

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board
February 22, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, 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 vote to approve annual business permits/licenses**
 - **Common Victualler's License for Farmington River General Store**

The Select Board approves and signs the license.

5. Discuss and sign Deed to Right of Burial

The Select Board signs the Deed to Right of Burial.

6. Douglas Miner in for discussion of West Street status

Douglas Miner requests the Select Board table Article 1 on the Special Town Meeting warrant which proposes abandoning a portion of West Street. Douglas would like more time to research the issue. Alex states he has not found any evidence classifying this portion of West Street as a town road. Douglas would like to maintain the road themselves, but keep the road a public way.

George confirms that Douglas is concerned about subdividing his property and no longer having road frontage should the road be abandoned. George notes that should the proposed Shared Driveway Bylaw pass, Douglas can subdivide the property and use what would now be considered his driveway as a shared driveway. Douglas would prefer to simply discontinue maintenance rather than abandon the road because he does not want to create driveways off the road frontage on Cronk Road.

Douglas also notes that he is planting a chestnut tree orchard with the American Chestnut Foundation in May. This orchard will be open to the public, but should the road no longer be considered a public way and the Miner's move, this could create complications for the Foundation.

It's clarified that a discontinued road is still owned by the Town and is a public way, but not maintained. An abandoned road's ownership reverts to the abutters. It is no longer a public way.

The Select Board agrees to table the item at the Special Town Meeting.

7. Brad Curry in for DPW updates

Planning to resolve drainage issues on Town Hill Road by Yanner Park has begun. The project is currently estimated close to \$60,000, and will include ground drainage on both sides of the road.

The Small Bridge Grant has reopened. Brad has drafted a proposal that he will submit to the Select Board for review. He has also begun the process of applying for a Cold Water Fisheries and Streams Grant, which will go towards replacing four culverts on Beech Plain Road. Almost all of the grants have been closed out, with the exception of one.

There has been more ice, sleet and freezing rain this year which requires more salt and sand. Preparations for mud season have begun with the purchase of surplus stone. The DPW is trying to be as proactive as possible by laying down some of this stone as the temperature starts to rise.

Tree cutting will occur on March 10 and 11 on Route 183. Brad has been in contact with Eversource, who plans to return for cleanup and cut some additional trees which require a crane.

Recycling at the Transfer Station has gone well this fiscal year. In August they were receiving \$38.77/ton for recycling; it has since gone down to \$6.18/ton during the winter months. Brad expects to see an increase in the spring.

The Transfer Station will now start recycling textiles. Once the donation boxes are installed, residents can bring old clothing and other textiles for recycling. The town will receive compensation for the donations. The company that will be taking the textile donations will also take any items that have been sitting in the swap shop for a long time for no additional charge.

The Transfer Station's contract with Casella has expired. There will be a rate increase when the contract is renewed, so Brad would like to explore other options. This would only be for the hauling aspect of the Transfer Station, all recycling and disposal will remain the same. There has been a \$200 hauling fee since 2015.

Brad attempted to dig out the ends of the culverts on West Street to aid the ice buildup, but has been unsuccessful at this point.

The position of DPW Secretary has been posted on Indeed. There was one candidate who withdrew their application after deciding it was too far of a commute.

Route 183 will be paved between April and June. Route 57 coming down the hill will also be repaved, and include new drainage, as well as replacement boxes and culverts. This is about three million dollars worth of work. The road will not be closed during the Route 57 paving.

Brad has not yet gotten a definite answer whether Sandisfield's section of Tolland hill can be included in their emergency route paving project. Brad requests the Select Board reach out to Smitty Pignatelli to put some pressure on this issue.

Alex requests a list of projects with their estimated cost for the next fiscal year budget. Brad would like to go over this information with the Select Board for recommendations.

8. Discuss and vote on proposed FY23 Cost of Living Adjustment

Kevin updates he's reviewed the Consumer Price Index for the Sandisfield area and the national Social Security Adjustment. The five-year average for the CPI is 2.5% and the three-year average is 3.3%.

George explains that in the past the Select Board has negotiated, usually on a three-year contract, with the DPW Union a Cost of Living Adjustment. The agreed upon amount is then extended to the rest of the Town employees. Kevin notes it's his responsibility to recommend a number.

Item is tabled and Kevin's research will be used for the Union negotiations.

9. Town Manager Updates

Kevin questions whether Town Counsel should be present at the Special Town Meeting. George notes they always have Town Counsel present at the Annual Town Meeting, but not usually at a Special. The Select Board does not believe this to be necessary.

Kevin held a meeting with Ralph Morrision, Brad Curry, Jacki Bitso and Don Torrico to discuss how house numbers are assigned. One method for improvement is making the application more accessible online. It was also discussed how to encourage property owners to have visible house numbers for emergency responders.

10. Select Board Updates

George notes there was some misinformation published in the Sandisfield Times regarding some of the Special Town Meeting Articles. They plan to clear some of this information up at the STM.

11. Future agenda items

Alex would like to revise the process of issuing business permits from the Select Board.

12. Review mail

13. Review and sign warrants

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

George Riley

Alex Bowman