $3,608.00 Mowing parks and cemeteries

North Bennington Water Dept.: $74,106.50
Passive: $23,391.00 Insurance- municipal
Warrants approved 4-0-0.
There was no payroll warrant, waiting for a timecard.

6. Public Comments:
   Comments were deferred to the

7. Treasurer's Report
   Ms. Dexter pointed out the tax reconciliation from schools for $40,197.95, based on cash flow from the State for each school. It is an estimate that comes at a good time for the town. There will be a final reconciliation. Delinquent tax payments contributed another $14,311.28, and the town received another Comcast refund of $1,758.39. The cash balance is now $181,844.81. She noted that a large portion of the $200,154.25 warrant just signed was coming from the reserve fund. She then said that he budget status is not meaningful at this time of year, but there is enough money to cover checks until the next budget starts on July 1st. Ms. Dexter brought up the reserve funds. The only one of note is the Water Dept. Water bills are being paid, but it is still $55,243.99 under and a warrant was just signed for over $74,000 to the North Bennington Water Dept. She pointed out that all interest is now assigned to the top line of Reserve Funds and that the cash receipt module and NEMRC only give a snapshot of what's really coming in and where money is going. The Select Board doesn't weigh in on ACH payments as they don't appear in check warrants. Ms. Dexter said that the board probably should. For the sake of transparency these will begin appearing in warrants next month, in the new fiscal year. The check amount will be $0, because the money has already been taken out.

8. DPW Report
   Ms. Iken spoke for DPW Foreman Mike Yannotti, stating that the DPW was continuing road grading.

9. Acknowledgement and Proclamation of EMS Week
   Ms. Miller said that although they were late, they still want to acknowledge them. No one from the Bennington Rescue Squad was able to attend, but the proclamation was read and Ms. Miller asked for a motion to sign. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Mr. Peacock seconded. The proclamation was signed and will be presented at a later time.

10. Development Review Board and Planning commission reappointments
    Ms. Miller noted that the Select Board has for several years forgotten to reappoint board and committee members when their terms expired. The Select Board has returned to the practice of asking board and committee members to send letters requesting reappointment, then bringing their names forward and voting on reappointment. The entire Development Review Board, comprised of Chair Michael Day, Vice Chair Tedd Habberfield, James Browe, and Sarah Costin, is up for reappointment. Ms. Miller asked for a motion to accept them. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Mr. Peacock seconded. Development Review Board members were reappointed 4-0-0. Ms. Miller reminded the public that there is an opening on the DRB. Planning Commission members Michael Algus and Michael Foley are up for reappointment. Ms. Miller asked for a motion to accept them. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Ms. Contros Kearl seconded. These Planning Commission members were reappointed 4-0-0.

11. Emerald Ash Borer Committee Applicant Interview: Charlie Jenks
    Mr. Jenks was asked why he wanted to serve on the Emerald Ash Borer Committee. He said he had experience logging and could identify trees. He was concerned about the problems with the ash trees and the rot from the bottom that causes them to fall. As a member of the White Creek DPW, he understands the consequences when fallen trees block roads, potentially preventing plowing and access by fire or other emergency services. Ms. Miller asked for a motion to appoint Mr. Jenks to the Emerald Ash Borer Committee. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Mr. Peacock seconded. The motion passed 4-0-0.

12. Sewer Feasibility Committee Report

Ms. Miller said the Sewer Feasibility Committee Report could not be provided because Mike Gianowski was unable to attend the Select Board meeting. She suggested holding a Special Meeting on June 9th because the Select Board needs to hear and weigh in on the report and finalize a response to the committee. The committee needs this to move forward with Dufresne and a grant.

13. Cemetery Committee Discussion: Kathy Cardiff

Ms. Miller asked Ms. Cardiff to come to the table. Ms. Contros Kearl introduced herself and apologized on behalf of the Select Board for the misstep of disbanding the Cemetery Committee at the last Select Board meeting. She said that was out of the Select Board's purview and that the Cemetery Committee did exist. She then said that the Select Board's action was in the hope that decisions regarding the cemeteries could be more effective, but they should have discussed this and waited for comments. She noted the board's willingness to hear from the Cemetery Committee. Ms. Cardiff, the Cemetery Committee Chair, offered information including a discussion of the differences between a commission and a committee. She provided the first paragraph of the operating procedures of the cemetery committee and spoke about its duties. They tour and assess the cemeteries to see what projects should be focused on during the year, review policies and procedures, and interview potential cemetery superintendent candidates. The Cemetery Committee also determines the use of the capital fund, previously called the Cemetery Reserve Fund. This pays for projects beyond operational costs. She talked about problems with fences and other costs. Ms. Miller then asked Ms. Cardiff to describe the meaning of cemeteries in the history of Vermont. Ms. Cardiff spoke about genealogy and gravestones. Ms. Contros Kearl then asked about specifics of the Cemetery Committee meetings. Ms. Cardiff said the committee meets monthly from April through November on the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM in Cole Hall. They look to Jen Holley, cemetery superintendent, for the meeting agenda. Mr. Krulikowski brought up death registry and a discussion on obituaries followed. A member of the public then asked if Jen Holley had been interviewed for the superintendent position. Ms. Cardiff stated that she had. The small private cemeteries in town were discussed briefly. The board members reiterated their apologies for their misstep. Next to speak was Beth Wallace. She described her childhood of attending town meetings and her sense of community. She went on to talk about governance and transparency. Ms. Miller said that the Select Board will be in more dialogue as they try to rejuvenate committees. She said that there may be meetings of committee chairs so that everyone knows what the other committees are doing.

14. Review of Action Items

Special Select Board meeting on Monday, June 9th to hear the Sewer Feasibility Committee report

15. Executive Session

Ms. Miller made a motion to move to executive session. Mr. Peacock moved; Mr. Krulikowski seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0.

16. Adjournment

The board came out of executive session at 7:26 PM and Ms. Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Mr. Peacock seconded. Motion passed 4-0-0.