

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
December 15, 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.

Affirm vote taken in Executive Session on December 3, 2020

MOTION: To approve the collective bargaining agreement with Crossing Guard personnel.
(Heitin - Switekowski)

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

Candidate interviews for Energy Advisory Committee

Mr. Dan Rabatsky introduced himself to the Select Board as a candidate for Energy Advisory Committee. He stated that he grew up in Sharon and has been involved with the Sharon Lions Club and Sharon youth sports. Professionally, Mr. Rabatsky has been in financial services for 22 years. He installed solar panels on his home 7 years ago and has been following the green energy progress of Germany. Mr. Rabatsky feels he would make a positive contribution to this committee because he looks at things differently. In his free time, he plays men's softball.

The Board thanked Mr. Rabatsky for his time this evening explained that it is the Board's policy not to make appointments on the same night that they meet with candidates, rather they will do so at a future meeting.

Plan for COVID-19 vaccine distribution - Health Department

Ms. Karen Waitekus, Public Health Nurse, provided the Board with an update on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 vaccination plan. She stated that the state will have approximately 300,000 doses of the vaccine by the end of December. Plans are for a phased vaccination schedule as follows.

Phase One (December 2020-February 2021):

In order of priority

- Clinical and non-clinical healthcare workers doing direct and COVID-facing care
- Long term care facilities, rest homes and assisted living facilities
- Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- Congregate care settings (including shelters and corrections)
- Home-based healthcare workers
- Healthcare workers doing non-COVID facing care

Phase Two (February 2021-April 2021):

In order of priority

- Individuals with 2+ comorbidities (high risk for COVID-19 complications)
- Early education, K-12, transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works and public health workers
- Adults 65+
- Individuals with one comorbidity

Phase Three (April 2021-):

- Vaccine available to general public

Ms. Waitekus stated that the Health Department will be provided with more information as the state's vaccination plan progresses. When the time comes to vaccinate the general public, there will be several volunteer opportunities similar to flu clinics. There will be a need for volunteers to help with obtaining forms, vaccine preparation, monitoring patients, check in/out, traffic, security and social distancing.

The Board thanked Ms. Waitekus for her time this evening and for the information.

Update from Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Ms. Kiana Pierre-Louis of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee provided the Select Board with the first update of the committee's progress thus far. She advised that committee has met 5 times since its inception. They have established meeting norms and a correspondence policy similar to the School Committee and Select Board. A few important topics have come up over the course of their meetings including Main Street crosswalks and closed captioning for meetings. Suggestions were made for text to speech platforms as well as using the Zoom text to speech feature. It was agreed that closed captioning would be further researched.

The third topic the committee has been focused on is diversity, equity, and inclusion training. They sought and received information from four consultants, The Greater US, Diversity@Workplace, Jeff Rogers, and Requity (Dr. Loretta Brady). Overwhelmingly, the Committee like The Greater US for their personal connection to Sharon, strategic planning process and cost. Moreover, Diversity@Workplace also resonated with the committee because of their Inclusive Leadership training and diverse trainers. Overall, it was felt that the unique method of training and the community social approach can be useful in Sharon. The DEIC felt that Dr. Brady's approach may be a long term initiative that will take community stakeholders and leaders in the community to be engaged and highly recommends the Requity program be used in the future once a concrete plan has been vetted and funding solidified.

The cost of training is substantial and Ms. Pierre-Louis asked if there is a cost goal to be targeted. The Board asked if the committee has researched any grant funding. Ms. Pierre-Louis stated that they have not but she is aware of grants that are available and would begin to research them. Initially it was felt that \$5,000 would be the budgeted amount, however due to COVID, other trainings which have been attended regularly in the past have been temporarily suspended. Therefore, it is expected that approximately \$9,000 can be made available for funding of diversity, equity, and inclusion training.

Lastly, the committee is seeking guidance about committee use of the Town's webpage, specifically what can be posted both on the main page and the committee landing page. It was explained that articles, books, videos and other information related to the work of or promoted by DEIC would be appropriate for the committee landing page and news bulletins exclusive to the work of the DEIC are appropriate for the main page.

The Board thanked Ms. Pierre-Louis and the members of the committee for their hard work thus far and for their update this evening.

Consider and appoint candidate for Economic Development Committee

This item was tabled as another candidate for Economic Development Committee will be interviewed at the next Select Board meeting on January 5, 2021.

