

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
May 24, 2022

The meeting of the Sharon Select Board was called to order at 7:00 pm remotely via Zoom. Select Board members Hanna Switekowski, Emily Smith-Lee, and Kiana Pierre-Louis were in attendance as was Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr. and Assistant Town Administrator, Lauren Barnes. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Switekowski observed a moment of silence to recognize the lives lost in the Uvalde, TX school shooting.

Welcome new member - Kiana Pierre-Louis

The Board congratulated and welcomed newly elected Select Board member, Kiana Pierre-Louis. Ms. Pierre-Louis introduced herself. She has been a Sharon resident for 8 years and has two small children. She is very excited about her new role. She thanked Ms. Switekowski for recognizing today's sad events.

Ms. Switekowski remarked that this is the first ever all-female Select Board in Sharon's history.

Board reorganization

Ms. Smith-Lee began discussion by stating the Board has a tradition of rotating leadership in a predictable fashion where the member whose term ends with the upcoming election typically takes on the role of Chair. She mentioned that she has come to admire this policy as it eliminates power politics and everyone has an opportunity to lead.

MOTION: To appoint Hanna Switekowski for the role of Select Board Chair.
(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

Switekowski: AYE
Pierre-Louis: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

MOTION: To appoint Emily Smith-Lee for the role of Select Board Clerk.
(Pierre-Louis - Switekowski)

Pierre-Louis: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
Switekowski: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Status of DEI Committee member reappointments

There are three members of the DEI Committee whose terms will expire at the end of the month. A membership list was included with the Board's materials for the meeting. In addition, the seat that Ms. Pierre-Louis will also be vacant. An application was received for a candidate interested in the student position. The candidate was unable to make it to this evening's meeting but is scheduled for the next meeting.

The Board indicated their desire to post and involve the public more when reappointments are made to a board or committee. Board and committee vacancies are currently posted on the Select Board webpage. The Select Board's practice has been to reappoint those members who wish to continue their work with a particular Board or Committee. It is within the Select Board's purview to amend or update this practice and interview or meet with those seeking reappointment. Mr. Turkington advised that he will add this as a topic to the Board's next

agenda for further discussion. Ms. Switekowski also mentioned her desire to promote vacancies beyond the Sharon website as well.

The Select Board also discussed the Select Board liaison with the DEIC and whether Ms. Pierre-Louis was interested in taking over the Select Board liaison position to DEIC transition to her new role on the Select Board. She agreed it may be best since they will need to reorganize.

Discussion of Select Board procedures

The Board discussed procedures for getting regular updates from Boards and Committees about their work and projects and how the Board might support them. The Board considered whether to liaise with the groups or request more frequent updates, such as quarterly or semi-annual reports. They lamented the loss of the Sharon Advocate to hear about the work of certain committees and other town news. They also acknowledged the community's appetite for real time information.

Ms. Smith-Lee supported the idea of periodic reports. Ms. Pierre-Louis expressed her concerns around transparency and mentioned she has ideas about filling the void left by the lack of a dedicated community newspaper and getting word out to residents. The Board acknowledged that Sharon TV is an asset stating that they worked diligently during the pandemic to make information accessible to residents.

Mr. Turkington agreed to put together a list of committees and a possible plan or schedule for the Board to consider either when making liaison appointments or developing a reporting schedule.

The Board also discussed revisiting the idea of either holding regular office hours at Town Hall or reserving time for a public comment period on each agenda. The Board wishes to be accessible so that residents can be heard. It was agreed that five minutes would be reserved, perhaps monthly, for public comment. This will be added to the end of the next agenda, as a trial, and may be amended based on feedback.

Pride month, Pride Proclamation

Ms. Switekowski provided an overview of the anticipated Pride celebration events on June 12. The car parade and flag raising ceremony will take place at the Veterans' Memorial Beach. This has become an annual event and has taken place for the past two years now. Ms. Smith-Lee read the following Proclamation.

WHEREAS, the Town of Sharon is a welcoming community which recognizes the importance of equality and freedom, and is an exceptional place to live, learn, work, play, and raise a family; and

WHEREAS, the nation was founded upon and is guided by a set of principles that includes that every person has been created equal, that each has rights to their life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and that each shall be accorded the full recognition and protection of law; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Sharon is dedicated to fostering acceptance of all its citizens and preventing discrimination and bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Sharon's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual Plus (LGBTQIA+) community are a vital part of all fields and professions and contribute to a stronger community; and

WHEREAS, Sharon is strengthened by and thrives upon the rich diversity of ethnic, cultural, racial, gender and sexual identities of its residents; all of which contribute to the vibrant character of our Town; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Select Board, on behalf of the Town of Sharon, hereby proclaims and recognizes June 2022 as: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual Plus (LGBTQIA+) Pride Month in the Town of Sharon and urge citizens to recognize the contributions made

by members of the LGBTQIA+ community and to actively promote the principles of equality and inclusion.

Given this 24th day of May 2022 in Sharon, Massachusetts.

Signed by the Sharon Select Board.

