

**TOWN OF SHAFTSBURY  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, March 4, 2019, Shaftsbury Elementary School**

**Select Board Members Present:** Joe Barber; Ken Harrington; Tony Krulikowski; Tim Scoggins, Chair; Art Whitman, Vice-Chair.

**Moderator:** Thomas Dailey.

**Others Present:** Alan Baker; Richard Bump, Recording Secretary; Bill Christian; Jay Coonrad; John Dell'Anno; Melanie Dexter, Treasurer; Tony D'Onofrio; David Durfee, Shaftsbury State Representative; Bill Fisk; Marlene Hall, Town Clerk; Ben Hewlett; Charlie Jenks; David Kiernan, Town Administrator; Michael Lilly; Barry Mayer; Scott McEnaney; Karen Mellinger; Lon McClintock; Alice Miller, Former Shaftsbury State Representative; Ed Molloy; Tyler Resch; Jennie Rozycki, Librarian, McCullough Free Library; Jennifer Scoggins; Merton Snow; Shelly Stiles; Chris Williams; and about 70 other Residents and Visitors.

**CAT-TV:** This meeting was filmed and broadcast live by Beq Lendvay.

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After calling the meeting to order at 7:30pm, Dailey led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and the country. Dailey then noted that citizens are active this night in "governing ourselves" at annual floor meetings across the state of Vermont and then asked all present to turn, and greet/introduce themselves to each other and to welcome everyone to this community meeting. After lots of movement, laughter and animation by everyone responding, Dailey then

- introduced Selectboard members as well as various town administrators
- named and thanked employees, committee members, listers, auditors, trustees and volunteers and everyone working to make Shaftsbury a better place to live.

And those present responded with an enthusiastic round of applause for all folks just mentioned.

Dailey then pointed out emergency exits from the room, reviewed speaking and voting procedures, and then asked for and received a motion which was made and seconded to dispense with the reading of the Annual Meeting Warning, and the motion carried by voice vote and with no discussion.

Scoggins then asked Alice Miller to stand beside him, and then read aloud a resolution by the Shaftsbury Selectboard on the occasion of Miller's retirement from the Vermont Legislature, and as follows:

*WHEREAS, Alice Miller has represented the Bennington-3 District, including the Town of Shaftsbury, in the Vermont House of Representatives for 22 years, and*

*WHEREAS, Alice also served for years on the Shaftsbury Select Board, sometimes concurrently with her legislative service, and*

*WHEREAS, Alice devoted her life to public service as an educator, working for the Red Brick School, the Brattleboro School District, the Vermont Department of Education and Bennington College; and*

*WHEREAS, during her public service career Alice was devoted to protecting our most vulnerable citizens, including children, the disabled, veterans and the elderly, and*

*WHEREAS, Alice proved herself a tireless advocate for children and adults in the fields of education and job training, working hard to support and obtain funding for the local Career Development Center and our local schools, and*

*WHEREAS, Alice has served with boundless energy, enthusiasm, integrity, dedication, and grace, and*

*WHEREAS, Alice always has a smile and kind word for everyone she meets, and  
WHEREAS, in the course of being elected eleven consecutive times, Alice knocked on every door in town more than once;*

*Therefore, be it resolved that the Shaftsbury Selectboard, on behalf of the people of Shaftsbury, expresses its deep appreciation to Alice Miller for her decades of service, and wishes her peace and happiness in her retirement and future endeavors.*

Miller was then given a plaque by Scoggins as well as a standing and long lasting ovation by all present. Mellinger then recounted her decades-long working relationship with Miller on her various campaigns (“Miller needed to talk with everybody”) and community projects (she “located over \$400,000 in state funding to help cap the landfill”) and then asked residents to stay for coffee and cake at the end of the meeting in honor of Miller. In response, in part, Miller noted that “she is not leaving” and that people “need simply to say instead ‘Welcome home’”. Miller then thanked by name all the people, residents and non-residents alike, who have assisted, encouraged, corrected, directed, and otherwise influenced her actions and decision-making over her years as State Representative. Miller closed her remarks stating that “My work was all about you, hearing your concerns, your issues and your problems. I loved every minute of it”. And after yet another round of applause, Miller then presented Durfee, the newly elected state representative, with a Vermont legislature T-shirt. Durfee, in response, thanked Miller noting that

- “following Alice is a tough task”
- “everyone in the state house misses her”
- and everyone there greets him by saying “You’re the new Alice.”

**State Representative Report:** Durfee then briefly reviewed his first 8 weeks working as state representative, noting that

- although there has not been a lot of legislation yet, there have been over 800 new bills filed thus far, which sets a record
- he is a member of the Health Care Committee which is trying to “shore up what’s being taken away at the federal level” in health care programs.

Durfee noted that other issues before the legislature or working their way throughout the state include

- state mandated mergers of school districts as part of Act 46, with the Shaftsbury school district merger with the other three elementary districts in the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union scheduled for 7/1/19
- lead testing in water in all schools statewide, scheduling and funding
- ambitious climate change related goals to reduce carbon emissions state-wide via increased use of electric cars, improved home weatherization, etc
- imposition of a gasoline tax to help fund road maintenance
- broad band access to all areas of the state, albeit costs are becoming prohibitive to do this
- regulating and taxing the production, distribution and selling of cannabis.

Durfee closed his report noting that contact information for him is available in the newsletter and he encourages people to contact him with thoughts, concerns, and other issues.

**Selectboard Report:** Using a power-point format, Scoggins then reviewed the Selectboard Report (a copy of which was included in the Annual Report, page 41), noting that that the FY20 budget includes a “modest increase” over the current year, and that major accomplishments for the year include

- completion of the nearly 9-year effort to construct a new Public Works garage, replacement of the transfer station as well as significant renovations to Cole Hall, with thanks to Kiernan for diligent oversight of these projects

- hiring of a new, highly experienced Superintendent of Public Works who is in process of evaluating all roadways in Shaftsbury.

Scoggins also noted that

- further improvements to Cole Hall are being considered, including the entrance way, staircase and signage, as well as the removal of the old highway garage
- planning has begun for replacing the 75-year-old village water mains, a decades long project
- the establishment of the Windham and Bennington counties Southern Vermont Economic Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is now complete, and applications for funding of various projects are now being accepted
- residents should be on the lookout for and respond to a Planning Commission survey regarding broadband access throughout the town (available at the entrance to the school gymnasium, at Cole Hall as well as on-line).

Scoggins briefly reviewed proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaws to be voted 3/5/19 and as follows

- **Ballot Article 6:** defining short-term rentals as a Home Occupation and therefore subject to provisions governing Home Occupations
- **Ballot Article 7:** expanding definition of Rooming House to include multiple unit conversions of former motels
- **Ballot Article 8:** remove the Table of Uses from the Zoning bylaws, which has caused more confusion than helpful direction.

During a brief discussion, residents and board members noted that

- there is little payback for broadband companies to invest in infrastructure to provide services in a low density population area
- the zoning bylaws do not require an owner to live in a building being booked/reserved on-line
- the Highway department budget for gravel, salt and sand is lower than the current year, partly because there will be surplus funds in the current year budget (about 60%) and partly because the new Public Works Superintendent is implementing a new approach to roadway maintenance which should decrease the need for these materials
- the new salt shed should also result in the use of less salt
- nevertheless, the FY18 actual expenditure for gravel, salt and sand is higher than the FY20 budget amount
- the significant increase in the solid waste contract over the last two or so years is due to increased costs for disposal of solid waste as well as the need to replace some of the truck fleet
- there are no truck purchases included in the Highway budget, and the new Superintendent is planning on reducing the amount of in-house vehicle maintenance
- all other department, committee, commission reports are included in the annual report.

### **FY17 Town Warning:**

**Article 1:** A motion was made and seconded to waive the reading of and to accept the reports of the Town Officers as published. The motion carried by voice vote and with no discussion other than already noted.

**Article 2, A-D:** A motion was made and seconded to pay annual stipends/wages for the upcoming year and as follows

- Selectboard members: \$650 each
- Board of Auditors: \$14.00 per hour
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Constables: \$14.00 per hour
- Board of Listers: \$14.00 per hour

and the motion carried by voice vote, with no abstentions or opposition.

**Article 3:** A motion was made and seconded to authorize the collection of taxes on real and personal property by the Town Treasurer, which are due in hand on or before Friday, November 8, 2019 at 5:00pm or likewise postmarked no later than Friday, November 8, 2019 and the motion passed by voice vote, with no abstentions or opposition.

**Article 4:** A motion was made and seconded to appropriate the sum of \$1,960,862 to defray the Town's general and highway expenses for Fiscal Year 2020, the amount of such sum to be raised by property taxes and to be reduced by non-tax revenues and reserve funds as detailed in the *Town of Shaftsbury Annual Report for the Year ending June 30, 2018* (pages 23-39). After Scoggins noted that

- the \$1,960,862 budget does not include the Community Appropriations (see Annual Report, pages 16-17)
- the article to allow the town to borrow money in anticipation of taxes is no longer necessary as that is now an approved action within state statute.

A motion was then made and seconded to increase the town highway budget by \$40,000 to be used for sand, salt, gravel or other road-related expenses, and the motion carried by voice vote. A motion was then made and seconded to call the question and this motion, which is not debatable, passed by voice vote. Dailey then restated the motion on the floor to approve the adjusted FY20 budget at \$2,000,862 and the motion carried by voice vote, with no abstentions or oppositions.

**Article 5:** In response to Dailey's request to transact any other non-binding business as legally may come before said meeting:

- Whitman briefly reviewed the history and process by which Kiernan came to Shaftsbury and strongly commended Kiernan for his ability to "locate funding, write grants, have the town move successfully through annual audits, schedule and replace equipment, and successfully oversee the town garage and Cole Hall projects....they are all Dave's doing and his success" and in response, Kiernan received a standing and enthusiastic ovation from all present.
- Hewlett noted that the Vermont 350 newly formed Energy Committee has been named after Robert Healy Eastman III, a native of Shaftsbury and distinguished Commander in the US Navy, and who recently passed away at an early age. Christian further noted that this committee, which includes concerned residents of North Bennington as well as Shaftsbury, is just getting organized and would be interested in hearing thoughts, comments, recommendations, and any other ways Shaftsbury residents might support the committee.
- Rozycki thanked Shaftsbury residents for their support of a significant budget increase last year for the Park McCullough library, noting that the budget this year is level funded and that this has been a "record breaking year" for the library
- Lilley and Baker both spoke in support of Community Appropriation (Number 26) in the amount \$5,000 to support radio station WBTV, noting that this appropriation helps pay for heat and electricity and helps keep "the doors open", that no one at WBTV gets paid, the station itself is crucial in that it is part of the civil defense system, and allows local residents to "put on their own show" as Baker said that he himself is doing.

At 9:05pm, and after calling for but hearing no further comments, Daily reminded voters that the polls will be open at the Buck Hill Road Fire House 7am-7pm Tuesday March 5, 2019 for election of town officers and consideration of ballot articles. A motion was then made and seconded to adjourn the 2019 Town of Shaftsbury Annual Floor Meeting and, by voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Richard G. Bump