

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board
October 18, 2021

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, October 18, 2021 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Steve Seddon, Alex Bowman by remote

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

George reads a memo from the Select Board clarifying the mask policy for town buildings, which states all visitors and unvaccinated town employees must wear a mask, but all vaccinated town employees are given the option when not dealing with visitors.

George mentions Anina Carr stated she did not have a problem asking COA meeting attendees whether they are vaccinated, therefore giving all vaccinated members/attendees the option to wear masks as well.

The Select Board has asked the Board of Health to approve this policy.

3. Review and sign purchase orders

4. Discuss and take action on compensation for Acting Town Manager

George states that the budgeted compensation for his work as the Acting Town Manager is about \$46/hr. However, he would not request any benefits. He has been taking care of Town Manager business for about three hours daily for two and a half months, totalling 140 hours. George then recuses himself from the conversation because he cannot vote on matters involving his own compensation.

George explains he has been writing down his hours and specific tasks that fall under Town Manager responsibilities; he will photocopy and provide the list of those tasks and hours for the remaining Select Board members. He will also calculate the hours for the remaining September and October months within a few days, which have yet to be totalled.

Alex Bowman tables the item until all the data and records have been provided for review. George will have his total hours calculated from June to September by next week's meeting, 10/25.

5. Discuss and take action on revised Select Board meeting guidelines

George reads the proposed meeting guidelines which expect to make the best use of time at the weekly Select Board meetings. George then proposes they adopt the guidelines and open them up for discussion.

Barbara Cormier clarifies that if she were to have a topic not reasonably anticipated, she should notify the Select Board Chair of the topic upon entering the meeting. George suggests a meeting attendee with a topic not reasonably anticipated come five minutes early to the meeting to inform them of the topic, and together they will determine whether the topic can be resolved quickly or if it would be better suited under future agenda items to be discussed during the following meeting.

George motions to approve the revised Select Board meeting guidelines. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

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

6. Discuss winter transfer station hours

George reports the vehicle tally Keith Larson documented over the past three weeks regarding the transfer station hours. Saturday averages 101 vehicles, Sunday averages 146 vehicles, and Wednesday averages 116 vehicles.

Alex expresses surprise that there are more visitors to the transfer station on Wednesday than on Saturday, despite Saturday being open an additional two hours. George notes Keith's speculation that this is due to local resident's attempting to avoid larger crowds that may be made up of second-homeowners.

Alex notes that the transfer station hours were increased by five hours in 2020. George cites this change due to an influx of complaints from second-homeowners who wanted to dispose of their trash before returning to their full-time residence. Barbara believes they may have increased the transfer station hours to assist Keith in keeping his 40 hour work week.

Steve Seddon reminds the Select Board to take into consideration the effect changing the transfer station hours will have on the community, for the issue has already received a lot of criticism from town residents.

George reiterates from a previous meeting that decreasing the transfer station hours would allow Keith to do more general DPW duties. However, the only day this would be possible given the DPW schedule. A possible solution would be to change the transfer station hours on Wednesday from 12:00pm-5:00pm to 3:00pm-5:00pm.

Alex wonders why other towns with similar populations are able to operate at a significantly lower amount of hours. Barbara suggests other towns don't spend as much time socializing at their transfer stations. Melissa Bye suggests they create guidelines for the transfer station similar to those just approved for the Select Board meetings in order to create a more productive operation.

Alex proposes changing the transfer station hours to 9:00am-1:00pm on Saturday and 12:00pm-5:00pm on Sunday, allowing for both a morning and afternoon shift on the weekend. He believes basing the hours on Keith's schedule is problematic, for another DPW employee could work one of the weekend days which would still allow Keith two days off.

Melissa suggests hiring a new attendant entirely who would only work at the transfer station, and having Keith conduct day-to-day DPW duties fulltime. This part-time position would still be a part of the DPW, and would not require union membership. However, it is suggested that a separate pay rate for the transfer station be established, so in the event the part-time employee does opt to become a union member, they will not qualify for the established DPW pay rate. George states he would be willing to have a conversation with Brad Curry about this option.

