

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

December 6, 2021

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, December 6, 2021 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon, Kevin Flynn

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**

4. Discuss and appoint Administrative Assistant for the Conservation Commission

This item is tabled because the Select Board has yet to receive a letter of appointment.

5. Discuss and act on the sale of surplus Fire and Police Department equipment

Ralph Morrison was unable to provide a list of surplus equipment, but will have one ready for next week's meeting.

Ralph notes that one surplus fire truck located at Fire Station #2 and another surplus vehicle located at Gene Riiska's home do not operate or move. He questions how they should be transported to the DPW garage. The vehicles must be moved, for they are in the way of functional equipment and on a resident's personal property. Kevin Flynn suggests towing the vehicle off the resident's property, but suggests the fire truck can stay put until it is assessed and sold, therefore making it the buyer's responsibility to move. Ralph notes he would like the vehicle removed from the fire station before they receive significant snowfall because it's located where snow is usually plowed. Towing either of these vehicles will cost between \$250-500. The Fire Department does not have the funds in their budget to move the vehicles.

Steve Seddon questions whether either of the vehicles have any resale value or if the town would be better off selling them for scrap metal. He does not want to spend the money moving them if they won't profit from selling them.

George tables this item and Ralph will provide a formal list of his department's surplus equipment.

George apologizes for jumping into the agenda prematurely and notes he would like to take a moment of silence for the temporary Assistant Town Clerk, Donna Fillion, who passed away suddenly on Friday, December 3. He mentions this will be a loss for Sandisfield, and makes a significant impact on the Town of Granville, for she served as their Town Clerk, Assistant Assessor and Librarian.

6. Discuss and vote to hire Laura Lee Bertram as temporary part-time consultant to assist Treasurer with tax backlogs

George summarizes that the Treasurer/ Tax Collector resigned at a crucial time in the calendar year because tax bills had just gone out, and payments were being received. The new Treasurer/ Tax Collector arrived with a large amount of tax bills to sort through, and is still working through that backlog. George reached out to Laura Lee Bertram who agreed to assist with the tax collecting responsibilities, which would allow Gina Campbell to catch-up on some of her Treasurer duties. Laura would be working as a consultant for \$50/hr, rather than an employee, and predicts to complete the work within two to three weeks. This money would come from the period of time the town was without a Treasurer/ Tax Collector and any additional costs could be taken from Government Services.

Alex Bowman requests a more finite schedule for Laura, George estimates she will work about 10 hours a week. This would cost the town around \$2,000 for four weeks. The Select Board agrees that after Laura works a total of 40 hours, they will re-evaluate their agreement. Alex requests a weekly update of all progress made and what still needs to be done.

Roger Brown suggests the Select Board hire Laura on salary, not as a consultant. He notes the Select Board needs to make sure Laura is bonded, for he believes there is only a bond for employees, not consultants.

George motions to hire Laura Lee Bertram as temporary part-time consultant to assist Treasurer for \$50/hr for no more than 40 hours total. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

7. Discuss Berkshire Regional Planning Commission survey questions regarding priorities of electric vehicles and charging stations

George reads an email from Justin Gilmore from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission which requests the Select Board fill out a survey regarding electric cars and charging stations. The survey would help the BRPC better understand the town's priority on these items. Alex will fill out the survey on behalf of the Select Board.

George notes that a large disincentive for Sandisfield residents to own an electric vehicle would be the lack of a charging station in town. Ralph notes that he knows of at least three Sandisfield residents who own electric vehicles who installed a charging station at their residence.

Alex reads the survey questions aloud and together the Select Board determines the best response. It is determined Sandisfield is not in the process of making the change to electric power a priority, but would like to transition in the future.

8. Discuss and approve Transfer Station renewal letter and PermitEyes module

George notes the Transfer Station renewal letter and permit application is almost identical to the one from last year. George notes that over the years the Select Board has received complaints about bulky waste disposal availability. Previously, the Transfer Station accepted bulky waste twice a year. Now the price of Transfer Station stickers will increase from \$65 to \$75 to accommodate bulky waste disposal being available all-year.

George mentions he would like to create a way to purchase stickers online. This option has not been included in the letter yet because he is unsure when PermitEyes will be able to provide a proposal for a new module. The module would also allow the purchase of additional electronic fee tickets. Alex questions whether UniBank may be a better option for online payments.

Alex suggests taking another look at the additional and electronics fees and notes in the past the letter has gone out on one taped tri-fold piece of paper. To accommodate this method of sending, the Select Board will put the frequently asked questions on the website, rather than include them in the letter.

George motions to increase the Transfer Station fee from \$65 to \$75. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

9. Discuss Planning Board's draft Cannabis Bylaws

George summarizes that a detailed cannabis bylaw was submitted to Town Meeting last year and it was determined there were two sections within the bylaw creating issues.

