

# FIRST SELECTMAN COLUMN

04/27/23 ISSUE DATE

The Sherman 2023/24 Budget Referendum is this Saturday on April 29 from 8am to 8pm in Charter Hall. There are two YES/NO questions on the ballot: 1. Approval or disapproval of the Town budget; 2. Approval or disapproval of the Education budget. The budgets themselves are online on the Town website and you should also have received a mailer outlining both budgets accompanied by a "budget highlight" letter from yours truly. To be clear: This referendum is about the budget. It is NOT a referendum on the Sherman School repair/renovation situation. (That referendum vote is slated for some time to be determined in September.)

This Thursday, on April 27 at 7pm in Mallory Town Hall, is the regularly scheduled monthly Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting. The agenda for this meeting is posted on the Town website. Now that the budget is set and will hopefully pass on Saturday, the BOS will be tying up end-of-the-fiscal-year items and necessary Town capital projects. One of the big projects is the plan to resurface and paint the remaining farm buildings up at Happy Acres Farm. We successfully completed the large barn repair and painting two years ago and we want to follow suit with the rest of buildings up there. Bid specs for this work are being readied and should go out in the next two weeks. This work is expected to be paid for by a STEAP Grant that we secured through the state two years ago.

Regarding state grants, all of the work on the Town's end has been completed for a grant from the State Historic Preservation Commission towards the Sherman Scout House. Now we are just waiting for that commission to come forward with new information and hopefully the funding. This work is for resurfacing, re-roofing, and structurally securing that building. Absolutely no changes will occur to that historic structure other than making sure that it stands squarely, looks good, and lasts another several decades. I also completed work on a TRIP Grant (Transportation Rural Improvement) and have my fingers crossed that this will bear financial fruit towards some bridge repair that is needed in Town.

We are in the process of forming an official building committee for a potential new Senior Center. I applaud the efforts of the Senior Center workshop group that has led to a rough-draft floor plan, a building wish list, and most importantly, a location – next to the community gardens on Colonial Field. Now we need to take this to the next step and a building committee is that step. These types of capital plans are everlasting and profound changes to the Town, so taking the time to do it correctly is critical. And regardless of the work of the building committee and the Board of Selectmen to move this along, ultimately, the voters of Sherman will decide if they want a new Senior Center or not. As it should be.

Please consider attending Ted Hollander's book talk on his publication, *Bachelors of Citizenship*. Ted, a long-time and prominent citizen of Sherman, expresses his view in his book as to how American society can come together and confront social, economic, and political challenges that a divided America faces. Personally, I truly enjoyed Ted's first book, "Step Forward America" and found his even-handed point-of-view refreshing and impressive. Try not to miss this! It's at 11a.m on Saturday, April 29 in the Library.

A reminder also that the Sherman Historical Society Barn Sale is on Memorial Day Weekend and begins on that Saturday morning of May 26. However, donation days for the barn sale start on Saturdays, May 6, May 13, and May 20 from 9:30am to 12:30pm. These are the times to donate items for the Historical Society to sell on that much-awaited event.

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in Roadside Cleanup Day. You all are the best and Sherman looks better for it. A special thanks to the SCOUTS for all that they did towards this effort and a special, SPECIAL thanks to Ruth Byrnes for organizing the whole event!



DON LOWE

TOWN OF SHERMAN