

**MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SELECT BOARD
MAY 7, 2007
COLE HALL
SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT**

Board Present: **Wynn Metcalfe, Chairman, Bill Pennebaker, Cinda Morse, Karen Mellinger, Jim Mead**
Others Present: **Mike Gleason (Bennington Banner), Patricia DeAndrea (National Forest Service), Gina Owens (National Forest Service), Aaron Chrostowsky (Town Administrator), Susan Swasta (Recording Secretary)**

1. Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Wynn Metcalfe called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. He asked if any Board member needed to recuse him/herself from any matter on the agenda. None did.

2. Minutes:

April 30, 2007 minutes

Bill Pennebaker made motion to approve the April 30, 2007 minutes. Cinda Morse seconded.

Motion to approve April 30 minutes carried 4-0-1 (Jim Mead abstained because he did not attend the April 30 meeting).

3. Warrants:

The following warrants were presented for approval:

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|---|
| PR #43 - | \$ 9,363.57 | Payroll Warrant |
| PR #44 - | \$ 6,306.94 | Payroll Warrant |
| AP #46 - | \$ 3,277.19 | General Warrant |
| AP #47 - | \$ 13,216.48 | General Warrant (health insurance premium) |

Ms. Morse made motion to pay warrants. Karen Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

4. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

5. National Forest Presentation:

Gina Owens, district manager of the Green Mountain National Forest southern district, and Patricia DeAndrea, realty specialist for the Forest Service, joined the Board at the table for their presentation. Ms. Owen explained that whenever the Forest Service acquires new lands representatives come to local board meetings to present information and take questions. Ms. DeAndrea passed out maps showing land parcels that will be added to the Green Mountain National Forest. A 100-acre tract owned by Steven Gessner will be purchased by the Forest Service. Landowner Arnold Harrington wants to donate a smaller parcel. Two other parcels, of ten and sixteen acres, have recently been acquired.

This leaves a piece of land owned by the Matteson family surrounded by National Forest. Ms. Owens stated that the Forest Service is required by law to provide reasonable access to private lands, and would deed an easement to the Mattesons so that they would not be landlocked. Their

access situation will not change.

Jim Mead asked what the prospective use of the new land will be. Ms. DeAndrea replied that these lands are in the designated "escarpment area," which allows for a lot of different activities, including recreation and some timber harvesting. She passed out copies of the management policy for the escarpment area.

Ms. DeAndrea also distributed information assessing tax implications of the land acquisition, and said that there would be no impact on school taxes. \$35 would be subtracted from the municipal rate.

Ms. Morse asked if the purpose of their attendance is just to inform the Board about what's going on. Ms. Owen replied that Forest Service policy is to seek local Board support.

Aaron Chrostowsky asked if the Forest Service would be interested if the Town had land to sell. Ms. Owen replied that they would be most interested in land adjoining areas already owned by the National Forest. They are particularly interested in Taconic Range land from the standpoint of conservation, and would like to come back for a discussion of Taconic lands. Interest would depend on where the land is located.

Chairman Metcalfe asked about horse permits for National Forest land, and Ms. Owen said that this is a new process that is being studied and planned for. He also asked about the possibility of opening more ATV trails, saying that the Board is likely to be involved in any such trails in Shaftsbury Hollow.

Ms. Owen explained that the door is open for new trails in the Green Mountain National Forest, but in a very limited way. ATV Clubs need to come to them with plans, and they may permit connector trails if these make sense. Only connector trails are a possibility.

Mr. Mead asked about snowmobile access, and Ms. Owen replied that this is a different situation because use is over frozen ground and there is a strong organization, VAST, already in existence.

Ms. Morse made motion to endorse the specified National Forest Service land acquisitions in the Green Mountain National Forest. Ms. Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

6. Water System Upgrade:

Ms. Mellinger stated that the Board needs to sign a loan agreement, then will hear back from the state before signing a contract.

Ms. Mellinger made motion to sign the planning loan agreement. Mr. Pennebaker seconded.

Ms. Morse asked how much the loan is for, and Ms. Mellinger replied that the amount is \$19,200.

Motion to sign the loan agreement carried 5-0-0.

