

MINUTES
SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
July 11, 2017

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:10pm in the Town Hearing Room at the Sharon Community Center with Chairman John J. McGrath, Clerk William A. Heitin, Selectman Walter B. Roach, 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.

Finance Director/Town Accountant Interview – Krishan Gupta

Chairman McGrath asked Mr. Gupta to tell the Board a little about himself and why he applied for the position. Mr. Gupta reviewed his credentials, which includes an MBA. He is looking for something that will expand his skill sets. He has been doing accounting functions for nearly thirty years and is committed to bringing excellence to everything he does. He believes he'll add value to the town. He understands there is a leap of faith on both sides.

Selectman Heitin asked Mr. Gupta to talk about his experience with borrowing for capital projects and his dealings with the rating agencies. Mr. Gupta explained that he deals with borrowing on an annual basis and works closely with First Southwest and the bond rating agencies. He spoke at length about some projects involving school projects and MSBA reimbursements, as well as water and sewer projects. He is very comfortable in dealing with borrowings and debt management.

Selectman Heitin asked how he prepares for an annual audit and what he does after receiving the management letter from the town's audit firm. Mr. Gupta notes that preparing for the audit is not a one-day activity; it takes time and planning. He prefers electronic documentation versus paper files, for easy retrieval from staff and for the auditors. He stressed that policies are important for auditors.

Selectman Roach asked Mr. Gupta to highlight his experience with managing people and how many people he manages in his current job. Mr. Gupta replied that he manages a staff of six. He tries to meet monthly with his staff, and wants to know how their work is going and if there are problems. He does not micro-manage and encourages staff to expand their knowledge, including professional meetings. He believes that if he is open and clear, that works for his staff. Mr. Gupta noted that he and his staff spend many hours together and they need to work as a team and a family.

Selectman Roach asked if he deals with a Finance Committee and town meetings. Mr. Gupta replied that he appears before the City Council regularly. He is comfortable pleading his case before public boards, and has been doing so for many years.

Chairman McGrath asked what notice Mr. Gupta would need to give his employer if he were chosen for the position, and Mr. Gupta replied that it would be a minimum of two weeks.

Chairman McGrath noted that the Board is nearing the time allotted for the interview; can he conclude by sharing anything about his experiences that wasn't covered by the prepared questions. He believes he can add value in information technology.

Selectman Heitin asked Mr. Gupta what he thought of the screening committee process. Mr. Gupta replied that the committee is taking a leap of faith in meeting and interviewing the candidates. He noted that at this point, he believes the Board needs to determine if he is a good fit.

Chairman McGrath thanked Mr. Gupta for joining us this evening and explained that the Board expects to have the hiring decision by the end of the week.

Beach Access Policy Review

Recreation Linda Berger appeared before the Board, along with Gary Bluestein, chair of the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Chairman McGrath explained that there have been some complaints on social media and in the newspaper about beach access. This discussion is not about the beach fees, but rather for access issues, such as the closure of the Gunhouse gate, and to allow people to enter the beach to access the concession stand.

Mr. Berger noted that the costs to operate the beach are funded completely from user fees, and additional fees would put additional pressure on the budget, as they are anticipating a deficit. She has concerns about the staff managing the people that want to come in just to walk or get some food – it's not fair to those who paid the access fee. Mr. Bluestein brought up the issue of safety and not knowing who is entering the beach area if people accessed via the Gunhouse gate. Ms. Berger noted that people are not conducting themselves appropriately during the off-hours, and the staff is doing janitorial work, which is not part of their duties.

Chairman McGrath feels that access to the concession stand should be granted. Mr. Bluestein noted that there has been a longstanding rule to not allow access for reasons such as this. He added that this is not the time to be making changes at this point in the season. He went on to say that there can be some vocal people on social media, but the proper outlet to discuss these issues is at public meetings. Ms. Berger feels putting 15-to-18-year olds in the position to make these determinations is difficult.

With respect to the Gunhouse gate, Chairman McGrath wonders how it can be left open and properly manned. He believes that the Board and the Town Administrator need to determine how to fund the operation at the lake. Mr. Bluestein wonders if funding staffing for the Gunhouse gate will be cost-prohibitive.

Mr. Turkington summarized the issues that the Board is facing and potential funding sources. Mr. Bluestein noted that the Recreation Advisory Committee is already looking for solutions and discussing the operations for next year. Selectman Heitin agreed that this issue should be discussed later this fall. Selectman Roach believes that the town's budget should subsidize beach operations. Chairman McGrath hopes that there will be a solution to these issues.