MOTION: To approve and support the Pride Proclamation as presented.
(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

Switekowski: AYE
Pierre-Louis: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Consent Calendar

Review and approve the consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the following minutes:
 - a. May 10, 2022 open session
- II. Vote to approve a block party request on June 4, 2022 from 1 to 5pm on Lee Road
- III. Vote to confirm appointments of Ken Hyman and Stanley Rosen to the Lake Massapoag Advisory Committee beginning on the date of the bylaw change approval by MA Attorney General through June 30, 2025 and June 30, 2024 respectively

Ms. Smith-Lee asked about whether Town Counsel had reviewed the Executive Session minutes or offered an opinion about release. Mr. Turkington advised that all matters for which Executive Session was necessary have been concluded. He also mentioned that those minutes discussing matters not yet concluded have been appropriately redacted.

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

Switekowski: AYE
Pierre-Louis: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

Town Administrator's report

Mr. Turkington provided the following update:

A total of 47 pieces of correspondence were received or sent between April 22 and May 21

- Email that masks be required for ATM attendees
- Email from Police Chief Stephen Coffey announcing Trust Edge Leadership Institute completion for 7 of 9 supervisors
- Emails from MMA summarizing FY2023 state budget adopted by House and by Senate
- FinComm recommendation on Article #22 Sharon Gallery sewer easement
- Email and response questioning sensitivity of holding ATM on the Muslim holiday Eid al-Fitr
- Press release from Governor's economic development team announcing \$3.4B ARPA economic initiative that includes \$287,900 for downtown recovery grant and \$90,000 for Robin Road stormwater management improvements for Sharon

- Invitation to Eagle Scout ceremony for Bennett Synder on Saturday, June 4 at 1:00 p.m., First Church of Christ
- Invitation to COA Volunteer Appreciation breakfast, Thursday, May 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
- Invitation to athletic field dedication at BMSS with Governor Baker on June 9 at 10:30 a.m.
- Emails from Public Health Administrator/Nurse Leandra McLean advising COVID-19 status moved to medium on May 2, high on May 6 and surge of new variant on May 12
- Email announcing presentation of plaque from Girl Scout Troop 68071 celebrating Sharon as "beautiful, diverse and welcoming to all" to be hung at Town offices
- Email from Planning Specialist on statistics for Sharon businesses
- Email from Sharon Tennis Club announcing planned film had been withdrawn by MGM
- Emails advocating for installation of sidewalks on Lakeview Street, tractor trailer truck ban on South Walpole Street
- Emails from MMA notifying that Lt. Jeff Penders and Planning Specialist Maria de la Fuente have been accepted into the MMA/Suffolk University Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management Program
- Emails from six residents expressing belief that no mask mandate should be imposed during current surge of COVID-19 variant; email from one resident asking for mask mandate for indoor spaces
- Emails regarding inability for voters who test positive for COVID-19 to vote if onset occurred between absentee ballot deadline (May 11) and election day (May 17) and from Don Brichta asking for use of electronic message boards to promote election participation
- Email from Board of Health reporting on Mindwise mental health program access funded by grant SSPARC
- Emails from Sharon 8th grade and HS students advocating for bike lanes and response prepared by Town Engineer
- Email advising that the Planning Board has elected Pat Pannone as chair, Rob Maidman as vice-chair, and Shannon McLaughlin as clerk
- Summary of May 17, 2022 Annual Town Election results
- Schedule of events at Rock Ridge Cemetery observance on Memorial Day - Sunday, May 29
- Email and response to status of Sharon Gallery project

Mr. Turkington further advised that a department director's staff meeting was held on Thursday, May 19. The Police officer entrance exam is scheduled to be held on July 15. Residents interested in serving as a Police Officer on the Sharon Police Department are encouraged to apply to take the exam. Town staff has begun planning for Sharon Day which will be held on Sunday, October 2 from 11 am to 3pm. The Board can expect the following upcoming meetings or events:

- FinComm, Monday, May 23 (introduction of two new members; election of chair, vice-chair(s) and clerk; consideration of reserve fund transfer of \$210K to allow construction of Heights parking and traffic improvement project)
- COA volunteer recognition breakfast, Thursday, May 26, 9A to 10:30A
- Memorial Day activities (Sunday, May 29 at Rock Ridge Cemetery)
- Select Board meeting topics for June 7 at 7:30 p.m. (designation of Priorities and Capital Outlay members; consideration of committee liaison assignments; award RFP for beer garden; interview candidate for DEIC student position); for June 21 (HCA for new cannabis grow facility on Merchant Street; presentation on landfill solar lease and PPA; reappointments to DEIC)

Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting

Ms. Switekowski mentioned that the Board will not meet again before Sharon High School Commencement and would like to extend congratulations to the graduates.

Adjourn

MOTION: To adjourn at 7:56 pm
(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

Switlekowski: AYE
Pierre-Louis: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE
3-0 **PASSES**

List of Documents

- Membership list (2)
- Proclamation
- Minutes
- Block party request form
- Email summary of correspondence