

**MINUTES
SHARON SELECT BOARD**

April 27, 2021

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 A. 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.

Retirement Recognition

The Board wished to take a few moments to recognize the retirement of Chief John Ford of the Sharon Police Department.

Chief Ford served on the Sharon Police Department for twenty-five years, working up through the ranks of patrolman, sergeant, lieutenant, and Deputy Chief. He served the Sharon Public Schools as an educator before changing careers. Chief Ford will be dearly missed. The Board expressed their thanks to Mr. Ford for his many years of dedicated service to the Town and wished him good health and well deserved enjoyment in his retirement.

Jenks fountain location update

Continuing the discussion from the previous meeting, the proposed location for the historic Jenks fountain has been staked out at Town Hall. It appears further from the sidewalk than originally expected and seems like an appropriate location with less of a crowded esthetic than first thought.

MOTION: To approve the location of the historic Jenks fountain at Sharon Town Hall with a plaque for its dedication and/or recognition of Shirley Schofield.
(Heitin-Switekowski)

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

Discussion on Annual Town Meeting Articles

The Board had a brief discussion about the Annual Town Meeting Article 20 citizens petition which, if passed, would seek to increase the membership of the Select Board from 3 to 5. The Board has discussed the topic before and although open to the possibility of a five-member Board, consensus is that there should be a more holistic look at the Town's governance model. The petitioner also mentioned a possible provision for recall as Sharon doesn't presently have one. The Board feels that a Governance Study Committee would be worthwhile and is committed to evaluating governance for the Town of Sharon as a whole.

MOTION: To create a Governance Study Committee as discussed.
(Heitin-Switekowski)

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

Support for speed limit reduction on Old Post Road and Pine Street

Mr. O'Cain had forwarded information to the Board which explains that that effective November 7, 2016, MGL Chapter 90, Section 193, Sub-Section 17C, allows cities and towns to lower the prima facie speed limit from 30 to 25 mph "...on any or all city or town-owned roadways within a thickly settled area." This change allows the Select Board to designate certain areas determined to be "thickly settled" to have 25 mph speed limits without the usual 43-page speed study application to MassDOT and the associated traffic study. Thickly settled areas are defined as, "The territory contiguous to any way which is built up with structures devoted to business, or the territory contiguous to any way where dwelling houses are situated at such distances as will average less than 200 feet between them for a distance of one-quarter mile or more."

The change in the law now affords Sharon the opportunity to lower speeds on a number of roadways. That said, the change does not allow the lowering of speed on roadways with an already defined speed approved previously by MassDOT. The Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works is recommending that the Sharon Select Board vote to lower the speed limit to 25 mph on the following roadways:

Old Post Road between Walpole St. and Pine St. – entire length = 2203 = .42 miles

Pine Street between Old Post and South Walpole – entire length = 2663 feet = .50 miles

Old Post Road between South Walpole and South Main – entire length = 4373 feet = .83 miles

It should be noted again that if MassDOT already has a speed regulation number for Old Post, they will not allow a change to the speed limit. Additionally, this application may not be interpreted by MassDOT as conforming to the requirements of MGL Chapter 90, Section 193, Sub-Section 17C but resident feedback is driving this request and this application is our best chance for a speed reduction on Old Post Road and Pine Street.

MOTION: To approve and sign the request letter to MassDOT which would lower the speed limit on Old Post Road to 25 miles per hour.
(Heitin-Switlekowski)

Heitin: AYE

Switlekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

Review and approve consent calendar

- I. Vote to approve the regular and Executive session minutes of April 12, 2021
- II. Vote to approve the Veteran's Memorial Beach concession stand contract with Sweet 16 Ice Cream which includes an option to renew in 2022-2023
- III. Vote to approve the establishment of two scholarship funds and accounts in the names of Bernard Kafka and Susan Kafka and installation of a memorial bench at Veterans' Memorial Park Beach in memory of Aniketh Chivukula
- IV. Vote to authorize Southeaster Regional School District to apply \$11,554 from the ESSER II Grant towards the Fiscal Year 2022 Town of Sharon's share of operating expenses and reduce the Town's assessment accordingly
- V. Vote to approve outdoor water use restrictions
- VI. Vote to approve and sign negotiated contract with Firefighters Local 1880 IAFF

- VII. Vote to approve and sign negotiated contract with Massachusetts Coalition of Police AFL-CIO Local 166

MOTION: To approve the consent calendar with the exception of item V.
(Heitin-Switekowski)

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

Mr. Hooper spoke to the water use restrictions and explained that since his memo of March 26, drought conditions have changed.

MOTION: To approve the outdoor water use restrictions of two hours, two days per week on an odd/even schedule.
(Heitin-Switekowski)

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

Report of the Town Administrator

Mr. Turkington provided the following update.