7. Municipal Education Grant Application:

Chairman Metcalfe stated that Board permission is required to sign the application. The grant funds will be used to have Town Attorney Rob Woolmington come in and talk to the Board.

Ms. Morse made motion to sign the municipal education grant application. Ms. Mellinger seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

8. Open Bids for Drainage Repair Project:

Mr. Chrostowsky opened three bids for the project: Weaver Landscaping for \$7,699, Ken Harrington for \$4,490, and Burgess Brothers for \$7,620. Chairman Metcalfe noted that \$6,000 is budgeted for the work. Mr. Chrostowsky will discuss the bids with Highway Foreman Ron Daniels and come back with a recommendation next week.

9. Sheriff Contract:

Chairman Metcalfe stated that the Board had decided to contract with the sheriff for ten hours a week, at a cost of \$13,260. Ms. Mellinger asked if this represents the full amount, and was told that it does.

Ms. Morse made motion to sign the sheriff contract. Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

10. Year End Budget:

Mr. Chrostowsky reported on the year end budget, presenting figures from Town department heads on big expenses anticipated in the next 1 ½ months. He said that he will present a more complete estimate next week; this is just an outline of large expenses.

Mr. Chrostowsky also gave figures on landfill and recycling expenses, including \$2000 for used oil tank remediation. There was a discussion of the oil tank problem, which involves draining fluid from the containment area, and Mr. Chrostowsky said that the tank is now the Town's responsibility. This will be discussed further next week.

Ms. Morse asked if there is anything to worry about in the budget, and Mr. Chrostowsky replied that it's necessary to be vigilant and that department heads are aware of this. Next week he will present a spreadsheet with the bottom line.

Mr. Chrostowsky noted that the only thing for which funds have not been set aside is the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) Hazardous Waste Day. He would recommend that this expense come out of the landfill closure fund, which has \$68,000 remaining.

11. Methane Gas Update:

Mr. Pennebaker reported that he has not yet heard from Buzz Surwillo on the latest Heindel and Noyes proposal, which would require two new monitoring wells. He said that he is still getting the facts together on the proposal and does not yet have an opinion.

Mr. Pennebaker raised the possibility of going back to a trench system, characterizing a possible new approach as "trench system lite," which would be much less ambitious than the former design. He stated that his research shows that a trench system combined with pumping does work. Ms. Morse asked about costs of the Heindel and Noyes plan, and Mr. Pennebaker replied that this will be discussed in Executive Session.

12. Other Business:

Ms. Mellinger reported on the successful Green-Up Day and thanked everyone for participating. She noted that there is more trash out there, especially on East and Buck Hill Roads, if anyone wants to do more. She thanked Taylor and T.J. Paquin for bringing in two truck-loads of trash. If people pick up more trash the green bags can be brought to the town transfer station.

Ms. Mellinger reminded residents of Hazardous Waste Day this Saturday at Arlington High School. White goods, bulky items, and electronics will also be accepted. Tires will not be accepted.

Ms. Mellinger asked about the deadline for the enhancement grant. Mr. Chrostowsky replied that it

is May 31. She said that it might be a good idea to put in for \$10,000 - \$15,000, to be used for fencing, benches, or a bike rack for the Cleveland Avenue park. This would require a 20% match. Other Board members agreed.

Ms. Morse reported that the Economic Development Committee will present a follow-up to the sewer study on May 23 from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, at the elementary school. There will also be a panel discussion of the new state wastewater guidelines, to take effect on July 1, 2007. Cards will be sent out to remind residents.

Mr. Mead mentioned that Board members had agreed to contact people for service on Town committees and boards. A follow-up discussion will be put on next week's agenda.

Chairman Metcalfe reported that the Hale Mountain Club had done an outstanding job on the fishing derby. He said that probably 150 kids attended and had a great time.

13. Executive Session:

Ms. Mellinger made motion to go into Executive Session (contract). Mr. Pennebaker seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Board went into Executive Session for a contract matter at 8:13 PM.

Board came out of Executive Session for a contract matter at 8:35 PM.

Bill and Aaron will draft letter to Heindel & Noyes for board to sign.

Meeting adjourned at 8:41.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Swasta