

**Town of Shaftsbury**  
**PURCHASING POLICY**  
**Adopted November 1, 2004**  
**Effective December 1, 2004**

**ARTICLE 1. Policy Objectives**

The objectives of the Town of Shaftsbury's purchasing policy are as follows:

- a. To promote and effect, in the best interest of the Town of Shaftsbury, open and intelligent purchasing of supplies, equipment and services, which will result in the maximum value received for each tax dollar spent.
- b. To promote waste reduction and recycling through purchases which take into consideration the use of recycled material in the manufacture of purchased product or equipment as well as, the minimization of waste to be disposed of by the Town of Shaftsbury.
- c. To assure the realization of the principles of competitive purchasing and best buy at least cost.
- d. To assist management in reaching responsible, environmentally sound, and cost-effective decisions in the procurement of quality supplies and services for Town use.
- e. To insure that all vendors will have an equal opportunity to do business with the Town of Shaftsbury and promote good will and clear communications in Town/Vendor relations.
- f. To ensure purchase authorization prior to actual purchase as a budget management tool.
- g. To ensure that purchasing procedures and documentation meet generally-accepted accounting standards.

**ARTICLE 2. Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- a. **Purchase Order:** Documentation of intent to purchase goods and services for the town. Purchase orders shall serve as requisitions until signed by appropriate persons and when signed shall then be authorization for the purchase of indicated goods and/or services.
- b. **Major Purchases:** Those purchases calling for delivery of goods or services in the amount of \$10,000 or greater.
- c. **Regular Purchases:** Those purchases calling for delivery of goods or services in the amount of \$3,000 to \$9,999.
- d. **Incidental Purchases:** Those purchases calling for delivery of goods or services less than \$3,000.
- e. **Budgeted Expense:** Any planned expense that does not exceed the line item account after subtracting other anticipated expenses for the remainder of the Fiscal Year.
- f. **Unbudgeted Expense:** Any unplanned expense.
- g. **Competitive Solicitation:** Written quotes solicited from at least three competitive vendors.

**ARTICLE 3. Procedures**

- a. All purchases will require a completed and signed Purchase Order Form prior to any actual purchase. Appropriate detail and specifications for purchases should be attached to the Purchase Order Form when submitted.
- b. Three part Purchase Order forms will be used in the following manner:
  - i. Original (white) copy will go to the vendor once purchase is approved.
  - ii. Second ( yellow) copy will go to the Town Administrator's office.
  - iii. Third (pink) copy will stay in the department placing the order.

**ARTICLE 4. Major purchases: (\$10,000 or more)**

- a. Major purchases shall require a formal bid process and must be authorized by a majority vote of the Select Board at a warned Select Board meeting.
- b. The Town Administrator, under the direction of the select board shall act as Purchasing Agent for major purchases.
- c. The Purchasing Agent shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, specifications or a request for proposal for such goods and/or services required. The Purchasing Agent shall advertise an "Invitation to Bid" at least once in a newspaper of general circulation and shall mail the Invitation to Bid and the specifications to a list of competitive bidders prepared with input from the Select Board, Department Head and/or the Town Administrator. The Town of Shaftsbury uses the Bennington Banner as its official newspaper. The Purchasing Agent will also consider listing bid opportunities on the Town's website.
- d. The invitation to bid shall include the following:
  - i. The location, time and place for receiving and opening of sealed bids.
  - ii. Information on how to obtain bid specifications and bid forms, or the request for proposal.
  - iii. A description of the supplies, materials, equipment or services for which bids are to be received.
  - iv. Outline where appropriate the insurance requirements of the Town in order to limit the Town of Shaftsbury's liability.
  - v. All bid documents or request for proposals shall include the following paragraph, "The Town of Shaftsbury reserves the right to reject any or all bids/proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this bid/proposal as in the best interest of the Town of Shaftsbury. This solicitation in no way obligates the Town of Shaftsbury to award a contract."
- e. All bids will be submitted with a full set of specifications for the particular project.
- f. Bids shall be publicly opened at the next regularly scheduled Select Board meeting after the published bid deadline.
- g. Bids shall be awarded according to the Vendor Selection criteria outlined in Section IV of this policy.
- h. If no bids are received, the Purchasing Agent will review and consider revising the bid specifications to ensure competitive bidding is possible. The Purchasing Agent will then be instructed to place the advertisement in two newspapers of general circulation and consider relevant state/regional trade publications. If no bid is received after this action has been completed, the Select Board may solicit and negotiate a proposal from a firm of their choosing.

- i. Purchase Orders for Major Purchases will require two signatures, the Purchasing Agent and the Chairperson of the Select Board upon approval of the Select Board at a warned Select Board meeting.

**ARTICLE 5. Regular Purchases (\$3000 - \$9999)**

- a. All regular purchases must be approved by a majority vote of the Select Board.
- b. All regular purchases must be accomplished through competitive solicitation, but not necessarily through formal bids.
- c. The Town Administrator, under the direction of the select board shall act as Purchasing Agent for regular purchases.
- d. Regular purchases may be made through formal bid/proposal or through written quotation at the discretion of the Purchasing Agent in consultation with the Select Board and the department supervisor for whose department the purchase is being made. If the formal bid process is selected, the same process outlined in Article 4 of this policy shall be followed.
- e. The Competitive Solicitation process shall include the following:
  - i. Whenever possible written solicitations shall be sought from at least three competitive vendors.
  - ii. Competitive Solicitation may be accomplished without the formal advertising for solicitation of bids, proposals or quotations.
  - iii. Recommendations of vendors for competitive solicitation may be made to the Town Administrator or department supervisor who will solicit written prices for specified items or services from at least three vendors and report their findings to the Purchasing Agent
  - iv. The Purchasing Agent will present the specifications and the three prices to the Select Board.
  - v. The Select Board will determine the vendor to perform the task according to the vender selection process outlined in Section IV of this policy.
- e. Regular Purchase Orders will require two signatures, the Purchasing Agent and Select Board Chairman.

**ARTICLE 6. Incidental Purchases (\$0 to \$999 and \$1000 to \$2999)**

- a. Incidental purchases may be accomplished without the solicitation of bids, proposals or quotations. However, if practical, informal bids, proposals, or quotations for purchases over \$1000 should be solicited.
- b. The Town Administrator, under the direction of the select board shall act as Purchasing Agent for incidental purchases. In his/her capacity as Purchasing Agent for budgeted incidental purchases, the Town Administrator will assign purchase order numbers to department supervisors and pre-approve Incidental Purchases totaling \$1000-\$2999. These Incidental Purchases will be reported to the Select Board at least monthly.
- c. Incidental Purchase Orders will require the signature of the department supervisor for purchases under \$1000 and the signatures of both the Town Administrator and the Department Supervisor for purchases between \$1000 and \$2999.
- d. For purchase of items such as office supplies, the Town Administrator will place an order at regular intervals but at least monthly. All departments in the Town Office will

- be notified of order dates and will send requests for office supplies to the Town Administrator.
- e. All office purchases will be delivered to the Town Administrator's office and distributed from that location to the appropriate department.

#### **ARTICLE 7. Purchase Orders**

- a. Numbered Purchase Orders will be available from the Town Administrator.
- b. The Purchase Order shall specify materials and/or services being purchased including:
  - i. Date
  - ii. Shipping address and billing address
  - iii. Department placing P.O.
  - iv. Account number for the purchase
  - v. Date by which order is required. Must be definitive. Terms such as "Emergency" or "Rush" may be used but always include a firm date.
  - vi. Quantity in measurable units such as pieces, sheets, pounds, gallons, feet etc
  - vii. Description of item or service that is complete and detailed so that no guesswork is required. If known, the manufacturer and part number should be listed.
  - viii. Unit price for item or service.
  - ix. Useful information that will expedite the receipt of requested goods and services.
- c. The Purchase Order should be open to competitive solicitation whenever possible according to earlier sections of this policy, unless a sole source is approved as per Section IV Vendor Selection of this policy.
- d. Each Department will be responsible for the preparation of Purchase Orders for goods or services for their Department.
- e. Any changes to a major or regular Purchase Order during the course of an agreement affecting price, delivery or specification shall be covered by a Change Order and approved by the Town Administrator and the Chairperson of the Select Board upon approval by the Select Board at a warned Select Board meeting.
- f. A copy of the Change Order shall be sent to the Vendor and shall be attached to the original Purchase Order with a copy to the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator will keep the Select Board informed of changes.
- g. Cancellation of Purchase Orders for major or regular purchases should be based upon approval by the Select Board.
- h. Cancellation of Purchase Orders for incidental purchases should be based on approval of the Town Administrator and the Department Supervisor.

#### **ARTICLE 8. Purchase Order Log**

The Town Administrator's office will maintain a log of all purchase order activity including orders complete and orders in process. Sample Form Attached.

#### **ARTICLE 9. Receipt of Goods**

The receiving department specified on the Purchase Order will be responsible for the receipt, inspection, and acceptance of incoming supplies and equipment. Documentation of receipt of supplies must be provided for payment to be authorized. Receiving procedures are as follows:

- a. All received items will be checked against the packing slip & Purchase Order and

checked to ensure good condition. When complete, the packing slip will be initialed and forwarded to the Town Administrator's office where it is attached to the yellow copy of the P.O.

