

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

September 27, 2021

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, September 27, 2021 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Member present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon

Called to order at 7:00PM

1. Review and sign minutes of meetings. Points to minutes

2. Review and sign purchase orders

3. Discuss and vote on purchase order exemptions for grant expenditures

George Riley proposes a motion to exempt grant expenditures from the purchase order process. George explains the warrant writing process involving general bills compared to a grant. He states that grants involve money that has already been promised, therefore making purchase orders unnecessary.

Alex Bowman expresses concerns regarding situations where grant money might be able to go towards multiple things. He believes the Select Board should have the authority to know and approve exactly where money is being spent. Alex does not think the policy should be changed for every department and situation, but agrees there may be some instances where a purchase order is not necessary.

George would like to modify his motion, and instead motions to exempt grant expenditures that are given for specific, applied-for purposes from the purchase order process, whereas grants that can be spent with a certain amount of discretion will still be subject to the purchase order process.

Alex explains the purchase order process gives the Treasurer the ability to understand what funds will be needed and how to reallocate funds in accounts so those balances can be paid. He goes on to state the process may seem repetitive, but suggests there are multiple benefits to this process and does not believe it to be very time-consuming. George explains the process can delay purchases by a week.

Alex explains a purchase order should not be submitted with an invoice, this factor is why the process would cause time-constraint issues. Purchase orders should be the request for approval to purchase an item; the item should not have already been purchased.

George motions for purchase orders to be submitted without an invoice. Steve Seddon seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Roll-call vote: Steve, yes. Alex, yes. George, yes.

4. DPW Superintendent Brad Curry in to report on DPW issues and updates

Brad Curry states the Chapter 90 reimbursement request the DPW submitted in the spring was accepted by the state. Brad will confirm with the Treasurer that the money has officially been received.

Brad explains there have been a number of repairs for DPW vehicles recently, and briefly reviews the repairs that have been made. He states two of their vehicles, both at least 10-years-old, should be replaced soon.

Brad reviews all the vehicles owned by the DPW, amassing eight vehicles total. Brad explains it's necessary to have extra vehicles in case any break down. However, only four of these vehicles are used regularly. Brad explains the desired inventory of vehicles for Sandisfield's 96 miles of road would be three large trucks and one backup truck for emergencies, as well as two smaller trucks.

The road roller has been returned after some maintenance and service, it has been operable without issue for two days, but Brad will keep the Board updated regarding it's operation moving forward.

Water rising over the road on Cold Spring Rd has increased this year. Brad has been working with the maintenance team from Beaver Solutions, the contractor that takes care of the "beaver deceivers." With the company's assistance, the DPW was able to unclog the culvert and get it flowing once more. Brad plans to unclog the culvert further once the water table lowers. Beaver Solutions will continue to maintain other roads with flooding issues.

Alex briefly reviews the Pavement Protection Program's offer to pave 3.8 miles of Route 183. However, the DPW has already paved one mile of this allotted amount last year. Now the DPW and Select Board are negotiating Sandisfield's priorities to move the unnecessary mile somewhere more useful. Brad explains the PPP sent out engineers last week to take a look at Route 183 and 57. The engineers plan to take another look at Route 57 and requested the taller grass on the outside of the guardrail be mowed. The engineers also stated it was not beyond their scope of work to replace the culverts,

but wanted to see their condition before beginning their design. Brad states it is looking very promising in regards to moving the extra mile to Route 57; however, the repaving will most likely take place in the spring, before June 30, 2022.

Alex requests an inventory of roads and other issues that need to be repaired. This will allow the Select Board to assist the DPW in prioritizing these issues. Alex would like to move towards maintaining the roads rather than repairing.

Alex asks about the driveway permit process. Brad explains the process is still on paper, and has not yet been put in an online format. There is no enforcement on driveway bylaws at the moment, but the Building Inspector, Matt Kolmer, would handle any significant issues.

There are three candidates for new hires at the DPW, one of which has more experience with equipment. None of the candidates have a hydraulics license, but Brad informed them it would be necessary to acquire one should they be considered for the position. Brad has interviewed one candidate already and plans to interview one other. George asks how Brad knows whether they will “stick around.” Brad explains that it is difficult to judge.

George suggests the town pay for a candidate to get their hydraulics license in exchange for a specific amount of time they will be required to work for the DPW. Brad states that could be possible and suggests discussing it further or bringing it to Town Meeting.

The transfer station produced two dumpsters during the bulk waste disposal in September. Brad explains that Sandisfield has had issues regarding people dumping tires along the roads throughout the town. In an attempt to stop this, the DPW started a program charging people \$3 for regular car tires, and can reach up to \$28-30 for larger truck and tractor tires. This process has received a positive response from the residents. The DPW has started a contract with Tri-County for household hazardous waste, so beginning in October, Sandisfield residents will have the option to dump their hazardous waste in Lee, MA.

Brad provides some photos to the Select Board regarding a resident's driveway and their concern that it goes into the wetlands and whether they have a driveway permit. Brad confirms the resident does have the correct permit, but it was another resident, Mary Turek who applied for it. Brad also states he requested this resident get a culvert installed.

Brad references additional photos regarding a call he received from Eversource about West St and West Hubbard Rd. Eversource explained they were yelled at by a resident who believed they were pruning trees on their private property. However, Eversource states they were working on the town's right-of-way. George explains previously, trees have only been pruned off the powerlines, but now they are clear cutting, so it is understood why there may be frustration. Brad explains this type of pruning reflects a high number of power outages in that area. Bill Taylor suggests the town create a policy regarding the type of tree cutting allowed in Sandisfield.

The last residential issue regards the Segrin's culvert. Brad and Kathleen Segrin briefly explain the issue regarding a large ditch in her driveway as a result of a collapsed culvert being excavated. The solution Kathleen requests is unrecognized. However, it is suggested a solution may be to install a culvert connecting her driveway and her neighbor's driveway and the ditch filled in. George proposed a meeting with Alex, Brad and Doug Segrin take place to determine an appropriate solution.

5. Re-evaluation of visiting nurse services

Anina Carr, speaking on behalf of the Council on Aging, explains the Board of Health contracted with Alliance Nurses for their visiting nurse services. However, the COA has found the organization to be unresponsive to their requests. Previously, the visiting nurse services were provided by Porchlight VNA. This organization would host events like a monthly blood pressure clinic, flu clinics, and senior workshops. However, Alliance Nurses does not provide any of these services and is unresponsive to or denies any such requests.

Anina requests that before a contract is renewed with Alliance Nurses, an investigation be done into other organizations that may better suit the needs of the town. Alex confirms that Alliance Nurses are paid quarterly and it may be possible to cancel this contract immediately.

6. Discuss establishing Fees for Required Legal Ads for Special Permits

7. Discuss establishing Fees for Required Mailings for Special Permit

8. Discuss establishing Fees for Special Permits

9. Discuss Special Permit Application Requirements

Alex provides a list of fees from the town of Maynard, MA. George explains there was an issue with The Berkshire Eagle suspending Sandisfield's account because SAMA Productions LLC did not pay for their legal ads for their special permit because they never received a bill from the Conservation Commission. To avoid this issue, the Select

Board suggests establishing a policy where the special permit applicant pays upfront. Alex will begin developing the policy and share his drafts with the rest of the board to approve.

10. Future agenda items

Bill Taylor explains Great Barrington, MA created a proclamation to declare the second Monday in October “Indigenous Peoples’ Day,” and suggests Sandisfield do the same. The Select Board will look at Great Barrington’s proclamation and bring their own proclamation to the next meeting on October 4, 2021.

George makes an update stating a candidate has been sent a letter offering them the position of Town Manager with a salary between \$74,000 and \$90,000 and given until October 1, 2021 to respond. George explains this candidate does not require medical or dental benefits and therefore the money budgeted towards those benefits would go into their salary.

Barbara Cormier explains the Town Clerk has confirmed all board Chairs and drivers need a CORI check. She requests the Select Board reach out to the Police Department to begin this process. Barbara also recommends the Select Board conduct these types of CORI and reference checks for any future town hires.

11. Review mail

12. Review and sign warrants

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

Larry Dwyer announces the Green Committee has officially gotten approval from the Department of Energy Resources of MA to begin construction on solar panels on the Town Hall and the DPW garage. The project will cost \$90,000 and is paid for by a grant. The projected electricity savings is estimated at \$240,000 over twenty-five years.

During the next round of Green Committee funding, the committee plans to apply for a grant for heat pumps in order to heat and cool the town hall.

Mary Kronholm requests the locks on the doors accessing the Town Hall and the Town Clerk office be changed for additional security. George explains the security systems are monitored by Alarms of Berkshire County and the Select Board has been in touch with them regarding a proposal request for updating the locks already, but they have yet to hear back.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23pm

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon