

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, December 19, 2022 at 6:30PM at the Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: Steve Seddon, Alex Bowman, John Field, Jonathan Sylbert

Called to order at 6:30PM

1. Call to order: Note that the meeting is being recorded

2. Select Board and Finance Committee Joint Meeting

- **Budgetary Targets for Department Heads**

The Finance Committee does not have a quorum, but Chair, Olivia Konstam can vote with the Select Board as a single member to make a decision on the budgetary targets for department heads.

Steve reiterates the Select Board recommendation was to level fund services with a 3% salary increase to align with the negotiated DPW Union COLA. Any increases to services should be explained in the comments section of the budget sheet. Any increases to salaries should also be explained in the comments section for Select Board consideration. Olivia is in agreement with this recommendation. Last week's motion regarding budgetary targets stands.

Jonathan's goal is to send the budget sheets out this week and receive all department submissions by January 18, 2023. He will then take a week to review all the submissions with department heads as necessary. By January 30, Jonathan will have presented the budget to the Select Board for review. The Board will give their input by February 13, 2023. The Finance Committee will review and share their input in mid February. By March the Select Board will have reviewed once more and all reconciliations will have been made. In mid April the Select Board and Finance Committee will begin preparing for Town Meeting with the final numbers.

- **Review Capital Fleet Plan Draft**

In FY23, the town is paying for the second DPW dump truck with auction funds, the roller and grader are being paid for with Free Cash and ARPA, and Firetruck was paid for with Free Cash.

In FY24, the 2017 freightliner is due to be replaced at \$225,000. The \$236,000 loader should have been replaced last year. The \$217,000 roadside mower should have been replaced many years ago. Additionally, the \$54,000 chipper and other vehicle accessories should have already been replaced as well.

The Select Board may want to consider replacing the roadside mower immediately using Chapter 90 funds, as it is no longer operational. Steve had questioned whether a mowing attachment could be purchased for their other tractor or loader, rather than buying an entirely new piece of heavy machinery. He has not received confirmation from the DPW Superintendent yet.

Additionally, the \$50,000 Ford F350 Police vehicle is due for replacement. However, this can wait if the truck is still in good condition. Barbara Cormier questions the possibility of purchasing a van for senior transportation. The cost of the van and a driver is something the COA should look into.

3. Webmaster Position & Website Notification Subscription

Steve summarizes the Webmaster position was discussed last week and the Select Board has decided that Janey should teach all departments to post on their webpages independently. It was questioned whether this discussion needed to be had in Executive Session, which is not the case.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to have Janey Beardsley take over Webmaster duties and train all department heads to post independently.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye
John Field	Aye

There is a module available on the website that can send notifications via text or voicemail to residents. The notifications can assist in sharing public safety concerns (road closures/detours, weather advisories, etc) and other town news (Town Meetings, Public Hearings, elections, etc). The cost of this module is around \$4,000, which may need to be taken to Town Meeting for voter approval.

Currently, the town has E-Alerts that residents can subscribe to on the town website which will send out emails regarding town news and announcements. It's suggested the town incentivize subscribing to notifications by offering something like a discounted Transfer Station sticker.

4. MassDOT Rumblestrip Letter

A few weeks ago, the Select Board sent a letter to MassDOT requesting they fill in the rumblestrips on the Route 57 hill, as they appeared to cause unsafe conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. District Highway Director, Francisca Heming responded to the letter stating they will not consider filling in the rumblestrips, but Sandisfield is welcome to find other funding sources to come up with their own solution.

Jonathan stresses the seriousness of the situation, as Francisca determines which towns will receive funding for their highway/bridge projects. Since Sandisfield currently needs the remainder of Route 57 paved, two bridges redone immediately, and could easily have as much as 20 million dollars in liabilities in the next ten years, it's important to mend their relationship with MassDOT as soon as possible.

Jonathan will write a letter to Smitty Pignatelli outlining the state of the town regarding their costly projects and request assistance mending the relationship between the town and MassDOT. A plan will then be made to address the issue.

5. Options for Library Renovations and Funding Sources

There are numerous competitive grants available for library reconstruction. Enough data needs to be collected in order to determine the direction the library should go: complete renovation or maintain the library as is and make small continuous improvements. It's noted the cost of the two options may even out over the years.

The first step would be allocating funds at Town Meeting to conduct a feasibility study. This study would determine what updates could be done on the existing property to meet parking requirements, ADA compliance, conservation requirements, etc.

The possibility of a Town Center is discussed, as it would be beneficial to have all town buildings, including the library, in a congregation. The theoretical purchase of land and new construction can be estimated, but will likely be out of reach for the time being.

Additionally, the number of visitors and visits the Library received per month will need to be calculated for grant submission.

6. Composition of Charter Committee

The Charter Committee will be made up of Alex Bowman (Select Board), Barbara Cormier (Planning Board), Olivia Konstam (Finance Committee), and two TBD

residents. More information regarding member responsibilities is available online at sandisfieldma.gov - Reach out to Janey Beardsley at jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov if interested in becoming a member.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to create a Town Charter Committee as a five-member committee with initial members of Alex Bowman, Barbara Cormier, and Olivia Konstam.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye
John Field	Aye

7. Negotiation Procedure for School District Withdrawal Agreement and RDA Modification

After the Town voted to request the terms of withdrawal from FRRSD at Town Meeting, the School Committee has been asked by default to reorganize the RDA to meet all the requirements of the state, which it currently does not. The School Committee has asked for Select Board participation to find a resolution to the issue.

School Committee member, Carl Nett suggests opening a line of communication between the Sandisfield and Otis Select Boards by electing a point person from each Board to discuss proceedings with the agreement.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to appoint John Field as point person with the authority to begin negotiations on FRRSD RDA modifications.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye
John Field	Aye

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to have Jonathan Sylbert write a letter to the Otis Select Board requesting them to delegate a Select Board member to negotiate with Sandisfield's delegate, John Field on the future of the RDA and School Committee.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye
John Field	Aye

8. Town Manager Updates

One copy of all daily fines must be sent to the violator, one must be delivered to the court by a member of the Police Department, and one must be kept on file by the Police Department. This process has begun for multiple bylaw/building code violators.

There are two new potential Best Practice grants the town may qualify for, Financial Policies and Human Resources. The Human Resources grant can assist in creating a succession plan in anticipation of the pending wave of retirements that will severely challenge a municipality's ability to maintain service levels.

9. Select Board Updates

All town buildings have been receiving their annual furnace servicing. The furnace at the DPW Garage had previously never been serviced and was installed improperly. The Town will need to allocate funds towards maintenance of this equipment at the ATM.

10. Future Agenda Items

There is no Select Board meeting on December 26, 2022 and the meeting the following week has been rescheduled to Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

11. Review and sign minutes of meetings, purchase orders, warrants, and mail

12. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Steve Seddon

Alex Bowman

John Field