- b. When items received are not acceptable, the receiving department shall work with the vendor in reaching a satisfactory solution. The Town Administrator will be informed of all unresolved issues.
- c. To take advantage of any "prompt-payment of accounts" and to maintain good vendor relations, it is important that all invoices, packing slips and receiving reports be forwarded to the Town Administrator's office without delay. These documents must reach the Town Administrator's office within one working day after receipt. Departments will instruct vendors to bill the Town Administrator's office.

#### **ARTICLE 10. Emergency Purchases**

In case of an actual emergency when the purchase of supplies or equipment is essential to prevent delays in work which may significantly affect the life, health, safety or convenience of the Town and the public, the department head in consultation with the Town Administrator when possible, may make the required purchase. The department head will submit a purchase order form, following guidelines outlined in earlier sections within 24 hours of the occurrence of the emergency. The department head will also submit a brief written summary of the emergency and reasons for the purchase.

#### **ARTICLE 11. Vendor Selection**

- a. Whenever possible and appropriate, vendors will be selected on a competitive basis.
- b. Bids, quotations, and proposals will be solicited by newspaper advertising, direct mail request to prospective suppliers, or by telephone.
- c. Purchase orders or contracts for purchases shall be awarded to the lowest, best-qualified and most responsible Vendor following a majority vote of the Select Board.
- d. Any and all bids, quotes or proposals may be rejected if such reaction is deemed to be in the best interest of the Town of Shaftsbury.
- e. In determining "lowest, best qualified and most responsible vendor", in addition to price, the following will be considered:
  - i. The ability, capacity and skill or the vendor to perform the contract or provide the material or service required.
  - ii. The ability of the vendor to perform the contract or provide material or service promptly or within the time specified, without delay or interference.
  - iii. The character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience, and efficiency of the vendor.
  - iv. The quality of performance of previous contracts, orders or services.
  - v. The previous and existing compliance by the vendor with laws and ordinances related to the contract, order or service.
  - vi. The sufficiency of the financial resources and ability of the vendor to perform the contract, fill the order, or provide the service.

- vii. The quality, availability and adaptability of the supplier, or contractual services to the particular use required.
  - viii. The ability of the vendor to provide future maintenance and service for the contract.
  - ix. The number and scope of conditions attached to the bid, quotation or proposal.
- g. Vendors from the local area or vendors with a favorable history with the Town of Shaftsbury:
- h. The Select Board may choose to accept a vendor from the local area (Arlington, Bennington, North Bennington, and Shaftsbury), or a vendor with a favorable history with the Town of Shaftsbury, that is higher than the lowest bid.

**ARTICLE 12. Miscellaneous**

- a. In the event the Town Administrator is not available to act as the Purchasing Agent, the person appointed to act as Interim Administrator by the Select Board shall also act as an interim Purchasing Agent.
- b. All Contractors performing work for the Town of Shaftsbury whether on or off Town Property, must provide a Certificate of Insurance or performance bond before the project is started. The Select Board will determine what type of instrument is required and the limit of that instrument and shall ensure that liability and Workman's Compensation issues are covered as appropriate to the job.
- c. All Contractors performing work for the Town of Shaftsbury will provide all warranties (implied or otherwise) in writing and deliver them to the Purchasing Agent.
- d. The Select Board may waive the bid process when a sole supplier is available or during times of emergencies.
- e. This Purchase Policy may be changed from time to time by majority vote of the Select Board.
- f. This policy will be adhered to for all purchases by anyone authorized to make purchases on behalf of the Town of Shaftsbury.
- g. All Town employees and volunteers are encouraged to submit suggestions that will help reduce costs promote efficiency or improve supplier service. Cost reduction ideas should strive to reduce costs without a corresponding reduction in quality of service.

**ARTICLE 13. Conflict of Interest and Ethical Practices**

- a. Purchases shall not be made from Town employees or from companies owned by Town employees.
- b. No gifts, rebates or gratuities will be accepted by any Town Employee or Elected Official from any Vendor that has previously done, or is trying to do business with the Town of Shaftsbury.

**ARTICLE 14. Severability**

If any provision of this Policy is found for any reason to be invalid, such decision shall not invalidate any other portion.

**ARTICLE 15. Authority**

The Select Board is hereby authorized and empowered to do all acts and things set forth and provided for in Title 24 V.S.A. Section 872 and Title 19 V.S.A. section 304(3).

The above procedures are adopted by the Select Board to be a useful tool to help Town Officials maintain good control on planned and actual expenditures as they relate to the authorized municipal budget.

Shaftsbury Select Board

Signature Page for the Town of Shaftsbury Purchasing Policy