

**MINUTES**  
**SHARON SELECT BOARD**  
March 13, 2023

The meeting of the Sharon Select Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Hanna R. Switekowski remotely via Zoom. Select Board members 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 recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public comment period**

A resident of Edge Hill Road expressed concerns about the proposed retail marijuana facility to be located behind Applebee's on Route 1 at the intersection of Route 27. At the time the matter on allowing marijuana in Sharon was heard at Town Meeting in 2018, it was explained that the number of marijuana licenses would be limited to 20 percent of liquor licenses issued. It is the opinion of the resident that now allowing another license is unfair to residents that voted in 2018 based on the understanding that there would be only one facility. The resident would also like to understand whether the licensed cannabis facility has contributed the 3% community impact fee for education, prevention and monitoring and, if so, would the facility continue to do so. It was explained that Staff has consulted with the Cannabis Control Commission and the number of alcohol licenses increased with the acceptance of all alcohol package stores in Sharon, thus increasing the number of licenses available in Town for marijuana sales. Four Daughters has indeed honored the 3% local option sales tax on their wholesale receipts. The impact fee payment this year was around \$80,000.

There being no other public comment, Ms. Switekowski moved on with the meeting.

**Update to the charge of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**

At their meeting on February 7, the Board had an update from the DEI Committee. As a part of that discussion, the Committee expressed the desire to amend the charge, particularly around the word "ensure" in the task of "ensure equitable access to resources, programs, and opportunities for all residents." It is felt that the term intimates a level of certainty that the Committee may not be able to attain. DEIC initially preferred to use the term "advocate;" however members of the Board had differing opinions on the efficacy of both terms and wished to give additional thought to possible options.

Ms. Pierre-Louis is the liaison with the DEIC. She explained that DEI met after the February 7 meeting with the Select Board and agreed that amending the language to include "ensure to the best of its ability" acknowledges that the committee may be limited in their abilities. This language change is amenable to all.

The Select Board expressed their appreciation for the work of the committee in coming back with this language.

**MOTION:** To approve the update to the charge of the DEI committee.  
(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

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

**Consider Host Community Agreement with Godsend HP**

Mr. Turkington provided an overview. It was explained that the Cannabis Control Commission has been consulted and as there are now 9 alcohol licenses issued in Sharon, a second retail marijuana facility is permissible.

Godsend is willing to accept the same agreement negotiated with Four Daughters. This addresses negative consequences for the Town and for which the Town can request compensation to mitigate. It was further explained that the site was cleared, and trees cut before this proposal in accordance with the previous permitted use of the site, La Quinta hotel. The warehouse and retail facilities are taking up the same space as the formerly proposed hotel. The proponents have a scheduled meeting with Conservation on Thursday for an amended order of conditions. Not necessary to file new OOC as this facility has more advantageous use than hotel.

Entire project is in Sharon. Can develop manufacture or grow. Retail needed further clarification by CCC. Warehouse is 222000 sf dry storage only. No issues with manufacturing, grow. Need for distribution network in the marketplace. That will likely be a separate HCA agreement. Site is bounded by Routes 27 and 95. Applebee's has been fully aware since the beginning. Not much property left in Sharon zoned appropriately for this development.

To question about whether existing HCA. One is mitigation, retail sales tax. In addition, wholesale tax was agreed by four daughters which is. Collected \$80,000 this year from 3% wholesale tax collection. Always looking for ways to increase commercial tax revenue. KPL feels contract is very thorough. All questions/concerned were answered. Public safety has generally not been an issue. Pleased that this agreement also has mitigation. Dunkin, Mobil gas station. Have had to notify abutters and abutters to abutters. Applebee's has been made fully aware also. Have heard from neighbors who have no significant issues. A traffic study is being conducted. Traffic volumes are similar to what they would have been if the hotel were constructed, but during different times of day. ZBA has seen this for a second time. Most impacts are will not be realized in Sharon. More comfortable with this concept.

Have been in touch with Fire Department. Wanted to get behind building. There is 12' gravel path for FD access. CCC require security plan review and acceptance. Vote tonight will be authorize signing agreement.

**MOTION:** To approve the Host Community Agreement pending site and all other required approvals.  
(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

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

### Discussion on updated HR policies

This is a continued discussion from the February 7 meeting. Draft policies had been distributed for the Board to review with the materials for that meeting and finalized drafts have been provided with the materials for this meeting as well. As you recall, Ms. Barnes has been working with a consultant to update policies to address matters not covered by the nine collective bargaining agreements presently in force. It was explained that Town Counsel wished to have more time to review the technology and social media policy. This will be circulated at a future meeting for the Board to approve.

**MOTION:** To approve the HR policies as presented.  
(Pierre-Louis – Smith-Lee)

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

### Overview of FY2024 operating budget

Mr. Turkington provided an overview. He explained that staff began a review of the budget in the fall in preparation for the next fiscal year. The Fiscal 24 budget has funding for a communication specialist which will be split 50/50 with the IT budget. Also included is \$48,000 in the election registration budget for a possible special Town meeting and/or special election. There is continued funding for an Intern through the Northeastern University program.

The Board has reviewed the information included in the meeting materials. It was asked whether DEI training was included. Mr. Turkington advised that funding has been increased from \$6,000 to \$10,000 to include training for members of Boards and Committees.

**MOTION:** To approve proposed SB sector budget as presented.  
(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

Switekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

Pierre-Louis: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

### **Executive group salaries and personnel article changes**

Mr. Turkington advised that the Personnel Board was invited to the meeting this evening to present their views on the article list recommended by the Governance Study Committee. It was recommended that the Board consider eliminating the Personnel Board and shift responsibilities to the Select Board. There has also been a recommendation to amend the list of holidays, changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day as well as add Juneteenth. Mr. Turkington will be sending performance reviews to the Personnel Board for their review. They will vote their position on Article 4 at their next meeting on March 22.

Ms. Kelley spoke about the Personnel Board's feelings on the proposed dissolution of the Personnel Board. They have not yet completed their deliberations, but she provided an update on the discussions to date. The general consensus of the Personnel Boards is that it should remain. Ms. Kelley explained that they have not had difficulty filling spots on the Board and wished to correct the record on that matter. She explained there was once a 3-month period where the moderator could not be reached to make an appointment to fill a vacancy. There has also been no difficulty experienced in securing a quorum for meetings. It was the impression that members of the Personnel Board did not have qualifications or background in Human Resources and she wished to correct the record in this area as well. She explained that two members have credentials in HR management; one of those members has 43 plus years' experience in human resources. Ms. Kelley has significant experience in labor law. The remainder of the Board members served previously on the Finance Committee. That said, a consultant or consulting services would always be helpful as employment law changes on consistent basis.

Ms. Pierre-Louis expressed concerns about the bylaws being considerably out of date. Ms. Smith-Lee asked to what extent did Ms. Kelley believe that the Personnel Board could be effective advisory to the Select Board as opposed to independently appointed.

Ms. Kelley responded that she felt a separate board provided for checks and balances more effectively than an advisory board. Her feeling has nothing to do with current composition with Select Board.

With respect to the Personnel Board's decision on holidays, they have not yet voted. A public hearing was held a little over a week ago. Members of the Board wished to digest the information gathered before deciding. They will vote at the next meeting on March 22.

### **Vote positions on the warrant articles for Annual Town Meeting**

Ms. Switekowski explained that she would read through the list of articles provided. Select Board members should state whether they support, do not support, or wish to abstain for each article. With respect to the

article involving the size of the Select Board, Ms. Smith-Lee expressed that although she is not sure she has strong feelings either way, she supports having Town Meeting deliberate the matter. Ms. Switekowski felt that she would prefer to abstain, but she has openly supported the move to a five-member board in the past.

<b>Art. #</b>	<b>Agenda Topic</b>	<b>Smith-Lee</b>	<b>Pierre-Louis</b>	<b>Switekowski</b>
1	Act on Reports	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
2	Sharon Friends School Fund Records and Appointments	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
3	Personnel By-Law	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
4	Property Tax Exemptions	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
5	Revolving Fund Authorizations	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
6	Grant of Utility Easement for High School	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
14	Compensation of Elected Officials	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
15	Capital Outlay	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
16	Fiscal Year 2024 Budget	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
19	Citizen Petition: Increase Select Board from Three (3) to Five (5) Members	ABSTAIN	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
20	Amend General By-Law: Sharon Standing Building Committee and SSBC Selection Committee Membership; Appropriation and Expenditure of Funds	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
21	Amend General By-Laws: Finance Committee and Nominating Committee of the Finance Committee	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
23	Amend General By-Law: Reduce the Term of Planning Board Length from Five (5) Years to Three (3) Years	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
24	Eliminate Personnel By-Law	TABLE UNTIL MARCH 28 SELECT BOARD MEETING		
25	Amend Personnel By-Law: Amend List of Holidays (OMIT PRESIDENT'S DAY)	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
29	Amend General By-Law: Remove Requirement to Mail Town Meeting Warrants	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
30	Authorize Local Voting Rights for Permanent Resident Aliens Residing in Sharon	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
31	Citizen Petition: Amend General By-Laws Relative to Board/Committee Reorganization	TABLE UNTIL TOWN MEETING		

## Consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the open session minutes of February 21, 2023
- II. Vote to approve the following banner request/requests:
  - a. Friends of the Fourth Sharon Five Road Race and July 3 festivities, June 19 -July 3, 2023, in 1<sup>st</sup> position
  - b. Sharon Pride Steering Committee Sharon Celebrates Pride banner, June 5-12, 2023, in 1<sup>st</sup> position
- III. Vote to approve out of state travel for Assistant Town Administrator Lauren Barnes to attend the ICMA Local Government Reimagined Conference in Burlington, Vermont from April 12-14, 2023
- IV. Vote to approve the purchase of temporary PFAS treatment in the amount of \$770,289

- V. Vote to approve SERSG's DPW Services Contracts from March 1, 2023 through February 29, 2024 for hot mix asphalt, crack sealing, guardrail installation, catch basin cleaning, sidewalk construction and setting of curbs & edging with a total estimated value of \$2,265,225.20
- VI. Vote to approve the fraud risk policy recommended by the Finance Committee
- VII. Vote to approve the following Invitations to Bid for Recreation
- a. 2023-2024 Concession stand Invitation to Bid
  - b. 2023-2024 Concession stand draft agreement
  - c. 2023 Beer Garden Invitation to Bid
  - d. 2023 Beer Garden draft agreement
- VIII. Vote to approve the change of purpose of the Kafka family Learn to Sail Scholarship fund
- IX. Vote to appoint Francis Berry as interim Treasurer/Collector from March 8 through March 26, 2023
- X. Vote to approve the employment agreement with Treasurer/Collector Diane E. Wyman

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

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

### **Report of the Town Administrator**

Mr. Turkington provided the following update.

*New treasurer/collector appointed.* We are pleased to announce that Diane Wyman, currently deputy collector for the City of Pawtucket, RI will begin as treasurer/collector on Monday, March 27. Ms. Wyman comes to us after 24 years of experience in all aspects of the finance function. She came highly recommended by outgoing treasurer/collector Shaun Stroebel as she was his assistant during his time working for the city. Approval of her employment agreement on the consent calendar is requested.

*Annual Town Meeting update.* The order of articles having been established; the Board will consider its position on each article at either of the next two meetings. A schedule has been provided. A logistics meeting to plan for the first town meeting to be held in the new high school will be held on March 22.

*FY2024 Select Board sector budget.* Under separate cover, I am providing the proposed budget that meets the priorities allocation target of \$16,080,010. It is largely a current services budget, with a few notable additions we were able to include to further the Board's objectives given the 4.73% increase over the current fiscal year:

- Hiring of a communications specialist to support outbound communication with residents, manage social media and external media, develop a robust email distribution list, and support improvements to the website.
- Continued funding of Northeastern University co-op intern to perform research projects, assist planning and zoning function and implementation of the master plan (\$28K).
- Funding for a regional housing services office with seven other towns spearheaded by MAPC to coordinate affordable housing initiatives and administration (\$15K).
- Increased funding in support of community celebrations and events.

### **Select Board Correspondence/Announcements**

We received / exchanged approximately 23 pieces of correspondence between Friday, February 17 and 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 9. Topics included:

- Notices and invitations: one submission related to consideration of appointment to Town boards and committees (Olson Drisko - Conservation); resignation from member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee due to work conflict; copy of proposed zoning articles; copy of presentation and minutes from February 27 meeting on Middle School solar project; notices from One Book, One Town, Cultural Council newsletter, Neponset Chamber March newsletter, and email Sustainable Sharon regarding May 7 Green Day program; and invitations to ceremony recognizing Fire Chief on his retirement on March 10 and Eagle Scout ceremony for Ethan Levine on April 30;
- Email from chair to Personnel Board supporting naming second Monday of October as Indigenous People's Day, together with DEIC advisory opinions and public hearing notice;
- Three emails exchanged regarding technical difficulties with ZBA meeting broadcast;
- Notice from Health Department regarding start of Interface mental health program access, initiative to educate and make available Narcan, and notice of program on eating disorders;
- Notice of next citizen's public safety academy;
- Notice from MMA analyzing municipal aid in Governor Healey's proposed state budget; and,
- Email from Housing Authority introducing Attleboro's executive director as management agent for Sharon Housing Authority.

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

None.

#### **Adjourn**

**MOTION:** To adjourn at 8:47 pm.  
(Pierre-Louis – Smith-Lee)

Switekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

Pierre-Louis: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

#### List of Documents

- Current DEIC charge
- Draft host community agreement
- Site plan
- Draft HR policies
- FY2024 Operating budget
- Memorandum to Personnel Board of March 9, 2023
- Email correspondence of March 8, 2023
- Updated list of articles
- Minutes
- Banner request forms (2)
- Conference overview/event details
- Memoranda
- Award form
- Draft policy
- Invitations to Bid/Draft agreements (2)
- Employment agreement