- 2021 Annual Town Meeting and Annual Town Election. The May 2, 2021 ATM will be held at the Middle School athletic field under a tent. Same arrangements, layout, etc. as 2020 ATM at the HS stadium field. School vehicles will be relocated for the event, and we are coordinating police for traffic control and allowing parking on the school side of Mountain Street as needed. The Warrant was delivered to residents on April 15 and 16. The Warrant Hearing will be held on Monday, April 26th at 7:00 p.m. Early voting has been approved for the Annual Town Election on Monday-Thursday, May 10-13, with extended hours of 7A to 8P on Tuesday, May 11. Election day is Tuesday, May 18th from 7AM to 8PM at the high school gymnasium.
- CVS/Wluka redevelopment project. David Wluka has approached the Town with interest in attaching his proposed retail/office/residential project to the septic system at the Wilbur School owned by the Town for which capacity remains (subject to a lease amendment with Beacon Properties). Town Counsel is exploring the potential from a legal standpoint.
- Hiring of Financial Analyst/ Veteran's Confidential Assistant. Finance Director Krishan Gupta has announced the selection of Vincent Du of Holbrook to fill this position. He has a bachelor's in business administration with a concentration in management information systems from UMASS-Boston with a dozen years of accounting experience in the private sector.
- DPW Operations / Forestry & Grounds Supervisor position. We are consolidating the operations supervisory and forestry and grounds supervisory role under the leadership of Kevin Weber and recruiting an assistant operations supervisor (to replace retired Operations Supervisory Mike Teixeira). We expect to promote a member of the crew to assistant forestry and grounds supervisor (to replace F&G supervisor position formerly held by Kevin Weber). The consolidation of senior leadership is part of a leadership succession plan within DPW.
- Planning / Engineering Specialist hired. We have hired Maria De La Fuente Martinez of North Attleborough to fill this position. She graduates next month with a bachelor's degree in political science, with a concentration in public administration and GIS, from Bridgewater State University. She is doing thesis work in measures of income for affordable housing and interned with the state Office of Economic Empowerment working on the Baby Steps children's savings account program. Her areas of

interest include land use planning, mixed use development with affordable housing, GIS, and equity. She starts work on Monday, April 26.

We received / exchanged 24 pieces of correspondence between 12 noon on April 8 and 12 noon on April 22:

- Email exchange summarizing actions and timetable to be taken and response to address traffic concerns on Old Post Road;
- Emails from ten residents sharing public comment in advance of April 20 ZBA hearing on the library project variance requests;
- Email from U.S. Rep. Jake Auchincloss inviting students to seek appointment to a service academy;
- Email asking the Town and/or schools to join a mental health services referral group;
- Email from asking about options other than credit cards to pay for certain town services; and,
- Email exchange regarding diversity training and establishing standards of conduct and behavior for elected and appointed members of boards and committees.

Mr. Hooper explained that testing results indicate that significant levels of PFAS compounds above maximum contaminant levels (MCL) were found at Well 4 and near the MCL at Well 2. As you may know, Well 4 is the primary production well used year round.

The regulatory limit for the sum of concentrations of 6 indicator PFAS compounds is 20 ng/L (or parts per trillion - ppt) and active monitoring is required when sampled levels are between 10 and 20 ppt. Clearly the Well 4 level appears to be significantly above this limit, and the Well 2 level is close and will require monthly monitoring.

There are some QC flags associated with the Well 4 samples, but these should not affect the results. According to the lab, this QC error commonly occurs when you have a sample with a high amount of a PFAS compound and then you spike the duplicate with a low level of the compound (2 ng/L in this case).

DPW will look into treatment options at all wells. One option will be a treatment facility located at Well 2 that will also serve water from Well 4 as well. Another option would be to locate a treatment facility at the former MBTA property adjacent to Well 4. Unfortunately, both of these options will probably require two years to complete, even on an expedited basis, so Mr. Hooper will be looking at some level of water restrictions for at least two years. The MWRA connection will likely be used also as soon as it is completed.

PFAS treatment vendors say they are getting inquiries everyday about their systems, so while DPW will look into finding a rental treatment system for rapid deployment, there may be slim pickings.

Mr. Hooper had earlier put an earmark request for PFAS treatment funding at both the State and Federal level, but chances of funding are wildcard at best.

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

None.

Adjourn

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Sharon Municipal Employees Association and to conduct a grievance hearing with a member of the Sharon Municipal Employees Association, then adjourn for the evening at the conclusion.
(Heitin – Switlekowski)

Heitin: AYE

Switlekowski: AYE

Smith-Lee: AYE

3-0 **PASSES**

**DISCUSSION OF THESE ITEMS IN OPEN SESSION MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON
THE BARGAINING POSITION OF THE TOWN**

List of Documents

- Proclamation
- Correspondence
- April 22, 2021 memo
- Draft letter
- Minutes
- RFP Response
- Memorandum
- Southeastern Regional School District correspondence
- March 23, 2021 memo
- Town Administrator's report