

MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD
January 23, 2024

The meeting of the Sharon Select Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Kiana Pierre-Louis remotely via Zoom. Select Board members Emily Smith-Lee and Hanna Switekowski 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

Mira Belenkiy spoke about mandatory diversity training and expressed her hope that the Board will reconsider their position.

Judy Crosby thanked the Select Board for their support of diversity training. Hope empowering. Thinks training is the best thing for the Town. She also expressed concern for a potential conflict with the for Personnel Board meeting and an outreach meeting by the Planning Board for MBTA Zoning. Mr. Turkington advised that the Personnel Board has requested a move to February 20th.

Casey McLaughlin also commented about mandatory diversity training and expressed her opposition.

Matt MacDonald spoke about the Simoni Foundation. He wished to thank the board for looking at the impact of donations. Effect has already happened, regardless of how the Board votes tonight. He stated that he will continue to ask Select Board to rescind their support for same reasons expressed back in May and June as he still has concerns.

Melissa Tee wished to speak about diversity training and supports the other two comments in opposition.

Ms. Pierre-Louis made clarifying remarks indicating that the training is for appointed officials.

Kiana wished to clarify. This is for elected. There is an interview policy. Mandatory means strongly yes. Agree that dialogue is important. Has nothing to do with School Committee as Select Board has not purview over School Committee. If you chose not to do training, Training for staff was done before her election to the Select Board.

Potential joint meeting with Personnel Board

The Personnel Board has requested a change in date to February 20.

Review warrant articles

An overview was provided on the following list of articles for May Annual Town Meeting.

.	Agenda Topic
A	Act on Reports
B	Sharon Friends School Fund Records and Appointments
C	Approve Changes to Compensation Plan in Personnel By-Law
D	Property Tax Exemptions
E	Revolving Fund Authorizations

F	Appoint Finance Committee Members and Nominating Committee of the Finance Committee Members
G	Compensation of Elected Officials
H	Capital Outlay
I	Fiscal Year 2025 Budget
J	Community Preservation Act Annual Funding and Projects
K	Multi-family zoning districts for MBTA communities
L	Establishment of historic district on East Street
M	Board of Health regs/bylaw changes (w/ Animal Control)
N	Increase senior tax workoff limit
O	Acceptance of MGL c.64G, s. 3D
P	Land swap - septic for potential old library reuse
Q	Amend Personnel By-Law
R	Powers and appointing authority of Personnel Board
S	Amend General By-Law to establish recall provisions for elected officials
T	Amend General By-Law to establish removal provisions for appointed members of committees
U	Amend Zoning By-Law - District A
V	Amend General By-Law to codify role and authority of Moderator
W	Road Acceptances - Lily Lane & Juniper Road
X	Amend the General Bylaws to Establish a Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Revolving Fund
Y	Citizen Petition - Extend Artificial Turf Field Moratorium for an additional five (5) years
Z	Citizen Petition - Special Act regarding the recall of elected officers
AA	General Bylaw - Opt-In Specialized Stretch Code

Opt-in specialized stretch code

Silas Fyler of the Energy Advisory Committee shared a presentation with the Board. The Energy Advisory Committee requests that the Select Board sponsor a warrant article for 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

Judy Crosby commented that while she appreciates presentation, she wished to point out the credits referred to are not permanent, can quickly change the future value. She expressed concern about building projects coming down the pike.

Dan Rabatsky and Chris Pimentel of the Energy Advisory Committee also commented about their research in other communities who have adopted this specialized stretch code.

Ms. Smith-Lee remarked that she agrees with the comments that this is ultimately coming down the road. The reason to do this is same reason that Sharon became a green community in the first place and is an important way to sustainability. She also appreciates the comments about what new construction really means. She is fine with it being on the warrant.

Ms. Pierre-Louis agrees about having an informed vote at Town meeting and saw enough to agree to sending this Town meeting for a vote.

MOTION: to add an article for the opt-in specialized stretch code to the 2024 annual town meeting warrant.

(Switlekowski– Smith-Lee)

Switlekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

Pierre-Louis: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Donations by Simoni Foundation

The Board explained that there had been requests on the consent calendar at last meeting to accept donations to fire and police department from the Simoni Foundation. During the public comment period that evening, the Board heard from concerned citizens about the appearance of conflict of interest. At the time, the Board wished to get more information before making a decision. They have been advised by Town Counsel to decline the donation, not because it is felt to be a conflict, but rather there give the appearance of conflict.

MOTION: To decline the donations by the Simoni Foundation as discussed.

(Switlekowski– Smith-Lee)

Switlekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

Pierre-Louis: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the following minutes
 - a. January 9, 2024, open session
- II. Vote to approve a one-day liquor license for a private event in the Community Center ballroom on January 27, 2024 from 5 pm to 10 pm
- III. Vote to award a contract to Poulin Construction, Inc. of Sterling MA in the amount of \$564,500 for construction of the Sharon Civil Defense building
- IV. Vote to accept the following donations:
 - a. \$200 to the Fire Department donation fund from Patricia Gird
 - b. \$200 to the Fire Department donation fund from the Pande family
 - c. \$200 to the Police Department donation fund from the Pande family
- V. Vote to approve request by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to include pre- and post-training surveys – hold for comment by ESL
- VI. Vote to make the following Board and Committee appointments:
 - a. Michael Smith to the Audit Committee through June 30, 2026
 - b. Katherine Goyette to Council on Aging Board through December 31, 2025
 - c. Stephen Kafka to Council on Aging Board through December 31, 2026

ESL comment. Wanted to acknowledge the earlier comments about DEI training. Folks retain all of their rights to free speech.

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

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

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update.

Over the past few weeks, staff have been working on the budget. State aid figures will be released tomorrow. There appears to be a \$200,000 deficit as of now. The Board will have budget presentations from Sharon Fire and Police Departments at their next meeting on February 7 at 6pm.

As mentioned earlier, staff is currently vetting articles for Annual Town Meeting. The Planning Board has posted a public presentation/discussion on MBTA zoning on February 13 at the Community Center.

The audit has been completed with no issues. The report has been posted to the website.

Tuesday evening there will be a presentation about recycling and the feasibility of pay-as-you-throw with Sustainable Sharon at Community Center at 7pm .

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

None.

Adjourn

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:38 pm
(Switlekowski– Smith-Lee)

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

List of Documents

- Warrant article list
- Request by Energy Advisory Committee
- Minutes
- One-day liquor license application
- Contract agreement
- Donation request memos (3)
- DEIC request letter
- Board/Committee/Commission applications (3)