

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
September 29, 2020

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

Public hearing for wine and malt package store license – DDAS Corp. dba BP Foodmart, 68 Pond St.

MOTION: To open the public hearing at 7:04.
(Heitin - Switekowski)

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

Attorney Greg Demakis representing BP Foodmart located at 68 Pond Street was in attendance along with his client, Jay Patel. It was explained that this location is the site of the former Tedeschi convenience store. The location has a 2300 square foot retail space. Mr. Patel and his wife own and operate 8 other convenience stores nearby and have had liquor stores for 15 years. Their employees are TIPS certified. Mr. Patel submitted a petition previously in July which shows over 70 signatures in support of his application. He has had no tobacco violations and has a good relationship with his clients in Sharon. Mr. Demakis stated that the operators are sharp and highly qualified.

Ms. Switekowski expressed concern regarding whether the store footprint is adequate if there is no plan to expand the retail space. She also asked how attempts by minors to purchase beer or wine would be handled by store staff. It was explained that beer and wine will be segregated in an area inaccessible to minors and an ID scanner will be used to verify valid identification and confirm acceptable age at the cash register.

MOTION: To close the public hearing at 7:14 pm.
(Heitin - Switekowski)

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

The Board thanked Attorney Demakis and Mr. Patel for attending this evening. They will make a decision on this application at their next scheduled meeting on October 13.

Review and approve MOA with HESSCO

Ms. Kathie Medeiros of the Sharon Council on Aging explained that HESSCO received notice from Peabody Properties in August that they would have to vacate the Hixson Farms location of the Meals on Wheels program in 30 days. Ms. Medeiros was approached by HESSCO as they had not found a location to relocate to as of October 1. The Sharon Community Center seemed to be a logical location for the program. Ms. Medeiros

and Ms. Jayne Davis, HESSCO nutrition director, have had a long standing working relationship. Ms. Davis explained that Meals on Wheels is providing more than 60 meals per day now due to COVID-19.

A copy of the memorandum of understanding was provided for the Board as part of their meeting materials and they agree that this seems to be a natural fit for both HESSCO and the Adult Center. Ms. Davis and Ms. Medeiros were thanked for this important work. Ms. Switekowski encouraged the public to learn more about HESSCO's services offered to the community.

MOTION: To approve the Memorandum of Understanding with HESSCO as discussed.
(Heitin - Switekowski)

Heitin: AYE

Switekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Sharon Cultural Council candidate interviews

The Board met with Valerie Vigoda who has submitted a Board and Committee application expressing interest in the Sharon Cultural Council. Ms. Vigoda explained that she is a Sharon High School graduate and has returned to Sharon to raise her children and care for her 91 year old mother. She feels there is no better time to become involved in this kind of work. She is a lover of the arts as an observer. She feels that she can add value to the Cultural Council due to her experience as a grant writer, grant reviewer and recipient.

Mr. Daniel Brenner explained that he is also a Sharon High School graduate, class of 2006. He has a three year old son and six month old daughter. He feels that he has a unique ability to bring people together and hopes to bring a youthful perspective to community outreach.

The Board thanked Ms. Vigoda and Mr. Brenner for their time this evening and explained that it is the Board's policy not to make an appointment on the night the interview takes place, rather it will be at the next scheduled Select Board meeting which is scheduled for October 13.

Discussion of draft Select Board statement regarding community concerns

The Board agreed at their last meeting that a statement would be prepared expressing their zero tolerance for racism, expectations for positive behavior and leadership, and reassure residents that the Board sees and hears the community and is doing their due diligence of behalf of the community. The following statement was

As elected officials sitting on the Select Board, we work throughout our community on a variety of topics, including working in partnership with the School Committee and other Town Boards and Committees. Over the past two weeks, we have received nearly 30 emails and pieces of correspondence about recent events relating to the non-renewal of Superintendent Greer and the content and tenor of discussions at the School Committee table. We have also each followed many of the discussions on these topics on our community social media pages.

As a Board we want to reassure members of the community that we hear you. We also want to note that this is not the first time that concerns have been raised about equity and inclusion in our community, which was the impetus for our recently launched Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee to advise the Select Board about

how we might address these issues across all of our town boards and committees. We want to be clear that we will not stand for racism in our community, and that we recognize our role and responsibility to work to eradicate it. We look forward to working with the DEI committee in the coming weeks and months to do just that.

The three of us are also members of this community, living here and we are cognizant that words matter, and certain kinds of behaviors should not be tolerated on any board, or in the community. We cannot mandate what individuals say in their day-to-day lives or on social media. But as a community, we need to be better; we must make an effort to work together collaboratively more, listen to one another, and look to move the town forward, so that future generations will want to also live and lead here.

MOTION: To approve the statement as read and to post on the Select Board webpage as well as Town of Sharon social media outlets.

(Heitin - Switlekowski)

Heitin: AYE

Switlekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Review charge to Energy Advisory Committee and Economic Development Committee

Mr. Turkington reminded the Board that the leases for the three solar projects were recently finalized with mitigation built-in to the agreements. The Energy Advisory Committee is presently down to two members from the original five members. Rob Maidman of the Planning Board and Economic Development Committee recently suggested that there may be an opportunity to utilize some of the expertise from the Economic Development Committee, some of whom either were or are currently land use commissioners, to play a role in future solar sites given that these projects have impacts on neighbors. Mr. Heitin has had discussions with members of both committees and feels that while the members of the Energy Advisory Committee have strength in their technical knowledge, the legal expertise of the Economic Development Committee may add value if the two committees were to work together. Mr. Turkington will attempt to draft a charge in line with the Board's wish to maintain focus on energy conservation.