Town Administrator's Evaluation

For background, each Select Board member independently completes an evaluation form and adds comments based on their thoughts on the performance of the Town Administrator for past 12 months. The responses and comments are then assembled into one document, which reflects a combination of the three reviews. Mr. Turkington has received very strong scores. Ms. Smith-Lee reviewed many of the comments and scores for each section and revealed that the aggregate score is 4.8 out of a possible 5. The Board feels that Mr. Turkington has done a tremendous job since joining Sharon.

MOTION: To approve the Town Administrator Annual Performance Evaluation as presented.
(Switlekowski – Heitin)

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

Review and approve consent calendar

- I. Minutes
 - a. December 3, 2020 regular session minutes
 - b. December 3, 2020 Executive session minutes
- II. Vote to approve the following banner requests:
 - a. SYBSA Spring Registration – January 4-10, 2021 in 1st position
 - b. SYBSA Spring Registration – January 18-24, 2021 in 2nd position
- III. Vote to award the 2021 SERSG Drug and Alcohol Testing services contract to Advantage Drug Testing
 - a. Award form
- IV. Vote to award the 2021 SERSG DPW Services contracts in the aggregate sum of \$868,767.83
 - a. Award form
- V. Vote to approve and sign the 2021 Common Victualler's licenses for:
 - a. Giri Sharon, LLC dba Best Western
 - b. Sichuan Gourmet
 - c. The Cape Club of Sharon

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

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

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update:

The department received 9 pieces of correspondence between 12 noon on November 30 and 12 noon on December 10 which consisted of:

- A series of emails related to the conservation work being performed on a natural habitat plan in the Laurel Road neighborhood related to the Sharon Gallery project
- An email from Paddy Kalish encouraging the Town to consider joining GATRA regional transit authority
- An email from Sara Becker commending the School Department for handling of COVID-19 related protocols
- An email from SC member Veronica Wiseman inviting members of Town boards to participate in a focus group and complete a survey as to qualities for new superintendent of schools

In addition, members of the Board received announcements of changes by Governor Baker in COVID-19 protocols and plan for vaccine initial distribution.

At the next meeting the Board can expect to approve the collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Library Employees SEIU Local 888, renewal of the agreement for parking at the First Baptist Church, open the warrant for Annual Town Meeting in May, and set a date for possible Special Town Meeting.

Detailed worksheet with preliminary FY2022 revenues and fixed expenses will be distributed before the weekend. A detailed narrative summary will be prepared ahead of Monday evening's meeting chaired by Finance Committee chair Dan Lewenberg. Some key variables:

- Inclusion of \$270,000 in estimated local sales tax revenue from Verano Holdings retail marijuana operations.
- Current assumption of no change in state aid and Cherry Sheet charges from FY2021 to FY2022, pending release of the Governor's proposed FY2022 budget for the Commonwealth on January 27, 2021. The legislature's consensus revenue hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15.
- Refinancing of older debt saving \$100K.
- Health insurance trust fund contribution contains a 10% increase pending approval of COVID-19 relief funds for \$850K of incurred expenses.
- Property insurance increase of \$100K based on hardening market for auto and liability and increased workers' compensation claims.
- Restoration of cash capital to pre-COVID-19 levels (increase of \$90K).
- Retirement fund contribution estimated increase of 10%.
- Discussion of how to handle transition to mandated all-day kindergarten projected in FY2024 (shift from outside fund to share of fixed and school budgets).
- Consider impact of recovery on hotel, meals and other local receipts.
- New growth estimate pending building permit activity for commercial projects.
- Consider increase in operating reserves beyond usual \$500K funded from free cash to handle COVID-19 expenses not eligible for FEMA or in excess of CARES Act funding allocation (and potential future stimulus payment)

There will be a small swearing in ceremony for Deputy Fire Chief, Mike Madden next week.

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

Ms. Switekowski announced that the local Toys for Tots drive received double the donations over last year and the Stoney Brook food distribution center received a generous donation of \$10,000 from Shaw's this week. She wishes all a happy holiday season and a healthy New Year.

Adjourn

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:50 pm
(Heitin – Switekowski)

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

List of Documents

- Board/Committee application
- Energy Advisory Committee applicant list
- Boston Globe article
- MA DPH initial steps for vaccination
- MA DPH COVID cases for Sharon
- DEIC summary
- Training proposals
- Committee charge
- Board/Committee applications
- EDC membership list
- Minutes
- Banner requests
- Award form
- Report
- FY2022 revenue estimates and fixed expenses