7. Call for members for the Capital Planning Committee

George states it was brought to the Select Board's attention by Webmaster Larry Dwyer that the Capital Planning Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee have not posted minutes on the town website since 2015, indicating the committees are no longer active. George suggests the Capital Planning Committee was never able to formally host a meeting because of an insufficient number of members.

George would like the Capital Planning Committee to be active once more to allow for the proper planning to occur for Sandisfield's large purchases and capital expenses.

The Select Board asks the townspeople to volunteer to be on the Capital Planning Committee. One non-resident can also be a member of the committee. Alex states Richard Hubbard and Bill Haines have expressed interest in becoming members of the

committee, and suggests following-up with them about membership. Barbara suggests reaching out to Dennis Olson.

8. Acting Town Manager Updates

Real Estate taxes can now be paid online through the Sandisfield town website.

George updates that he's spent a lot of time developing a contract for their incoming Town Manager. He was unable to find the contract for the previous Sandisfield Town Manager, but after reviewing examples from other towns he was able to complete the contract and submit it to Town Counsel for review. Town Counsel made some minor revisions and the Select Board is now in negotiations with the incoming Town Manager. However, George does not believe there is much to alter within the contract and hopes to come to an agreement shortly. Once the contract is signed, the Town Manager will give his two week's notice at his current job, and will hopefully begin sometime in November.

George updates that he has been interviewing people for the Treasurer/ Tax Collector position. A contract for this position will be drafted shortly.

9. Select Board Updates

Alex inquires about a lack of payroll warrants for the Select Board to sign. George is unaware why this might be, but reminds Alex that today was their interim Treasurer's last day. The interim Treasurer had done payroll three weeks in advance, so town employees wouldn't have to wait for a new Treasurer to be hired before receiving their pay. George expects to see the payroll warrants soon.

Steve was able to get a quote from Alarm Systems of Berkshire County for an update to the alarm system at the Town Hall. The update would include a token key system for employees to utilize. The system will also include codes for all town employees and the ability to unlock the door remotely from a phone or computer. The company will provide training upon installation. Also, a misalignment of the system to the hardware on the Town Hall exterior doors, which prevents employees from buzzing visitors into the building, will be repaired. The estimated cost of the project will be \$2,548, which includes the material, labor, and programming.

Steve presents the revised Driveway Permit. He believes there shouldn't be an additional cost for driveway permits that are included in a building permit. However, if a resident requests a driveway permit on its own, there should be a fee. No permits are

needed for an access road, but owners are required to make sure the access road does not negatively affect residents or roadways, including washouts.

George proposes that if a driveway permit is granted in conjunction with a building permit, there will be no fee. However, if a standalone driveway permit is requested, there should be a fee of \$50. Alex expresses confusion as to when this permit would ever be utilized considering a driveway permit is almost always included in a building permit, and a driveway can be considered an access road with no permit obligations until a structure is built. Steve clarifies a driveway constitutes more than a dirt road, and a permit would be necessary for a paved driveway that cuts into the highway.

Alex believes it should be added into the bylaws that it is the DPW's responsibility to reach out to a driveway owner should their driveway prove any hazard to residents or the highway. The driveway owner is then held responsible to make the proper adjustments to their driveway.

10. Future agenda items

The Select Board will vote to officially establish a driveway permit fee.

Alex will present the Special Permit Application and the Select Board will make adjustments and then approve the application to be posted online.

Steve will draft an amendment for the School Committee majority rule policy, which will now require a vote from at least one person from each town, and submit that to the Town Attorney for review.

Melissa requests an update on the infrastructure bill the Select Board supported from the Massachusetts the Ways and Means Committee. Alex updates that the letter has been received and the committee is grateful to have received input from Sandisfield as they try to allocate money for projects in Massachusetts.

11. Review mail

12. Review and sign warrants

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

Alex requests George include the other Select Board members when scheduling meetings whenever possible.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25p.m.

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon