

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

May 9, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, May 9, 2022 at 7:00PM at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon, Jonathan Sylbert

Called to order at 7:00PM

- 1. Call to order: Note that the meeting is being recorded**
- 2. Review and sign minutes of meetings. Points to minutes**
- 3. Review and sign purchase orders**

12. Town Clerk Updates

Town Clerk Douglas Miner had to leave early, so he briefly goes through his updates. He notes that due to the upcoming Annual Town Meeting and Election, his department will be focused primarily on these events. The Annual Town Report is now available on the website and physical copies are available upon request.

5. Public Meeting regarding Culvert Replacement on Route 57

Brad requests public input on the diversion of traffic during the culvert bridge replacement on route 57 by the Beardsley residence at 90 Sandisfield Road. MassDOT and engineers determined the detour route for passenger cars should be up Route 8 to Cold Spring Road, Cold Spring Road to Town Hill Rd. Larger vehicles would go Route 23 to Town Hill Road. Utilizing some of the smaller dirt roads is also an option for local traffic.

Engineer, Micah Morrison confirms that the culvert needs to be replaced as soon as possible. Currently, the bridge rates at a three, but if it decreases to a two, MassDOT will close the bridge entirely.

Micah goes on to explain that the installation of the new culvert bridge was designed to close the road for 30 days during rapid construction. A date has not yet been set for this project, for the installation of a bypass will change the cost of the project.

Police Chief, Michael Morisson states that the suggested detours do not consider the public safety of Sandisfield residents. Should these detours be utilized, emergency vehicles will take far longer to reach their destination. He recommends keeping one lane open by constructing half the bridge at a time or installing a bypass.

Micah reports due to the condition of the bridge, it is not viable to close one lane at a time, and therefore would require the installation of the bypass, which he estimates

would increase project completion time up to ten months. A bypass would require the installation of a temporary bridge, which includes creating the road bypass, putting up signals and installing a foundation for the bridge.

Dana Beardsley reports that there was a proposed deal with a previous Select Board and Town Manager to sell him a three acre piece of town-owned property that abuts his own for a dollar in exchange for the installation of a bypass on his property. This would require a vote at Town Meeting, but Dana could still be compensated with an agreed upon sum for the use of his land for a bypass.

Micah notes construction may not take all ten months to complete the temporary bridge, but since the project involves wetlands, the town would need to go through the Conservation Commission, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and Army Corp, which takes significant time.

It's questioned whether another town could be on-call to assist/respond to any emergencies the fire department, EMTs or police may be unable to respond to in a timely manner due to the road closure. Alex questions the possibility of making the dirt roads more passable, which would provide faster detours.

Dana suggests creating a bypass available for emergency vehicles only. This would lessen the environmental impact, for there would be minimal traffic. Currently, there is already a culvert pipe in the brook that the bypass would go over. It's questioned whether the state would still need to sign off on the project if the pipe could be left alone and still withstand the weight of the emergency vehicles. Micah notes that the state may get upset should they find out any of the grant money was used towards creating this bypass without their approval.

It's proposed to make Silverbrook Road for emergency vehicle use only, and possibly making it one-way. The road will still need to be maintained before emergency vehicles feel comfortable using it heavily. Brad will pursue this option. Ralph Morrison requests Public Safety be notified earlier about projects that may affect their ability to respond to emergencies.

6. Brad Curry in for DPW Updates

Brad reports the new Ford 550 truck has been delivered. The old Ford 550 truck has now developed more problems, and it may be more reasonable to discard this vehicle instead of the Ford 350 truck, which has planned to be disposed of.

Grading has begun and a schedule will be posted on the website to notice residents of possible delays.

The DPW will receive a quote for some maintenance and repairs to be done on the salt shed, including the replacement of the canvas roof. The current estimate is \$75-80,000. It's requested Brad get a second opinion on whether total replacement is necessary.

There is a discussion about placement of a new septic system at the DPW Garage. Brad has reached out to Crash Recovery to reinstall a sign that was run over at the end of Tolland Hill. McCuin Landscaping has been hired for the 2022 and 2023 seasons.

Culvert replacement and paving on Route 183 and 57 will begin the last week in May. The project is anticipated to be completed by the first week of July. Mike Morrison requests he be contacted to schedule police officers for details.

Line painting has already been bid out, and Brad hopes this project can begin shortly. Brad also put out a bid for paving the remainder of Cold Spring Road and a section of Town Hill Road. He hopes to complete repairs to a culvert on New Hartford Road, and two on Town Hill Road. Subdrainage will need to be addressed near Yanner Park.

DPW employee evaluations will be completed after Town Meeting by May 21. Contractually, these evaluations are past due.

7. Discuss GPS installation in Town Vehicles

Steve reports that installation of GPS tracking in DPW vehicles was agreed upon in the DPW Union contract. GPS can establish fuel saving techniques, monitor engine life, locate employees, and determine route efficiencies. The devices have been quoted at \$2,883 with a monthly fee of \$240.25, which will cover six vehicles and four pieces of equipment.

John Field informs the Board that he has previously used the same service for his fleet of tree service vehicles and found the devices sparsely work in Sandisfield because it operates off cell service. He recommends seeking other GPS programs. The Select Board will confirm whether the devices require cell service and whether they are contracted or operate on a monthly basis. They will also request a trial device to see if it functions properly in town.

8. Discuss and vote to appoint Janey Beardsley as Temporary Treasurer/ Tax Collector Assistant until June 30

Jonathan Sylbert notes that if an Assistant is hired, the Treasurer/Tax Collector can begin to dedicate more time to tasks that have a better return to the town. The position is covered in the budget, and a permanent position has been budgeted for and will be advertised for the coming fiscal year. Janey currently works 32 hours as Select Board & Town Manager Assistant, and will dedicate the remaining eight hours to Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector.

George motions to appoint Janey Beardsley as Temporary Treasurer/ Tax Collector Assistant until June 30. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

9. Discuss and vote to accept Plumbing Inspector and Assistant Plumbing Inspector resignation

All resignations must be received by the Town Clerk.

10. Discuss and vote to appoint Plumbing Inspector and Assistant Plumbing Inspector

Contingent on receipt by the Town Clerk of resignations, George motions to appoint Brian Middleton Assistant Plumbing/Gas Inspector and Charles Pease as Plumbing/Gas Inspector. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

11. Discuss Proposed Select Board Amendments to Bylaws at Annual Town Meeting

George summarizes amendments had been made to the bylaws submitted by the Planning Board, but upon review with Town Counsel, it's been determined this is not proper practice. Amendments can only be made on the floor of Town Meeting.

George asks that no public input be made during discussion of the proposed amendments, for this deliberation would traditionally be made inside a Work Session. He also notes the public will have the opportunity to voice their opinions on the floor at Town Meeting.

The proposed amendment in the Shared Driveway bylaw would strike "Building Inspector" from paragraph 13 and 14 and insert "Highway Superintendent." The Highway Superintendent should be responsible for inspections of the driveways.

Steve motions the Select Board put forth an amendment request to the voters at Town Meeting to strike "Building Inspector" and add "Highway Superintendent" to both paragraph 13 and 14 of the Shared Driveway Bylaw. George seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

George goes on to describe an amendment proposal in Section 4C of the Accessory Dwelling Unit bylaw to utilize the term "square feet of net usable floor area" instead of "gross square feet. Net usable floor area is defined as "the sum total living areas as distinguished from other areas of an accessory building, such as utility or garage areas."

George notes that he believes the square footage allowed in the Accessory Dwelling Unit bylaw is too large, and would prefer 600-700sq/ft. Steve would rather send the bylaw back to the Planning Board than propose amendments that change the integrity of the bylaw, which include change of square footage and how it's defined. Alex also agrees with keeping it the way it is.

George goes over the amendment proposals for the Cannabis bylaw, which include making cultivation less restrictive, for a table determining setback requirements was

inserted into the bylaw without discussion at a Public Hearing. George also suggests waiting to create the mandatory sub-committee until an application is submitted. Steve, doesn't agree because this would allow more time to recruit members. Changing the word "marijuana" to "cannabis" was also proposed. Alex and Steve do not agree with making any amendments on the floor.

13. Interim Town Manager Updates

Jonathan goes over some of the slides he was unable to present at the Informational Budget Meeting last Thursday. The first item he mentions, notes that according to the Sandisfield bylaws, the Planning Board cannot receive compensation. This will need to be amended on the ATM floor.

He notes there was \$155,000 in underfunded/transferred operating budgets that should have been raised last fiscal year. The FY22 operating total is \$3.67 million, the proposed FY23 operating total \$3.66 million.

14. Discuss Employee Evaluations

Jonathan suggests developing goals for FY23 with all full-time town employees before conducting reviews for FY22 because this gives employees the opportunity to present what they can offer to the town, in conjunction with management's recommendations. This lets employees feel valued and establish context as to why evaluations are done. Proper job descriptions should be established, and goals should be reviewed quarterly.

15. Select Board Updates

16. Future agenda items

Discuss and approve Special Permit application

4. Discuss and sign Year-End Transfers

George motions to approve the Year-End Transfers. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

17. Review mail

18. Review and sign warrants

19. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting

Alex suggests having a daycare available during Town Meeting. Jonathan reports that in the past other municipalities have organized a daycare through Berkshire South. However, it is too short notice to organize this, and a private contractor would need to be insured.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon