

SHARON DISTRICT BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING
(WITH SHARON SELECTBOARD)
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021 - 6:00 PM
@
VIA GOOGLE MEET
DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting was publicly warned in conformance with H.681 authorizing temporary amendments to Vermont's open meeting law to protect the health and safety of the public, board members, and town employees during the state of emergency declared due to COVID-19.

Links were provided for public participation by videoconference software or by conventional phone.

In attendance via Google Meet:

Sharon Selectboard members: Joe Ronan, Mary Gavin, Kevin Gish;

School Board members: Don Shaw, Samantha Potter, Chantelle Brackett

Others: Margy Becker (Selectboard Assistant), Keenan Haley (Sharon Elementary School Principal), Galen Mudgett (Town Moderator), Tara Weatherell (WRVSU Business Manager), Nicole Antal (School Board Recording Secretary)

1. Call to Order

Don Shaw called the School Board meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Joe Ronan called the Selectboard meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

No adjustments.

3. Discussion Items

3.1 Preparation and Logistics of Annual Town of Sharon and School District Meeting

Discussions between selectboard members and school board members started with agreeing on a start time for the school meeting and the town meeting. It was decided that because the school meetings are usually shorter, with less attendance, a 9 am start would be better. The Town Meeting would follow at 11 am.

Margy Becker, Selectboard Assistant, noted recently-developed COVID19 guidelines for town meetings appear on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development website. She read passages from those guidelines that stated the requirements: collection of health screening questions, contact tracing information from all attendees, wearing of masks by all attendees, social distancing of chairs, social distancing of officers, etc.

Kevin Gish shared his views on why he doesn't feel comfortable moving forward with an in-person meeting at this point. According to him, there are too many variables and too

many unknowns to move forward at this point.

Margy Becker indicated boards still had time to decide whether to move all business to Australian ballot, suggesting a deadline of March 1st to enable the School District and Town to adequately warn each meeting and prepare final reports for the town report.

Kevin Gish said that he supports moving all Town business discussed 'on the floor' to Australian ballot. Mary Gavin shared that she has also been rethinking her position about hosting an outdoor meeting, especially with new COVID19 variants.

Joe Ronan shared that he wanted to have an outdoor meeting, to allow for the discussion of articles. He said it would have brought in some normalcy too.

Galen Mudgett commented that twice as many people attend town meetings compared with school meetings. Mudgett further noted the Town already elects officers via Australian ballot. Selectmen pointed out the vote on the Ashley Forest article is also to be by Australian ballot.

After brief further discussions, ***Kevin Gish made the motion that the Selectboard move all business to be conducted at the May 8, 2021 Town Meeting to Australian ballot. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.***

Joe Ronan thanked School Board members for discussions and indicated it would be appropriate for the Selectboard to adjourn its meeting, to allow the School Board to continue its discussions concerning its annual meeting. Don Shaw thanked the Selectboard members for coming to their meeting.

Selectboard members and SB Assistant Margy Becker exited from the meeting at 6:28 pm.

After the Selectboard members left the meeting, the School Board members discussed and agreed that they would like to move forward with an in-person meeting. They briefly discussed logistics with Haley about tents, sound system, pens, etc. Sam Potter shared that the tents might be an issue for the Baseball season, as the fields will be used by the Recreation department. Haley said that we have enough ground to move the tents to an area that will not be used by the baseball teams. Don Shaw said he has some pop-up tents that the School can use for this event.

Galen Mudgett shared with the Board that the Australian Ballot part of annual meetings is usually 7 am - 7 pm. The balloting will have to take place in the gym as it normally does. He asked why the School District would need to have their meeting in-person when the Town Meeting portion is all on Australian ballot. Why not have the school business move to Australian Ballot?

Tara Weatherell said that they would have a lot of articles to put on a ballot if they were to move to Australian ballot: the treasurer salary, the board stipends, authorize to borrow funds in anticipation of taxes, the moderator, the budget, electing one new school board member. Galen Mudgett shared that he sees that as a regular and good Australian ballot. He shared that the safety concerns are the same on the School side as the Town side, and they have chosen to move their meeting to Australian ballot.

Sam Potter said that because in the past, School meetings usually have less attendance, it would be easier to socially distance.

Keenan Haley suggested to meet again before March 1st to think about these comments and concerns before the School Board makes a decision. The School Board members decided to meet again on Tuesday February 16th, at 3:30 pm.

Nicole Antal asked the Board Members if they have decided how the School Report will be sent to the Town. Tara Weatherell said that the report will be sent with the Town Report. She shared that almost all reports are ready, only the warning needs to be added. An informational meeting will have to take place 10 days prior to May 8th, to discuss articles and answer voters' questions. Don Shaw said that in the past, the Regular School Board meeting prior to the School Meeting was the information meeting.

4. Public Comments

Public comments were made during the discussion section of the meeting.

5. Other

None

6. Adjourn

Sam Potter made a motion to adjourn at 6:48 pm. Chantelle Brackett seconded. Motion carried.