One issue being Tier 4-11, anything larger than 20,000 sq ft was prohibited in the town. The other issue being the total canopy permitted was listed as 300,000 sq ft. There was a plan that amendments would be proposed at Town Meeting stating the canopy be increased from 300,000 to 500,000 sq ft, and eliminate the prohibition of Tier 4-11, allowing the bylaws to pass. However, these amendments were never proposed and the bylaw was defeated.

The Planning Board has since conducted a survey for town residents about the cannabis bylaws and have updated their proposal. Canopy limitations have been increased from 300,000 to 400,000 sq ft and the prohibition on Tier 4-11 has been eliminated. An additional change has been made which limits the establishment of non-medical marijuana retail stores from one business to two.

George notes an additional change he finds problematic is the overlay district, which would allow retail establishments only to operate in that zone, has been altered. The Planning Board has removed Route 57 from the overlay district, and extended the area on Route 8 all the way to the Otis town line. But they also stated in the bylaw that this overlay restriction would apply to cultivation as well. George states this plan was rejected by the Select Board last year because there were almost no properties in this area that would satisfy the setback requirements.

The Select Board will meet with the Planning Board to discuss the bylaws and get a better understanding of their reasoning behind the bylaw adjustments. The new cannabis bylaw proposal will be presented and voted on during the Town Meeting in May.

10. Discuss Select Board FY22 goals and objectives

This item is rescheduled to be discussed during a Work Session on Wednesday, December 29 at 5:00pm. The Select Board meeting for Monday, December 27 is cancelled.

11. Town Manager Updates

Kevin updates he spoke with Interim Town Clerk, Mary Kronholm and they discussed how she will proceed without an Assistant. At this time they are still searching for an Assistant who would be trained to eventually take over the position of Town Clerk.

Kevin spoke with Building Inspector Matt Kollmer who has recently submitted his resignation and asked for names of possible candidates for the position. Matt will speak

with some Building Commissioners from surrounding towns to see if there is anyone interested. Kevin states Matt would be willing to assist Sandisfield while they search for a replacement.

Kevin states he has received two resumes for the Administrative Assistant Position. The position has been posted on the town website, the Shopper's Guide, and the Sandisfield Times.

ISG did some work on the security system in Town Hall. They will return Friday to run some additional wiring to increase the voltage. Fobs will be given out to Town Hall employees who frequent the building, as well as 4-digit codes. A new lock will also be installed and a limited number of new keys given out to town employees. The Fire and Police departments will receive keys in case there is no power.

A staff meeting is scheduled for tomorrow night at 7:00pm in the COA meeting room.

12. Select Board Updates

George updates the cluster box unit has been installed and Suites have been assigned to departments. The process of establishing forwarding addresses has begun and soon mail will be picked up there instead of the Post Office. This allows department heads to retrieve their mail without having to come into Town Hall during business hours.

The Town Hall sign has been delivered and is waiting on the DPW to install it. Brad Curry is waiting on confirmation from the BOH where the septic system is located.

Steve updates he's read through Sandisfield's master plan and is determining what items in the plan still make sense and what items the town can prioritize. A lot of effort went into the creation of that plan and it seems as though the Select Board has lost focus on these items.

Steve submitted an amendment request to the School Committee for them to take up as an item on their agenda at their next meeting. The amendment was a suggestion of the School Options Exploration Committee, which takes a look at the financial problems and efficiencies of Farmington River Elementary. Steve requested the School Committee discuss an amendment that would give Sandisfield a vote during all matters at School Committee meetings, and would allow Sandisfield to get on the agenda more easily. Steve discussed the wording on the amendment with Town Counsel. Previously, participation from Sandisfield School Committee members has been symbolic, for Otis members can vote without the agreement of Sandisfield members.

Alex reports David Hubbard will not be serving as a member of the Capital Planning Committee; he has still not heard from Bill Haines.

Kevin notes that all town employees should be using an email the town provides to them. This will prevent having personal emails and computers audited.

13. Future agenda items

14. Review mail

15. Review and sign warrants

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

George reads the resignation letter from Building Inspector Matt Kollmer who has taken the position of Building Commissioner in Lee and Lenox, MA. His final day of service will be December 31, 2021.

Mary Turek requests the toilet be repaired in the library. She also requests the DPW shovel the front door of the library when it snows. George notes the DPW does not shovel the Town Hall, and it is up to the first person who arrives at the office to shovel. Steve suggests assigning someone the responsibility of creating a safe path for employees. Alex suggests designating the responsibility to the new temporary DPW employee, Tegan Abear. Steve notes they must have someone who will always be available to complete this task because it is a safety issue, and mentions Matt McCuin, the town's hired landscaper, may be available to handle this task. The Select Board would need to put it out for a bid for shoveling of all town buildings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon