August 31, 2020 Minutes

Town of Sharon Finance Committee Meeting

**Present:** Daniel Lewenberg, Patricia-Lee Achorn, Anja Bernier, William Brack, Arnold Cohen, Gordon Gladstone, Charles Goodman, Ann Keitner, Ira Miller, Edward Philips, Anil Ramoju.

Also present: Krishan Gupta, Director of Finance and Fred Turkington, Town Administrator.

1. **Dan Lewenberg, Chair, gave opening remarks**
   1. This meeting is being held through the Zoom online platform due to the State of Emergency based on the COVID-19 outbreak. He confirmed the meeting was being recorded and broadcast.
2. **Discuss and Vote Annual Town Meeting Articles** 
   1. 80 South Main Street / CVS - Jerry Snierson, owner of CVS, and David Wluka, owner of Chestnut Square at 10 East Chestnut Street:
      1. Jerry Snierson is interested in expanding CVS and adding a drive-through window if allowed to purchase from the town the small parking lot area at 80 S. Main St. CVS needs a letter of intent to consider proceeding with construction and to extend the building lease from the remaining 4 years to 20-25 years.
      2. Construction of a drive-through window would necessitate changing the lay out of the parking lot and driveway traffic flow for the two buildings
         1. The number of parking spaces would stay the same or increase.
         2. Existing building is 6,344 sf, and the expansion would add an additional 4,900 sf.
         3. Traffic flow would be one-way entry from S. Main St., with new curb cuts in the existing parking lots to allow traffic to exit to E. Chestnut St.
      3. The Finance Committee will be voting on whether to recommend selling this lot at fair market value. Discussion that this project differs from the current library project where due diligence was not done at the beginning. Library is a Town project, not a commercial project.
      4. Assessed value for the lot is approximately $111,000. The assessed current value of CVS is $1,137,700.
      5. The lot is too small for a new building to be built that would include parking. The Town feels they do not have a need for this lot now that the Town Hall parking is expanded.
      6. Controls would be set in place in the contract that if CVS does not complete construction that the Town would not sell the property to them.
      7. At a 2% tax rate this would result in an additional annual tax revenue of approximately $15,000. The Town is currently not receiving any revenue for this lot.
      8. Ann Keitner volunteered to do the write-up for this warrant article.
         1. Open Warrant Meeting is set for Monday October 5 at 7:30PM via Zoom.
         2. Warrant goes to print in one week.

**Motion:** by Gordon Gladstone to recommend approval of this article to Town Meeting **Seconded:** Patricia-Lee Achorn **Voted:** 10-0-1. Ira Miller abstained.

* 1. Sharon Gallery – Eric Hooper, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, Bob Shelmerdine and Steve Rafsky:
     1. Fire Chief Wright, Eric Hooper, John Thomas from the Conservation Commission and others met today to discuss protections for the Town, the requirements met by Cumberland Farms and requirements for underground storage tanks (USTs).
     2. Special permits are required for the entire project.
     3. Wetland flags have been completed on the site. Gasoline and diesel pumps will be located outside of wetlands and their buffer zones. Most of Sharon is in a groundwater resource protection district, including these 59 acres. Some amendments to Town bylaws are being recommended to accommodate this.
     4. Committee discussed importance of stating in the bylaws and the warrant the gasoline and diesel station will only be an accessory use of the club that will be on the site. A stand-alone station will not be allowed on this site.
     5. Language in the bylaws and the warrant should also include aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) that meet compliance standards, in addition to USTs and partially underground storage tanks, in case ASTs need to be used on the property.
     6. Steve Rafsky is meeting with the Conservation Commission this week.
     7. The Finance Committee will hold a short public meeting next week to vote on their recommendation for this article.
  2. **Vote Article 5 - Budget**
     1. Increase initially in budget of 2.94%, which has recently been lowered to an increase of 2.5% instead.
     2. Total sector budgets to vote on are:
        1. Select Board sector: $14,424,226
        2. Finance Committee sector: $1,309,024
        3. School Department sector: $46,234,015
        4. Total for three sectors plus fixed & uncontrollable and special articles : $90,199,006.
        5. Potential surplus / gap: $5,529 that residents will not be taxed as a result of Finance Committee sector budgeting below the Priorities number.
        6. Capital items were borrowed separately.

**Motion:** by Patricia-Lee Achorn to recommend approval of the budget as detailed on the most recent budget presented **Seconded:** Anja Bernier **Voted:** 11-0-0.

* 1. **Article 4 – Personnel Bylaw**
     1. Patricia-Lee Achorn circulated her draft write-up to the Committee. Select Board took money out of their sector budget without changing the compensation table.

**Motion:** by Patricia-Lee Achorn to recommend approval of Article 4 **Seconded:** Ann Keitner **Voted:** 11-0-0.

Dan Lewenberg discussed that Eric Hooper has stated a section of Gunhouse Street will not need to be repaved which will save approximately $26,000. This has been removed and the capital outlay item will be reduced by this amount.

**Motion:** by Anja Bernier to recommend approval of Capital Outlay as presented **Seconded:** William Brack **Voted:** 11-0-0.

# Warrant & Open Warrant Meeting format changes

* 1. The Committee discussed allowing proponents of the two citizen petitions, artificial turf (AF) at the high school and recycled asphalt pavement (RAP), to make 200-word statements for inclusion in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.
  2. Finance Committee write-ups in opposition of these items will suffice as opposing arguments as the Committee has voted against both of them.
  3. There will be no presentations at the Open Warrant meeting, but members will be present to answer questions and provide clarification on any of the articles.

# Liaison Updates:

* 1. Sharon Schools –Ann Keitner and William Brack:
     1. The HVAC assessment found 200 issues across five school buildings. Dr. Greer has stated that associated costs have been written into grants and will be funded by either the CARES Act or FEMA.
  2. Contract negotiations are ongoing.
  3. Teachers started working remotely last week. There is not yet a commitment by the teacher’s union regarding how many hours they will work each day, or whether they will be working in the hybrid or remote models.
  4. Vacancy on School Committee – Marcy Kaplan resigned at the last School Committee meeting, effective August 31
     1. There will be an open interview process to fill Marcy’s seat, and this person will serve until the next Town election.
     2. Vote at the recent meeting: Judy Crosby is now the Chair, Adam Shain is now the Vice Chair and Julie Rowe is now the Secretary.
  5. Library - Charles Goodman:
     1. Wendy MacArthur stated there will be a 15-minute meeting of Library Trustees this Wednesday evening, including a 3 minute public meeting and a 10 minute executive meeting.
  6. Planning Board - Arnie Cohen: No updates.
  7. Standing Building Committee - Gordon Gladstone:
     1. High school project is moving along and is on schedule.
     2. Meeting today to discuss access and egress.

1. **Minutes to be Voted: August 24, 2020**

**Motion:** by Anja Bernier to approve the August 24, 2020 minutes **Seconded:** William Brack **Voted:** 10-0-0. Anil Ramoju was no longer present.

1. **Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair in 48 hours****:** None.
2. **Adjournment:**

**Motioned:** by William Brack **Seconded:** Patricia-Lee Achorn to adjourn **Voted:** 10-0-0. Anil Ramoju was no longer present.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 pm.