

Town of Shaftsbury Selectboard Meeting

Monday, December 4, 2023

In person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were vice-chair Tony Krulikowski (presiding), Art Whitman (chair), Mike Cichanowski, Naomi Miller, and Martha Cornwell. Town administrator David Kiernan was also present.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes

Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the minutes of November 6. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

Ms. Cornwell moved to approve the minutes of November 20. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

4. Warrants

- Check warrant #20, \$102,237.92, a line of credit in anticipation of tax receipts. Ms. Miller moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.
- Rebate warrant 17, \$23,235.15. Ms. Miller moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.
- Check warrant #19, \$4,452,901.36, for taxes owed to the Supervisory Union and other payments. Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.
- Warrant #1, water payment for Cole Hall and fire department, \$228.29. Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.
- Payroll warrant \$29,457.55. Ms. Cornwell moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.
- Payroll warrant \$29,475.14. Ms. Miller moved to approve the warrant. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

5. Announcements

Ms. Cornwell thanked all who planned and attended the December 3 Polar Express event.

A special meeting will be held on Monday December 11 at 6 p.m. in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom to present to the public the host town agreement for the solar project. The proposed agreement will be posted on the town website ahead of time.

6. Public Comments

There were none.

7. Treasurers Report

Ms. Dexter reported the Nov. 30 cash balance was \$5,673,705.11. This year's tax receipts totaled \$6,145,704.97. The delinquent tax warrant was \$315,265.02. Holly Behan, interim delinquent tax collector, is getting up to speed on all issues related to her new position. Water bills are due December 5.

8. Town Meeting Information Session -Proposed Change to Preceding Saturday – Marlene Hall TC

Marlene Hall asked that the Town Meeting information session be changed to the preceding Saturday, March 2, in order to give employees and volunteers time to prepare on Monday March 4 for the balloting on March 5. It was agreed to begin the meeting at 10 a.m. Mr. Kiernan asked that a vote on the matter be postponed until the December 18 Select Board meeting, to give the public a chance to consider the proposal. Ms. Hall noted that absentee ballots can be requested at any time by calling her. She also noted that, for the federal election, a voter must request either a Democratic or Republican ballot.

9. DPW Report

Mr. Kiernan reported that the DPW crew worked with the cemetery committee to straighten about 150 tombstones. A boulder barrier has been created around the Howard Park parking area. Ron Jennings, longtime employee, retired as of November 30. The plows are ready and sand is in the box.

10. VLCT Contract – Town Administrator recruitment

Mr. Cichanowski talked with a VLCT staffer about the draft contract. That person thought that ICMA should kept as an advertising venue as well as the Banner and Seven Days. Mr. Cichanowski cautioned the board to be prepared to be able to move forward quickly and to make themselves available for interviews. It will be important that VLCT get the position announcement out ASAP.

Mr. Kiernan noted that a Select Board representative for the Town Green committee is needed. Ms. Miller volunteered. The first meeting will be held December 8.

11. Other Business

A budget meeting will be held December 18. It appears that the budget will go up about 6%, slightly more than the rate of inflation. Details regarding the budget will be made available next week.

All ARPA monies must be committed by March 2024 now, not December 2024. Though they can be moved to the general fund, Mr. Kiernan expressed concern that Congress could claw back those funds and urged the board to enter into contracts where possible.

12. Review of Action Items

Mr. Kiernan will look into the legalities of meeting with the North Bennington Board. A presentation will be prepared for the December 11 solar meeting. That meeting will be posted. Questions regarding moving the town meeting day will be addressed. Mr. Cichanowski will work with VLCT on the town administrator hiring.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Whitman moved to adjourn at 7:10 p.m. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.