

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
June 22, 2021

The meeting of the Sharon Select Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Select Board Chair William Heitin remotely via Zoom. Select Board members Hanna Switekowski and Emily Smith-Lee were in attendance as was Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr. and Assistant Town Administrator, Lauren Barnes. The meeting commenced with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction and appointment of four new Sharon Police Officers

Chief Brewer introduced four new candidates for Sharon Police; Ralph Valmond, Justin Brown, Robert Awad, and Lenny Then. He presented a brief biography on each candidate. The 4 candidates being presented tonight are a result of recruitment and community reputation. The Police Department successfully leveraged social media and community involvement to create an amazing result in the development of these impressive candidates. Chief Brewer expressed his pride at introducing them to the Select Board and the Town of Sharon for consideration. He strongly believes the strongest candidates are being brought forward, and they will be excellent police officers for the Town of Sharon.

MOTION: To appoint officers conditionally upon successfully passing the academy.
(Smith-Lee - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Municipal vulnerability program plan

Ms. Caroline Wells of Weston and Sampson has been working with Engineering and Public Works in preparing a municipal vulnerability program plan. The last step before submitting to the state is holding this listening session this evening and posting the plan on the Town's website. Ms. Wells provided a brief presentation explaining the program plan which requires no formal adoption. There was no indication of public comment this evening but residents may email Caroline at: wells.caroline@wseinc.com with questions.

MOTION: To approve the municipal vulnerability program plan as presented.
(Smith-Lee - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Update on water system restrictions and water capacity strategy

Mr. Heitin gave a brief update on his ongoing discussions with Mr. Hooper and Water Department staff. Well number four was recently shut down. The Water Department is moving through the process of installation of a filtration system for slightly elevated levels of PFAS. The plan and implementation will be approved by MA DEP and running by the end of the month. He feels it prudent to extend restrictions until Monday, June 28.

Mr. Hooper explained that by immediately taking the well offline, PFAS was not allowed to get into the system. He extended his thanks to Select Board and residents because by following restrictions, capacity was not impacted. Sharon was one of very few communities that completely shut down. Having taken those measures, bottled water was deemed unnecessary.

Mr. Hooper further explained that he is and has been investigating why levels are elevated at this well and not at others. A common cause is fire-fighting foams. Railroad ties were mentioned today as a potential source, but there being no problems at well six or two it is an unlikely source.

The Board has been very proactive in this matter. Mr. Hooper speaks with Mr. Turkington every day. If there is an issue, safeguards would be implemented right away.

MOTION: To lift the current emergency water restrictions, resuming normal summer restrictions effective June 28, 2021 upon approval of the filtration program by the Commonwealth of MA.
(Smith-Lee - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Update Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Final version of the updated Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee charge was included in the meeting materials for the Board to review. Mr. Turkington extended his thanks to the DEIC for their review and input. They suggested some modifications. At this time, it is suggested that staggered terms be imposed as indicate in the materials presented. All members wish to continue and Zainab wishes to stay on but not as the School Committee. The police member will be changed to a non-voting position. The Committee will fill role of student. Both groups feel the composition outlined by Mr. Turkington is a good way to start. There remain two open seats to fill which will be filled on a rolling basis.

MOTION: To approve changes to charge and composition as well as the staggered terms proposed.
(Heitin-Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Restrictions on Town land opposite Massapoag Lane

Staff was approached by residents of Massapoag Lane whom have enjoyed deeded access to the lake on Massapoag Avenue in response to signs posted by Conservation Commission restricting access due to the Town acquiring the property by tax title. However, deeded lake rights are not extinguished by tax title. The Board agreed to post signage indicating access restricted to those with deeded rights only. In response to a resident question, Mr. Turkington would explore any liability issues with Town Counsel.

MOTION: To approve the access restrictions on Town land opposite Massapoag Lane.
(Switekowski – Smith-Lee)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Review and approve interview questions for Governance Study Committee interviews

Mr. Turkington advised that not all interested candidates are available for tomorrow evening's interviews. The Board agreed to hold interviews for those who cannot attend tomorrow at their July 13 meeting but agreed that they would be prepared to make appointments at that meeting so that their work can begin as soon as possible.

A few candidates have not responded to the written questions. Draft interview questions were provided to the Board with the meeting materials for consideration.

The Board was blown away by how many people submitted applications for the Governance Study Committee. It was felt that a hard deadline for submissions to the written questions is necessary. Ms. Smith-Lee feels it would be helpful to know candidates' positions on Town Meeting as opposed to RTM and wished to add that to the list of questions to be asked of candidates.

Review schedule and process for Police Chief selection

This topic has been spoken about briefly at prior meetings. At this time, a scope of services and Request for Proposals is being developed which will be forwarded to several search firms. The Board can expect to have information and decide on a firm at their next meeting on July 13.

Consent Calendar

- I. Vote to approve the minutes for the following meetings
 - a. May 25, 2021 regular session
 - b. June 8, 2021 regular session
 - c. June 8, 2021 Executive session
- II. Vote to approve a banner request for Friends of the Sharon Public Library book sale, October 25 through November 1, 2021 in first position and waive the fee
- III. Vote to rescind the local declaration of emergency effective June 15, 2021
- IV. Vote to approve the collective bargaining agreement with Police Lieutenants

MOTION: To approve the consent calendar.
(Switekowski – Smith-Lee)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update.

The Finance Committee will review on June 28 draft financial policies in the area of reserve levels for water enterprise and health insurance trust, free cash and stabilization fund targets and use, debt management policies, and funding and investment for OPEB trust in response to auditor's letter to management recommendation to formalize current practices. Draft policies are attached. I am also drafting for their discussion this summer an omnibus budget article that would replace the six articles now utilized to approve the annual budget.

Attached is the proposed road closure for filming a scene for a Netflix motion picture production now Filming in Canton, Dover and Sharon. The planned date is Thursday, July 8 from 5PM overnight to 3AM. A detour will be planned during filming, with police details maintaining traffic when possible. Notices will be distributed to all impacted residences and electronic signage warning of the detour two days in advance.

Juneteenth declared a Federal holiday. Congress passed and President Biden signed legislation designating Juneteenth National Independence Day as a Federal holiday. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers brought the news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas — two months after

the Confederacy had surrendered. That was also about 2 1/2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in the Southern states. Juneteenth is a state holiday currently observed in 5 states - Massachusetts, New York, Texas and Virginia on June 19th each year and in New Jersey on the third Friday in June. Beginning in 2022, Washington is set to become the sixth state that observes Juneteenth. Massachusetts now has 12 paid holidays (some towns like Sharon give the day after Thanksgiving as a paid day off) with the addition of Juneteenth.

One unit remains with an expiring contract in June 2021 — police lieutenants. The only agreement expiring in FY2022 is with dispatchers. Talks with the police lieutenants began on April 7 and continued on May 24. A tentative agreement has been reached consistent with the wage settlement agreed to by the police officers and sergeants (1.5%/1%/1.5% for FY2022, 2023 and 2024). It includes the COVID-19 stipend of \$840 in FY2021 and the same small increase in uniform allowance, EMT stipend, and physical fitness stipend negotiated with the police union. Approval on the consent calendar is requested.

We received / exchanged 50 pieces of correspondence between 12 noon on June 3 and 12 noon on June 17. Topics included: continuing advocacy for traffic mitigation measures and sidewalk installation on Old Post Road; comments regarding the designation of October 11, 2021 as Indigenous People's Day; and applications for Governance Study Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals alternate positions, and Telecommunications & Technology Committee.

A total of 45 emails from residents relative to the change in designation of October 11, 2021 from Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day, of which 39 supported the change, 4 were opposed, 1 proposed joint designation and 1 suggested renaming Columbus Day as Italian-American Heritage Day and designating another day to celebrate Native Americans.

Two messages suggesting that the Board not appoint to the Governance Study Committee individuals who served on the 2009 Charter Commission who oppose retaining open town meeting form of government.

A total of four emails concerning sidewalks and other measures to address traffic concerns on Old Post Road.

Topics not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours in advance of the meeting

Ms. Switekowski provided the following information.

- An 11-year-old child helped to prevent a near-drowning at the lake, wishes to make a formal recognition at a future date
- Historical Society is hosting a reading of the Frederick Douglas speech, 7pm July 3 at lake
- Wish everyone happy, safe 4th of July.
- Sharon Day being planned first weekend in October

Adjourn

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:52 pm.
(Smith-Lee – Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

List of Documents

- Recommendation letter
- Candidate biographies
- Draft report
- Amended DEIC charge

- Correspondence
- Case law
- Draft interview questions
- Draft Police Chief selection schedule
- Minutes
- Banner request form
- Resolution
- Draft agreement
- Town Administrator's Report