

**MINUTES**  
**SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
February 3, 2015

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Sharon Town Hall at 7:04pm with Chairman William A. Heitin, Clerk John J. McGrath, Selectman Walter B. Roach and Town Administrator Fred Turkington.

Chairman Heitin thanked the Department of Public Works and its contractors on its hard work in cleaning the roads during these past two storms. Selectman Roach noted that the Fire Department prepared an ice safety video and thanked the Department. Chairman Heitin also asked residents to clear the fire hydrants near their homes.

<b>Amanda Levasseur – Recreation – FY2016 Budget</b>
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Recreation Director Amanda Levasseur began by explaining that her department's budget includes a salary increase for a third recreation professional; 50% of the funding will come from the Recreation program revolving account and 50% from the Town's operating budget, which is \$25,404. The third professional will offer sport and aquatic programs while allowing the Assistant Recreation Director to instruct arts and music programs. In addition

Selectman McGrath asked if this position is full time and whether it will be a position with benefits. Ms. Levasseur replied that it will be a full-time position but only half of the salary will come from the town's operating budget and indeed it will be a benefited position. The other half of the salary will come from the Recreation Department's program revolving account. Mr. Turkington added that the Recreation Department is currently spending \$8,300 for the Recreation League Coordinator position and is projecting a salary of between \$8,000-10,000 for a Waterfront Supervisor. Those expenses would be redirected into this position. Selectman McGrath did note that the programs with the Recreation Department are top notch. Ms. Levasseur pointed out that if the third professional position was funded, the current expenses for peak season staffing would be redirected to the 50% revolving expense. As a result, the revolving accounts would only need to support \$9,104. The third professional will offer sport and aquatic programs while allowing the Assistant Recreation Director to instruct arts and music programs. In addition, they plan to bring more events, programs, and services to the community. To list a few: Beech Tree Park concert series, children's performance series, sponsorships, summer boat rentals, vacation programming, increased contract and rental management, and more. These offerings cannot be sustained with the current full time staff.

Ms. Levasseur noted that they are trying to bring on a Waterfront Supervisor that is older and not a college student.

Selectman Roach noted he is not comfortable with this added position.

Mim Gopen of Beech Tree Park project noted that Ms. Levasseur has been very responsive to their needs, particularly with the summer concert series. Her waterfront staff has also assisted with the removal of invasive weeds in the park. The park deserves more attention and hopes that the Board will be able to fully fund the budget that Ms. Levasseur is proposing. Selectman McGrath commented that over time, volunteers wane and it is difficult for the town to take over and he hopes that other volunteers will step up. Ms. Gopen noted that this proposed position is to boost all of the programs of the Recreation Department. Ms. Levasseur noted that the new position would cover the weekends. Recreation Advisory Committee member Mitch Blaustein noted that the Recreation Department used to have three full-time people, and the position was eliminated several years ago when the building was undergoing its renovation.

Recreation Advisory Committee member Steve Lesco added that the existing department is stretched to the maximum and they are having difficulty doing the job they presently have. Selectman Roach said that people are having difficulty paying their taxes and folks are moving out of Sharon, and it's not just the elderly.

Chairman Heitin noted that the budget is \$236,000 for the Recreation Department, including salaries and expenses.

### **Beach Procedures & Fees Discussion**

Recreation Director Amanda Levasseur said that the Recreation Department is recommending that the rates for beach fees remain the same for 2015. The Recreation Advisory Committee, at their October 24 meeting, supported the 2014 rates with the exception of the non-resident boat access pass. They are recommending that rate be reduced from \$150 to \$125. If a permanent gate guard is to be hired to check boats for extended hours, then they recommend the rates remain at \$150. The decrease would reduce pass income by \$1,300.

The recommendation for the beach procedures for 2015 is as following:

Beach operating dates: May 23 – August 30, 2015; weekends only from May 23 – June 21 (or whenever school releases for the summer) and then full-time from June 22 – August 30. The recommended operating hours are from 10am – 6pm. There are budget implications if the beach hours are extended from 6pm to 8pm. If the extended hours are proposed, there are three options to make up the \$8,300 shortfall:

- Increase beach fees by 10%
- Request funding from the town's operating budget
- Do not extend hours and continue to operate from 10am-6pm

Ms. Levasseur believes that if the Board wants to extend hours to 8pm, the beach needs to be fully staffed with an additional supervisor, three lifeguards and two gate guards. This would also staff the boat ramp.

Selectman McGrath noted that the major issue from last season was people driving onto the beach and other issues that the Police Department has raised. Ms. Levasseur offered a compromise of hours from 11am-7pm. Selectman Roach wants to see a gate guard, a lifeguard and one waterfront person this year and see how it works – he wants to stop the out-of-town people from coming to the lake. Ms. Levasseur commented that other communities use police patrols to monitor the lake and believes that if there is a need to have someone there, then it should be fully staffed.

Chairman Heitin suggested locking the main gates at 6pm or 7pm and people can walk in.

Selectman McGrath said that the Police Chief believes there are security issues at the lake and they need to be addressed. He also knows that there are people that want to come to use the lake in the early evening, after dinner.

Mr. Turkington noted that the conversation tonight seems to be more focused on security. Chairman Heitin asked about implementing a split shift. Ms. Levasseur noted that the morning is the slowest time.

Selectman Roach asked if the students were ever assessed to be able to park at the lake. Chairman Heitin said that they are working on this issue. DPW Superintendent Eric Hooper said that if you charge an entrance fee to come into the lake, then the money would go to the Recreation Department.

Ms. Levasseur said that they can sell a parking pass that would enable them to park all summer and then into the fall until the first snow.

Chairman Heitin said that he, Amanda and Fred will have a solution for their next meeting.

**MOTION:** To approve the beach fees for 2015, as proposed  
(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

### **Community Center Rental Rates Public Hearing**

**MOTION:** To open the public hearing at 7:50pm  
(Roach – McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

The Department of Public Works, Recreation Department and Sharon Adult Center are seeking the Board's support concerning updating the Community Center Rental Agreements and Rates.

The DPW Superintendent, Recreation Director, and Executive Director of the Adult Center have met extensively over the past several years to update the procedure and requirements for rental of the various rooms at the Community Center and establish uniform rates for those rooms.

Their effort was to create forms that display accurate information based on current procedures. The rates will be put into effect to re-coup costs associated with operating the building and to offset future capital expenses for larger cost maintenance of the building.

The rates are modeled from the Sharon Public School rental rates so that the Town can have a relatively uniform set of rates for public facilities, i.e., rates are set according to user category (Town/non-Town, for profit/ non-profit).

Rates will be put into effect pending the Board of Selectmen approval.

The reason for the fee structure is because the operating budget is not covering the cost of operating the Community Center or even the capital recovery budget. The Town's insurance agent and Town Counsel have assisted with the development of these applications.

Mr. Hooper noted that one of the questions is what is considered a departmental program. He believes that a department program is one in which the department gets money. He does not believe the fees are onerous and doesn't want to drive people away. He noted that the Men's Club meets weekly and ties up the ballroom for the day. Mr. Turkington noted they compared their application with other communities. Mr. Hooper said that the problem with waiving fees is that the Department of Public Works cannot maintain the capital recovery.

Selectman McGrath commended Mr. Hooper and Ms. Levasseur for their hard work, as this proposal was well done.

Selectman Roach asked if there was a process for determining waivers and Chairman Heitin believes that the decision could be made by the Town Administrator and then the Board of Selectmen, if needed.

Selectman Roach asked when this would be implemented and Mr. Turkington offered March 1 as a start date.

**MOTION:** To close the public hearing at 8:01pm  
(McGrath – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

**MOTION:** To approve the presented fees  
(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

**Eric Hooper – Department of Public Works – FY2016 Budget**

Mr. Hooper informed the Board that there will be some reimbursement from FEMA from the blizzard, but the snow and ice budget has been over-expended.

**Department of Public Works Budget**

The FY16 DPW budget breakdown is proposed as follows:

	FY13 Expenses	FY14 Expenses	FY15 Appropriated	FY16 Proposed	Delta
Salaries and Wages	\$2,007,959	\$2,155,890	\$2,091,753	\$2,345,362	\$253,609
Materials and Services	\$1,090,773	\$1,213,503	\$824,939	\$834,946	\$10,007
Total	\$3,098,732	\$3,369,393	\$2,916,692	\$3,180,308	\$263,616

Efforts have been made in recent fiscal years to bring Materials and Services expenses into line with increased utility costs. Both natural gas and electricity costs have remained somewhat stable according to rates established by the present long term contracts for both natural gas and electricity. Fuel use has continued to decline due primarily to improved operations at the Community Center. Gasoline and diesel prices have declined somewhat over the past year, down from \$3.50 per gallon to approximately \$3.00 per gallon.

Full staffing to FY03 levels is proposed: the Engineering Department and Forestry and Grounds Divisions will each have one position restored. Given the recent addition of playing fields at the Sacred Heart site, the move to make the DPW responsible for maintenance at Beech Tree Park, and the move to turn the Hammershop Dam area into a recreational area to be maintained by the DPW justifies the increase in personnel by the Forestry and Grounds Division. The expectation of development at Sharon Commons and Rattlesnake Hill, the increased emphasis on grant pursuit and the expectation that the DPW will compile bid documents, permit filings and funding request filings for projects where other departments are the primary proponents justifies the increase in personnel for the Engineering Department. A new position for Facilities Manager has been created, given the recent construction of the Community Center, the expected construction of the Public Safety complex and the addition of the building at One School Street all falling under DPW responsibility, this position is necessary.

Overtime hours is assumed to be 100% of the historical 5-year average for the proposed budget.

Data show that historical spending on a constant dollar basis, per capita expenditure has remained steady or declined somewhat for the Department of Public Works since 1960, despite increased regulatory requirements and resident quality of service expectations, while the population of Sharon has expanded from 10,052 to the 2011 population of 18,168.

### Proposed Budget:

The proposed budget for FY16 represents an increase of \$263,616 or 9. %. Much of this increase (\$158,456) is a result of funding positions that were cut in FY03; a Forestry and Grounds position and the Assistant Town Engineer/Planner, and creation of the Facilities Manager.

The proposed budget for salaries and wages is **\$2,345,362** which includes contractually obligated step increases of 2% for eligible personnel only and 2% cost of living increases for all personnel. Overtime hours is assumed to be 100% of the historical 5-year running average. This represents an increase of **\$253,609** of which **\$158,456** is due to additional personnel for the Forestry and Grounds Division and Engineering Department.

The presently vacant positions of Assistant Engineer/Planner and Forestry and Grounds positions are proposed for funding.

With additional staff for the Forestry and Grounds Division and Engineering Department, the efficiency of the F&G and Engineering Departments will no longer be compromised.

He noted that fuel use has continued to decline due primarily to improved operations at the Community Center. Gasoline and diesel have declined somewhat over the past year.

Mr. Hooper explained that the Facilities Manager is being proposed because another building is coming online shortly and someone is needed to handle all of the town building needs.

Overtime hours is assumed to be 100% of the historical five-year average for the proposed budget.

### Water Department Budget

The proposed budget assumes that the Water Department retained earnings reserve fund has sufficient capacity to fund both water main replacement under Brook Road and initiate the emergency connection to the MWRA via Norwood. Expected revenue for FY16 with the recently approved rate increase is \$3,100,000.

	FY13 Expenses	FY14 Expenses	FY15 Appropriated	FY16 Proposed	Delta
Salaries and Wages	\$1,261,181	\$1,376,611	\$1,376,611	\$1,430,467	\$53,856
Materials and Services	\$510,514	\$563,527	\$595,834	\$508,287	-\$87,547
System Improvements/Equipment	\$654,824	\$507,600	\$795,500	\$2,254,322	\$1,458,822
Total	\$2,426,519	\$2,447,738	\$2,767,945	\$4,193,076	\$1,425,131
Reserve				\$200,000	\$200,000

### Proposed Budget

The proposed budget of **\$4,393,135** includes **\$1,430,467** for salaries and wages which includes contractually obligated step increases of 2% for eligible personnel only and 2% cost of living increases for all personnel, **\$508,287** for materials and supplies, **\$2,254,322** for long-term projects (Brook Road, Emergency Connection to the MWRA via Norwood), an additional **\$25,000** for purchase of a

pickup for use during minor water main break, repair and service activities and administrative activities and **\$309,322** to cover principal plus interest for debt incurred for previous infrastructure replacement projects. No additional borrowing is proposed for this fiscal year. However, **\$1,293,076** will be allocated from retained earnings accumulated during prior years.

Chemical expenses that more than doubled in FY09 to reflect price increases of KOH have been reduced as KOH prices have stabilized and pumped quantity has decreased, representing a budget decrease of over \$54,000.

The proposed budget is possible without any additional layoffs.

Tentatively identified major construction projects totaling \$1,650,000 for FY'16 include water main replacements under Brook Road from North Main Street to Brook Road terminus. This is a continuation of the partially completed project in the Brook Road neighborhood where 100+ year old cast iron mains will be replaced in order to correct fire flow deficiencies. The other major project proposed for FY16 is the initial phase of the emergency connection to the MWRA via Norwood. Other expenses include the following:

		Operating	Debt
<b>5781.1</b>	Infrastructure Replacement and Upgrade		
	Emergency Connection via Norwood	\$750,000	\$0
	Brook Road Neighborhood	\$900,000	\$0
<b>5781.2</b>	Catch Basin Cleaning and Street Sweeping	\$70,000	
<b>5781.3</b>	Source Evaluation and Augmentation	\$0	
<b>5781.4</b>	Conservation (Rebates, Mailings, Ed. Coord.)	\$50,000	
<b>5781.5</b>	Water Management Act Permit Compliance	\$50,000	
<b>5781.6</b>	System Maintenance	\$25,000	
<b>5781.7</b>	Water Resources/System Upgrade	\$25,000	
<b>5781.8</b>	Property Purchase	\$0	
<b>5781.9</b>	Unscheduled System Improvements (breaks)	\$50,000	
	Total	\$1,920,000	\$0

The \$200,000 reserve is needed should there be a big problem. Two big ticket items are the emergency connection to the MWRA via Norwood (a two year project; \$1 million each year) and improvements to the Brook Road neighborhood.

Chairman Heitin pointed out that the water department budget is an enterprise account, so this is funded through water rates revenues and reserves.

### **Street Lights Budget**

The proposed FY16 budget for Street Light is a level funded budget.

The proposed budget of **\$187,500** includes **\$49,948** electricity costs, primarily associated with Town owned "cobra head" street lights. An additional **\$47,500** is allocated to street light maintenance, also in line with past year expenses. This includes \$7,500 for materials and supplies expenses to be allocated to continued efforts to correct underground failures notably in the Bird Streets, Castle Drive and Beaver Brook Road areas.

This budget also includes **\$59,687** for debt service to fund a changeover to LED cobra head street lights from the current High Pressure Sodium (HPS) or mercury vapor (MV) type. The energy savings is

projected to be sufficient to cover the debt cost incurred. There are approximately 1450 66-watt street HPS lights that will be converted to 25 watt LED. Another 200 higher wattage MV and HPS (125W – 295W) will be converted to 74 watt or less LED.

The DPW spent over \$122,000 during FY13 for electricity for all streetlights. This includes approximately 1650 cobra head street lights, 500 lollypop style, 100 decorative period-style lights in the Town Center and 4 traffic signals. The lollypops, decorative style and traffic signals are not included in the conversion project.

The payback program will occur over 10 years. LED lights have a 20 year life. Consequently, savings will be realized after year 10.

The Board thanked Mr. Hooper for his time.

#### **Review & Approve Consent Calendar**

- I. Vote to accept regular and executive session minutes of January 20, 2015
- II. Vote to approve banner request for: Sharon Pop Warner
- III. Vote to appoint Julie House to the Sharon Cultural Council for a term to expire on June 30, 2018
- IV. Vote to sign wage amendment agreement between the Town of Sharon and School Crossing Guards
- V. Vote to sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Sharon and the Sharon Public Library Employees for a three year contract, from July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2017

**MOTION:** To approve the February 3, 2015 consent calendar  
(McGrath – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

#### **Town Administrator's Report**

The Town Administrator reported the following:

- The department heads review will take place at the Board's next meeting
- The Board will interview for the Water Management Advisory Committee at the next meeting and will interview the final candidate for the Board of Health on March 3 and the Board is encouraged to make an appointment that evening
- The Annual Town Meeting warrant has closed; no citizens petitions and no zoning articles
- The Finance Committee will be reviewing Police, Fire and DPW in the next several weeks
- Police, Fire and DPW have done a wonderful job during these two recent storms

#### **Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight hours in advance of the meeting**

Selectman McGrath read a commendation letter from the Police Chief to Officer Phil McEnany for his life saving efforts. Officer McEnany is participating in the Polar Plunge on February 14 as a member of Copsicles to benefit the Special Olympics.

Chairman Heitin said that a draft report has been completed on an inventory of fields in the Town and he hopes to have this as an agenda topic for a future meeting. The Fields Use Committee has done a wonderful job.

## Adjournment

**MOTION:** To adjourn at 8:27pm  
(Heitin – Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**