The Board was introduced to Mr. David Ruggiero. Mr. Ruggiero was hired by the Towns of Sharon and Norwood as a shared Energy Manager. He explained that he has twenty years of experience as an energy professional. He offered his thanks to Silas Filer and Matt Baldassari who have been instrumental in his acquaintance with Sharon and its municipal buildings and properties.

Mr. Filer and Mr. Aronson spoke to the Board briefly about the municipal aggregation plan. They hope to have an approved contract with a vendor at the beginning of December.

Vote to approve correspondence policy

As discussed at the last meeting, the Select Board has historically not had a formal correspondence policy. The following policy is being proposed at this time. It is felt that it is flexible enough to allow for future preference when the Board reorganizes.

Correspondence sent to the Select Board by members of the community (defined as people who live, work, and/or send their children to the schools in Sharon) either via the shared email address or via mail addressed to the Select Board will be acknowledged at our open meetings in a manner to be determined by the Chair and

Town Administrator prior to each meeting. How much detail to disclose will be subject to the discretion of the Chair and the Town Administrator, but our goal will be to fairly summarize the substance of the communication, either on a piece-by-piece basis or in the aggregate. We will not read the name of the sender unless requested by the sender, though residents should understand that items of correspondence are public records which we are required to make available upon request of any member of the public. Please note that we will not acknowledge anonymous letters, and may decline to summarize or acknowledge correspondence that is inappropriate or discriminatory.

MOTION: To approve the correspondence policy as presented.
(Heitin - Switlekowski)

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

Discussion of Library mitigation draft MOU

Mr. Turkington presented the Board with a copy of a draft memorandum of understanding which captures neighbor concerns based on the 55 plus or minus comments gathered from community meetings and correspondence received regarding the proposed library building at One School Street. Redlined versions reflect the comments of the Sharon Standing Building Committee and the Library Board of Trustees.

Mitigation items include traffic and pedestrian safety improvements, light and noise pollution, landscaping, infrastructure, water runoff, operational issues and infrastructure. It is hoped that this demonstrates a shared commitment to being good neighbors with respect to the library building project. This is being presented this evening for conceptual approval. Once circulated, the final draft will be returned to the Select Board, the Library Trustees, and the Standing Building Committee for approval.

Review and approve consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the following minutes
 - a. September 8, 2020 – Regular session
 - b. September 8, 2020 – Executive session
 - c. September 14, 2020 – Regular session
 - d. September 22, 2020 – Regular session
 - e. September 23, 2020 – Regular session
- II. Vote to approve the banner request for HUGS Sharon Domestic Violence Awareness, October 5-11, 2020 in 1st position
- III. Vote to approve the purchase and installation of a bench at Veterans’ Memorial Park Beach as proposed by Environmental Science students Caroline Joy and Lena Jah-Darwish in honor of lives lost to racial injustice
- IV. Vote to approve the purchase and installation of memorial benches at Veterans’ Memorial Park Beach and Community Center Beach at the request of Sid Rosen in honor of his son, Peter Rosen, who passed away this summer

MOTION: To approve the consent calendar.
(Switlekowski-Heitin)

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

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update.

- Town meeting warrant has been mailed. Residents are advised to pay particular attention to the details on the warrant cover which explain the COVID-19 precautions for Town meeting
- Beach season receipts are within \$10,000 to \$14,000 of break-even with expected COVID reimbursement
- 52 train station passes were sold during the last quarterly sale
- The electrical supply bid resulted in the 48 month supply rate of 09.11 cents per kWh, a summary was provided for the Board
- Early voting will begin on October 17 and will continue through October 30
- The Select Board received 69 emails between the dates of September 8 and noon on September 24; of those 20 pertained to school committee issues, 27 requested intercession, 2 public records requests, one email in support of Heather Zelevinsky, 11 School Committee applicants, 17 emails requesting a copy of the email from Lajos Kamocsay on June 8 regarding evidence of community racism, and two responses from Mr. Kamocsay
- Fern Fergus has resigned her position on the School Committee citing health reasons. There have been statements of interest received from two new interested candidates. Depending on the number of applicants, interviews may be conducted either on October 14 or 15
- There will be a dedication ceremony at the Community Center for the Joe Roach, Jr. and Ralph Generazzo bocce courts on October 7
- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee will meet for the first time on October 8 at 7pm

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

None

Adjourn

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:20 pm.
(Heitin - Switlekowski)

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

List of Documents

- Wine and malt application materials
- Resident email of September 14, 2020
- Email correspondence of September 18, 2020
- Memorandum of Agreement
- Board and Committee application (2)
- Economic Development Committee charge
- Energy Advisory Committee charge
- Energy Advisory Committee applications (3)
- Draft Select Board statement
- Draft correspondence policy
- Draft Library mitigation memorandum of understanding
- Minutes
- Banner request form
- Memorandum
- Town Administrator's report
- Draft FY2022 budget schedule
- Bay State Consultants electric supply pricing summary