

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
May 23, 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 along with 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 expressed gratitude for the Sustainable Sharon Green Day event. Another resident also expressed their thanks particularly to Kevin Weber and the Forestry and Grounds Division as well as Linda Berger and Sharon Recreation for their hard work.

A resident read a statement regarding Edge Hill Road stating opposition to the project. A hearing by the Zoning Board of appeals is scheduled for May 24. With the documents now available, it was requested that the Select Board rescind their support for the project. Four materials items need to be addressed: the number of bedrooms per unit, the driveway cuts, abutter identification, and approval of the LIP application by the Select Board. It was requested that the Select Board rescind their approval along with their support letter to DHCD as well as take steps to cease the application process. The resident thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Two other residents of Edge Hill Road support the comments stated earlier. In addition, there have been ongoing discussions with Sharon Gallery developer on the cranberry bogs on South Main Street. There is a notice of intent with the Conservation Commission to deed the land to the Town.

Discussion on bids for solid waste and recycling collection

Mr. Turkington advised that a public hearing is scheduled to take place on June 6 for public comment relating to the solid waste and recycling collection program fees. He further advised that staff have spent some time looking at the dumpster contracts as well as the frequency of collection. Evaluation of the bid responses has Republic as the apparent low bidder. A Pay-As-You-Throw option is not viable as this would eliminate the containers and subject trash bags on the curb overnight to potential exploration by animals. A draft budget was presented for the Board to review, and it was explained that a contract has not yet been signed.

Clarification for Pay-As-You-Throw not being viable was requested. It was explained that with a typical Pay-As-You-Throw program, automated collection with trucks equipped with mechanical lifts are not used as there is no way to police Pay-As-You-Throw bags in containers. There is a savings of 15% for collection by automated means. This was challenged by a resident who felt that the bags could be monitored as the automatic collection device tips the container into the truck.

Ms. Smith-Lee acknowledged that the Board is not voting this evening and looks forward to hearing from residents during the hearing. She expressed her feeling that Pay-As-You-Throw seems the easiest answer to equity.

The Board will vote on the solid waste and recycling collection fees after the public hearing on June 6.

Library Reuse Temporary Advisory Committee

Mr. Turkington advised that this committee was convened pre-pandemic. Now that the School Street site for the future library building is back on track, it makes sense to reconstitute the committee for July 1. There have been many questions lately about accessibility. The Board asked whether the composition should be changed to reflect a desire for candidates with experience in accessibility. It was decided that those candidates with housing and structural engineering expertise would cover it.

MOTION: To reinstate the temporary study committee to evaluate the current library location on North Main Street for future uses, including, but not limited to Town purposes, sale or lease for commercial purposes or housing, parking, or some other use, and report its findings to the Select Board. Said temporary study committee shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Select Board, with preference given to voters with experience in real estate, architecture, structural engineering, housing, or the adaptive reuse of historical buildings.

(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis)

Smith-Lee: AYE

Pierre-Louis: AYE

Switekowski: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the open session minutes of April 25, 2023 open session
- II. Vote to approve the Hip Hop block party, Lee Road from South Main St to Essex Road, on June 17, 2023 from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm with a rain date of June 24, 2023
- III. Vote to approve Proclamations for Pride month, June 2023 and Flag Day, June 14, 2023
- IV. Vote to award the 2023 Helen Eaton Griffin Memorial Scholarship to Duncan McLean of the Sharon High School Class of 2023
- V. Vote to approve employment agreements with the Executive Group through June 30, 2024
- VI. Vote to approve an agreement with Widowmaker Brewing for the Sharon Recreation summer concert beer gardens
- VII. Vote to accept donations of \$100 for Beech Tree park
- VIII. Vote to award a contract to One4All Masonry & Construction of Boston, MA in the amount of \$31,200 for repair of the commuter rail concrete stairs

MOTION: To approve the consent calendar.

(Pierre-Louis – Smith-Lee)

Smith-Lee: AYE

Pierre-Louis: AYE

Switekowski: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update.

The discussion of the ecotourism grant program funding e-bikes adjacent to the railroad station and the Community Center will continue on June 6 at the request of the Transportation Advisory Board. TAB met on May 10 and May 17 to brainstorm different siting options and hear an update from staff regarding grant deadlines and status of the implementation plan.

The Board will join the Planning Board on Thursday, June 8 to hear an update from J.M. Goldson Consultants who are working with staff and Rob Maidman and Pat Pannone from the Planning Board to draft a zoning by-law for spring 2024 ATM to implement the requirements of the state law allowing multi-family housing by right within overlay districts adjacent to MBTA stations. We will also view a presentation on district improvement financing being studied through a grant to help economic development.

With the release of the NFL schedule last week, we have confirmed Sunday, October 1 from 11A to 3P (Patriots are away and play at 4:25pm). Planning for the event is well underway.

I'm pleased to report that the Town of Norwood has James Tobin, currently Energy Coordinator for the City of Lowell, as the shared energy manager for Sharon and Norwood. He begins his employment on June 5. Hours will be generally split evenly between our communities.

