

Town of Sandisfield
Board of Selectmen
Work Session
Minutes

Minutes for Work Session meeting on Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex.

Those present: The Board: Mark Newman, Brian O'Rourke. Absent: George Riley. Other Officials: Town Administrator Fred Ventresco; Fire Chief Ralph Morrison; Police Chief Mike Morrison; John Burrows.

1. Police Chief Michael Morrison and Fire Chief Ralph Morrison in to review and discuss creating a Public Safety Officer position.

Chairman Newman opened the meeting at 4:02 PM.

Fire Chief Ralph Morrison and Police Chief Mike Morrison presented to the Board their proposal for creating a new Public Safety Officer position in the Town. They gave the Board a handout consisting of multiple sections, which they went through individually. They are open to any changes the Board would like to propose. The packet of 22 pages includes, summary of the position, Sandisfield call statistics, estimate from County Ambulance to provide ambulance service, and revenue summaries, among other items.

This position/person would have to be a certified police officer, fireperson, and EMT; the Chiefs propose that he/she could have two of the certifications when hired and be obliged to get the third certification within a period of time. Most likely they would require police and ambulance certification immediately, and give a little time to obtain the fire certification. They reiterated that they cannot make a police officer serve as a fireperson or EMT as well; thus we have to title this position something different: Public safety Officer. The two chiefs are still unclear on some things such as whether this person can be salary or must be hourly, and how/if to compensate when on-call.

They recapped that the revenues from the ambulance is now split 50-50 between the reserve to purchase a new ambulance and 50% to the General Fund. If we turn down too many calls the State will revoke our license as an ambulance provider. You need two EMTs transport a patient; The Town usually does not respond to a call if only one EMT is available. This would allow us to respond to calls more often and faster.

Mike and Ralph and volunteers are usually available during evenings. Daytime is the problem getting people, the hours of 6AM-6PM. This new position would cover this day period. If our 911 system goes down in Pittsfield, it is returned to AM Auto and/or Ralph's cell phone. By law we have to have a back-up contact.

Gave figures of what Otis Rescue Squad pays their employees. Also gave quote of what it would be for the Town to contract out for an ambulance service; It would be \$345,000, and we would get none of the revenues. We would also have to provide the station for them to reside while on duty.

The Fire Department can contribute \$4,500 from the Fire Department Budget; this would be from the Fire and EMS Compensation budget. Based on the original proposed budget, Mike stated that the Police Department can give from its budget \$13,190.52. It must be kept in mind that this Public Safety Officer is not only a police officer; indeed he/she may well spend more time on EMS and Fire calls. This will depend on the calls that come in when he/she is on duty.

A new Ambulance is about \$135,000, and should be replaced every five years; we have been going seven years.

On a related topic, Mike asked the Board if they would consider increasing his parole officer hours back up to 28 hours, from the 24 they reduced it to. The Board will consider this.

Meeting adjourned at 5:25PM

Mark Newman

Brian O'Rourke