

March 14, 2022 Minutes
Town of Sharon Finance Committee Meeting

Present: Daniel Lewenberg, Patricia-Lee Achorn, Anja Bernier, Brian Collins, Gordon Gladstone, Charles Goodman, Ann Keitner, Ira Miller, Jada Wang.

Not Present: William Brack.

Also Present: George Aronson, Municipal Solar Oversight Committee; Krishan Gupta - Finance Director; Tanya Lewis – School Committee Chair; Fred Turkington – Town Administrator

1. Dan Lewenberg, Chair, gave opening remarks:

This meeting is being held via remote means through the Zoom online platform pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021.

Motioned: by Ann Keitner **Seconded:** Ira Miller to move to executive session pursuant to MGL C 30A s 21 as an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the collective bargaining process or the litigation position of Sharon School Committee. **Voted:** 9-0-0.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 7:40pm.

2. Discuss / Vote Annual Town Meeting (ATM) Non-Budgetary Warrant Article Recommendations

1. Long Term Lease Authorization for High School Solar Project:
 - a. Town Counsel is requiring a contract authorized by Town Meeting vote because the project will be on a school property
 - b. In 2019 there was a decision made that solar panels would be installed at the high school and the Town would raise the capital. However, Sharon can sign a solar lease through a power purchase agreement (PPA) with a developer and there will be no costs to Sharon for the solar installation and maintenance. Town can sign a site lease and a power purchase agreement with a special amendment for battery storage onsite. This is a substantial value to the Town as it avoids needing extra capital.
 - c. The company, Solect, was originally selected through the RFP process. They will secure a bond for removal costs from the beginning of the project
 - d. No substantive differences in the draft contract from other statewide procurement contracts. Mr. Turkington will send a draft of the agreement to Committee members for their review
 - e. Installation would begin after the high school building is completed, which is scheduled to finish on time
 - f. Solar installed on a canopy would be more complex and is not in the current plans
 - g. George Aronson, Chair of the Municipal Solar Oversight Committee, presented to the Committee:
 1. Power Options is a nonprofit energy buying consortium with more than 450 members
 2. Solect was awarded an RFP for solar and storage PPAs, installed in approximately 90 towns in Massachusetts
 3. The key financial term is the price energy is sold to the Town for by Solect. Energy prices can be volatile but the contract locks in a 20 year rate for energy purchased through the contract. Will have a fixed KWH price

4. Installed on the roof of the high school, with an array for storage just under 500 KW, and solar of 500 AC
 5. No upfront costs to Sharon
 6. Solect installs, finances, operates and maintains the solar project. Installation takes 6-8 weeks
 7. Ann Keitner will write up this article for the warrant.
2. Establish an Historic District on East St:
This article has been pulled for now. May be brought to the next Town Meeting once the requisite paperwork has been completed.
 3. Outdoor Water Use Bylaw:
Will present to the Committee on March 23 and can be voted on at the March 28 Finance Committee meeting.
 4. Acquire 94 South Main Street, Sharon:
 - a. Holds particular value because this property abuts the Town Hall property. Could be used for a Town building or additional parking in the future
 - b. Demolition costs would be approximately \$25,000 - \$30,000. Will need to test for asbestos
 - c. Any funds not expended would stay in free cash

Motioned: by Patricia-Lee Achorn, **Seconded:** Ann Keitner to move to recommend acquiring the property at 94 South Main Street. **Voted:** 8-1-0. Brian Collins voted no.

3. Vote recommendation on Community Preservation Committee FY23 budget:

Motioned: by Patricia-Lee Achorn, **Seconded:** Ann Keitner to move to approve the budget as outlined. **Voted:** 9-0-0.

4. Vote ATM consent agenda recommendations:

1. Remaining items to vote are:
 - a. Revolving fund authorizations
 - b. Property tax exemptions
 - c. Act on reports
 - d. Sharon Friends School Fund records and appointments

Motioned: by Gordon Gladstone, **Seconded:** Patricia-Lee Achorn to approve the consent agenda items. **Voted:** 9-0-0.

5. Liaison updates:

Schools - Ann Keitner:
No update.

Standing Building Committee - Gordon Gladstone:
No update.

Library - Charles Goodman:
No update.

Planning Board – Brian Collins:

Possibility that they will come forward with a zoning recodification article for the warrant. There is a joint Planning Board and ZBA meeting this Thursday.

Community Preservation - Patricia-Lee Achorn

No update.

6. Minutes to be Voted:

None.

7. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair in 48 hours:

Committee asked if there is an update on the Sharon Gallery project for the intersection and for Costco – no update was given.

8. Adjournment:

Motioned: by Ann Keitner, **Seconded:** Patricia-Lee Achorn to adjourn. **Voted:** 9-0-0.
Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.