

Shaftsbury Select Board
January 2, 2019

- 1) The meeting came to order at 5:07 . Present were Tim Scoggins (chair), Art Whitman, Tony Krulikowski. Town Administrator David Kiernan was also present.
- 2) Conflict of interest: no one had a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.
- 3) Warrants:
Check warrant 19, \$37,181.32. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.
Payroll warrant 13, \$27,116.02. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.
Payroll warrant 12, \$22,383.12. Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.
Check warrant 8, \$1,766,223.36 (transfer of school funding to the school). Mr. Krulikowski moved to approve the warrant. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

- 4) Announcements
There were none.

- 5) Public comment
There were none.

- 6) Bennington Rescue Squad. Forest Weyen presented.

Mr. Scoggins introduced the issue. Last year, the town contributed \$7500 to the BRS. The current draft budgeted contribution is \$25,000. He said he understood the Squad was seeking a contribution equal to \$12/resident, and pointed out that the northern part of the Town is served by the Arlington Squad.

Mr. Weyen said years ago, the Squad depended on per diem staff, who received no benefits. Today, finding it hard to find even full time applicants, the Rescue Squad is so short staffed that permanent staff are regularly working overtime. As a result, it has instituted an apprenticeship program, but those individuals won't come on for many months. Meanwhile, overtime will continue. The squad is carefully shepherding its investments.

Mr. Weyen described how costs can increase regardless of the number of calls: Medicaid reimbursement doesn't grow; citizens abuse the service; Narcan is needed more frequently (though the state subsidizes some of it).

Mr. Whitman asked how the Select Board can defend to the taxpayers consecutive increases in the size of the contribution to the squad that far exceed the growth in the number of calls. Mr. Weyden said the squad has prioritized its responses to better serve the citizens of Shaftsbury, Bennington and Woodford and at the expense of other potential clients that might be more lucrative. Mr. Krulikowski pointed out that clients now receive life-saving services rather than the less expert services formerly offered by volunteers. Mr. Weyden explained how, when the squad agrees to accept Medicare or Medicaid, it forfeits the right to seek reimbursement for all costs those entities refuse to cover – which can be significant. Most of the squad's clients use Medicare or Medicaid.

Mr. Weyden said in FY 19 Bennington decreased its contribution because the squad's investments did so well.

Mr. Whitman asked for a break down of transport calls versus non-transport calls.

7) FY 2020 budget

Mr. Kiernan gave an overview of expenses, noting that the rescue squad increase and the WBTN request are among the larger increases.

Mr. Whitman moved to change the WBTN amount from \$5000 to zero. Mr. Scoggins seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-0. Mr. Kiernan will tell WBTN that a petition is their only option.

Mr. Scoggins said he'd be inclined to support CAT-TV instead and wondered if the remainder of the board also so wished. Mr. Krulikowski suggested waiting to learn what is to happen to the cable universe. Mr. Scoggins reported that he'd been asked if he would serve on the CAT-TV board and said "yes."

This year's budget is 2.96% above last year, and will require a 0.015 tax increase. It is still below the FY 15 real budget.

Mr. Scoggins said he thought the county would need to reach a reimbursement rate something like \$12/citizen. He noted that Arlington may increase their request some time soon, bringing them closer to \$12/capita. (They requested \$7500 this year.) Mr. Kiernan said he thought we are in the twilight of the volunteer area.

Mr. Kiernan said we need to increase our rates at the transfer station – not this year, but soon. Mr. Krulikowski suggested having Trevor Mance come to present on his costs, to gradually educate the citizens.

8) Other business

- Mr. Whitman said he thought the Select Board should have a consensus regarding Shires Housing's project. He said the board should encourage the developer to improve Paran Road from the Paran Acres driveway to the Shires' proposed new driveway according to the standards set in the recently released Better Roads Manual. (This section of road is "hydrologically connected" and therefore subject to the Municipal Roads General Permit.) Mr. Krulikowski suggested the Town might work with the developer to accomplish this goal, maybe sharing its cost. Mr. Scoggins noted that Shires has already agreed to modify their plans in response to community feedback. He noted also that Shires will be paying taxes, making it easier to repair the road. He said future potential developers may look at obstacles thrown up by the Town and decide not to come here. The board agreed to express the viewpoints discussed above at the Shires hearing tonight. Mr. Whitman noted that additional development could be done on the land remaining following the proposed subdivision.
- Mr. Kiernan said Cole Hall is coming up \$3500 over budget. Fans were added, insulation in the ceiling was upgraded, and locks were changed.
- Mr. Kiernan said the Town would probably cover the overage at the garage with the sale of scrap metal. Mr. Kiernan said the road crew would acquire or build a compacter to be attached to the grader.

- Mr. Whitman said the road crew has been doing a good job filling in the ruts.
 - Mr. Kiernan said he'd been notified that the Town is at the top of the list for building the new water system.
- 9) Mr. Kiernan will call WBTN.
The next meeting will be held next Monday, Jan. 7.
- 10) Mr. Krulikowski moved to adjourn. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.