

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

Minutes for Joint Select Board Work Session with Finance Committee held on Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at 12:00PM at the Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: Steve Seddon, Jonathan Sylbert, and Alex Bowman by remote

Finance Committee Members present: Olivia Konstam, Myles Reynolds, William Newsome, Mike Lutynski, all by remote

1. Call meeting to order

2. FY24 Budget Reconciliation

Myles Reynolds requests clarification on the Highway Maintenance versus the newly added Highway Materials. Jonathan explains in order to create transparency, materials for roads including salt, sand, chip, etc, were split out from the rest of the maintenance costs.

There is a brief discussion regarding the increase of expenditures in Highway Snow/Ice and Vehicle Fuel. Due to inflation and the influx of storms this fiscal year, it's questioned whether these accounts need to be increased even further in FY24. Jonathan does not believe this is necessary, as some of the fuel costs should be attributed to the Snow/Ice budget.

Including an extra \$4,000 for the Foreman position has yet to be determined, as it may require negotiation with the Union. It's questioned whether Facilities Maintenance & Repair is too low. It's explained \$12,000 was allocated for this budget line because there is not a formal list of projects to be completed.

William Newsome requests more information regarding the School budget. The Town cannot negotiate the school budget, and must accept it from the School Committee. Jonathan recommends separating the School Budget from the Operating Budget on the warrant, as it can be attributed the vast majority of the overall increase. The Select Board and Finance Committee agree.

The entirety of the Public Safety Officer salary will not be expended in FY23 because the position was not filled until a few months into the FY. However, there will be an increase in this budget line to better align the position with surrounding towns. The salary increase will reach \$72,000 over two years.

A decision needs to be made to determine where the vocational student will appear on the warrant, as this will add a little over \$19,000 to the operating budget. The Select Board and Finance Committee agree to include the vocational student in the Education category as a separate line item. Jonathan recommends separating the School Budget from the operating budget to showcase the effect the School has on the town's finances. Everyone is agreeable to this suggestion.

The Board of Health Admin salary increase can be attributed to hiring a professional Sanitarian Inspector after the sudden passing of Victor Hryckvich who previously held the position.

The Berkshire County Retirement appropriation is a number submitted to the town by the Retirement Board. It is non-negotiable. The Town Manager salary is also non-negotiable, as the salary increase is included in the TM contract. The Administrative Assistant salary increase can be attributed to an increase in responsibilities and efficient work.

Elderly Transportation was removed because the company that was conducting the program went out of business. The Recreation Committee received an increase in expenses to accommodate more events and advertisement of said events. A pig roast will be included on the warrant as a special article. Should the town enjoy the pig roast, it will be included in Recreation Committee expenses moving forward.

The Finance Committee and Select Board agree to increase the Reserve Fund to \$30,000.

The format of the warrant is discussed. It's suggested to only present the total Department budgets, rather than every budget line on the warrant. This will allow more freedom to transfer funds within a department throughout the FY if necessary.

*** Topics Not Anticipated**

Over a month ago, the School Committee required each town to appoint four members to the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee. Sandisfield has appointed their RAAC, but Otis has not. Jonathan would like to send a letter urging Otis to move forward. Alex notes that the School Committee agenda for April 3, 2023 includes the following item:

1. **Formation of Regional Agreement Amendment Committee (RAAC):**

- The Town of Sandisfield has chosen the following people to serve on the RAAC: Carl Nett, School Committee; Steve Seddon, Select Board, John Field, Select Board; Jonathan Sylbert, Town Manager
- The Town of Otis select board voted last night to recommend all four interested parties to the School Committee for consideration. They felt the school committee members could then appoint the three they felt were best suited for the committee. Otis recommendations: Frank Tolopko, Sue Brofman, Mary Kay Pinkam, and Denise Hardie.

The Select Board will wait to send the letter until after the School Committee meeting.

3. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 1:12pm.

Steve Seddon

Alex Bowman