Four candidates for COA director were interviewed today by COA advisory board chair Rob Maidman, ATA Lauren Barnes and me. We have begun an initial review of applications for the Communications Specialist position and the Building Inspector position and will be scheduling interviews after Memorial Day. April Forsman has resigned as GIS coordinator after 20 years of services. We will begin recruitment immediately to identify her replacement.

We have reached a tentative agreement with the management/professional association. Pending ratification by the employee group on May 18, we anticipate discussion and vote on the agreement on May 23. We will begin negotiations with AFSCME representing DPW/Water laborers and equipment operators on May 10; the next session is May 25. We await confirmation of initial bargaining sessions sometime in the next few weeks with librarians represented by SEIU.

Our health insurance consultant, Cook & Company, has circulated specifications for our annual stop-loss coverage. We purchase reinsurance for aggregate claims in a policy year in excess of \$165K. We typically have 6-9 such claims each year.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 24 to review ATM article results and follow-up administrative issues, FY2024 budget implementation, and FY2023 fiscal year closing.

Select Board Correspondence/Announcements

We received / exchanged approximately 27 pieces of correspondence between Friday, May 5 and 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 18. Topics included:

- Notices and invitations including: email from Town Administrator reporting on MBLC supplemental library construction grant award for \$773,916 pending June 1 MBLC vote and note from Linda Berger seeking nominees for citizen of the year; HS legacy project presentation fair on May 24, Lake Massapoag clean-up event on June 10, COA volunteer appreciation event on June 1
- Five applications for appointment to boards and committees from Pototsky (DEIC student); Kamocsay (DEIC); Mael (Library reuse); Krishnan (DEIC or development/planning group); Wluka (GSC);
- Letter dated May 7 and follow-up emails (2) on behalf of Edge Hill Road neighbors to various committees and staff explaining opposition to LIP project at 268-292 Edge Hill Road;
- Email from Town Administrator announcing appointment of Dan Greenfield and Jeff Ricker as deputy fire chiefs effective July 1 (ceremony at PSB to be scheduled);
- Letter from Assistant Town Administrator to state legislative delegation supporting grant funding for Blue Apple Bus from Mansfield to Logan; Airport;
- Email from Town Clerk sharing May 1 and 2, 2023 Annual Town Meeting minutes;
- Nine emails from with Water Superintendent Eric Hooper regarding PFAS levels in MWRA water and decision to maintain the Sharon water system rather than seeking admission to MWRA;
- Email and response from Town Clerk regarding availability of town meeting votes on website;
- Emails expressing concerns over proposed bike lanes on South Main Street; and,

- Email seeking Select Board support for a resolution advocating for a universal breakfast/lunch meal program in Sharon schools.

Discuss Board reorganization

Traditionally, the role of chair rotates, and the advantages to doing so were mentioned. Ms. Smith-Lee announced that this will be her last term on the Board. She is planning a future move to western MA. Ms. Switekowski and Ms. Pierre-Louis expressed their appreciation for her service to the Sharon community and all she continues to do in her role on the Select Board. Ms. Smith-Lee and Ms. Pierre-Louis expressed their congratulations to Ms. Switekowski on her re-election. Ms. Pierre-Louis mentioned being okay with taking over the role of Chair perhaps in September. Ms. Switekowski is happy to continue as Chair for as long as needed to allow Ms. Pierre-Louis to transition into the role. It was asked whether the Clerk position may adjust as well, and it was explained that it can but is not required. Ms. Smith-Lee may continue as Clerk if preferred. The Board should also consider the commitment to the Capital Outlay and Priorities Committees and dividing those duties.

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

The Board made the following announcements:

- There will be a Wear Orange Day for gun violence awareness gathering outside Sharon Town Hall on Friday, June 2 at 9:00 am. It is believed that Congressman Auchincloss, Senator Feeney, and Representative Phillips will attend as well.
- Sustainable Sharon will hold their annual tree planting this weekend.
- Sharon Garden Club recently celebrated 90 years as an organization and will hold their annual plant sale.
- Friends of the Sharon Public library annual book sale is this weekend.
- Sharon Recreation Department has organized a community wide yard sale which will take place this weekend.
- New England Islamic Center held an open mosque day which was a great opportunity to meet neighbors.
- Sharon Rotary recently hosted a bicycle rodeo.
- Sharon Lions Club recently held their annual public safety appreciation brunch.
- Sharon High School graduation is June 4.

Executive Session

MOTION: At 8:21 pm to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Management Professionals Executive Group and at the conclusion, to adjourn for the evening.

Discussion of these items in Open Session would be detrimental to the bargaining position of the Town.

The Board will not return to open session.

(Smith-Lee – Pierre-Louis) 3-0 **PASSES**

Switlekowski: AYE
Pierre-Louis: AYE
Smith-Lee: AYE

List of Documents

- Budget
- Charge
- Membership list
- Minutes
- Block party request form
- Proclamations (2)
- Award notice
- Certificate
- Proposal
- Draft agreement
- Memorandum
- Award form
- Agreement
- Report