Chairman McGrath thanked everyone for attending.

Draft Solid Waste/Recycling Collection RFP Review

Selectman Heitin believes the draft is great and the RFP covers every option the Board discussed at earlier meetings. He commended Mr. Turkington and DPW Superintendent Eric Hooper for their work on the RFP, and believes the town should do something sooner rather than later. Mr. Turkington is exploring whether to engage a third-party bill printing and collection service or rely on the hauler to handle billing. Mr. Turkington spoke of his conversations with the Town of Brookline and their program, which allows each household to choose one of three barrel sizes that best suit their needs. Mr. Turkington went on to say that the earliest date to implement the new program is April 2018; the RFP would go out in the early fall. Some questions remain: whether to offer a once a month bulky waste collection or ask residents to schedule collection for a separate fee directly with the hauler and whether there will be a partial PAYT component to the program selected.

Mr. Turkington believes the next step is to contact the providers to seek their feedback on the scenarios and the feasibility from their standpoint. Mr. Hooper pointed out that it is difficult for the vendors to respond to 14 different scenarios. Ideally, Mr. Turkington would like to bring down the list of scenarios to 10.

Consent Calendar

- I. Vote to approve regular & executive session minutes of June 20, 2017
- II. Vote to approve and authorize the Town Administrator to execute the Verizon Wireless Water Tower Lease Agreement at 438 Massapoag Avenue
- III. Vote to approve extension to lease agreement for parking with First Baptist Church, Sharon
- IV. Vote to support the Recreation Advisory Committee's decision to name Scott and Katie Dykeman as Citizen(s) of the Year
- V. Vote to appoint members and alternates to the Priorities Committee and Capital Outlay Committee

MOTION: To approve the July 11, 2017 consent calendar, as read and understood
(McGrath - Heitin) 3-0 **PASSES**

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Turkington reported the following as ongoing or upcoming meeting items:

- The FY18 state budget passed by the Legislature leaves virtually intact the increased net state aid figures. The budget includes the \$50,000 for a study of parking at the train station as well as \$25,000 for the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition.
- The FY16 audit has been completed and the draft has been sent to the Audit Committee, which he hopes to convene in September. He is working on the management comments and will have a draft on Thursday. Moody's will reissue the rating on July 19 now that the audit is complete.
- August 1 agenda topics: open the warrant for the November 6 Special Town Meeting, review any updates from SBC on town office project and discuss strategy for marking the project
- The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee will take place on July 20 at 6:15pm in the administrative conference room at the middle school.
- Announced that there are two vacant seats on the Standing Building Committee. Folks with a relevant background are encouraged to apply.

Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting

Chairman McGrath read a letter from Chief Kaufman to Deputy Chief Ford, commending him for his work on the Citizens Legislative Academy.

Selectman Heitin announced that the 23rd Annual Square Jam, which is set on Thursday, August 3 in Post Office Square from 6:00pm to 8:30pm.

Executive Session - 8:20pm

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session to contract negotiations with non-union personnel, to discuss strategy with respect to pending litigation, and at the end, to adjourn of the evening. Discussion of these items in open session would be detrimental to the bargaining position of the Town.

(McGrath - Heitin) 3-0 **PASSES**

Roach: Aye
McGrath: Aye
Heitin: Aye

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:40pm
(Heitin - Roach) 3-0 **PASSES**

McGrath: Aye
Heitin: Aye
Roach: Aye

List of Documents:

- Finance Director/Town Accountant Interview Questions
- Letter of interest, resume & application for Finance Director Candidate Krishan Gupta
- Beach policies & fee data; January 31, 2017 Board of Selectmen minutes (voted 2017 season policies & fees)
- Draft Request for Proposals from Solid Waste and Recycling Collection, Transportation and Processing Companies
- Miscellaneous Sharon trash data
- Letter from Fred Turkington on behalf of the Board of Selectmen notifying residents of the trash fee increase effective July 1, 2017
- June 20, 2017 Board of Selectmen Minutes
- Water Tower Lease Agreement with Verizon – 438 Massapoag Avenue (cellular service)
- Parking Lease extension agreement for First Baptist Church
- Copy of expired parking lease with First Baptist Church
- Copy of extension to original parking lease with First Baptist Church
- Memorandum from Recreation Director Linda Berger regarding Citizen of the Year
- List of proposed FY19 Budget Committee members
- Report of the Town Administrator
- Miscellaneous Correspondence