

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, July 24, 2023 at 6:30PM at the Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: Steve Seddon, John Field, Robert Fedell, Jonathan Sylbert

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

2. Sign Special Permit Notice of Decision – Patricia Creem, 158 New Hartford Rd

Special Permit Notice of Decision for Patricia Creem of 158 New Hartford Rd is available on the Town website here

https://www.sandisfieldma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif1171/f/agendas/special_permit_notice_of_decision_-_pat_creem_final.pdf . The Select Board signs the notice. A 20 day appeal period will now begin.

3. Town Clerk Updates

• 2022 STM Article & 2023 ATM Article Status

The 2022 STM Articles, Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Bylaw and Shared Driveway Zoning Bylaw, have been approved by the Attorney General (AG) and are now posted online under the Zoning Bylaws. The AG has yet to return the 2023 ATM articles.

The Cannabis Bylaw has also been approved. The AG accepted everything in the bylaw except the 50 acre requirement. This poses concern as it is likely the Town would not approve this bylaw without the 50 acre requirement. Douglas is looking into recourse, but it is likely the best option would be to ban the bylaw altogether.

• Storage Trailer Removal Status

Douglas is waiting on a call back from King Information Systems for information on digitizing and microfilming documents. In the meantime, he has been consolidating documents himself. Steve recommends reaching out to another company for the digitization if King is unresponsive.

• Ethics/OML Training for all Departments/Boards/Committees Status

Douglas is working on creating a master list for the Town website of all the Department/Board/Committee members, their positions, and whether they are current

on their Ethics/OML training. This will allow all members to confirm themselves whether they need re-training/certification.

4. Review Modified General & Trust Fund Investment Policy

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the modified General & Trust Fund Investment Policy.

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| Steve Seddon | Aye |
| John Field | Aye |
| Robert Fedell | Aye |

5. Lighting & Surveillance at Transfer Station

John Field reports there are no lights, nor surveillance at the Transfer Station, and likely due to the change in hours, there have been numerous instances of illegal dumping. The Select Board is in agreement that this issue must be remedied as soon as possible. Brad will be asked to look into solutions for this.

6. Review Submitted Warrants & Purchase Order Limits for Fire/Ambulance

Steve explains that the Fire Department submitted three warrants all just under their purchase order limit from the same vendor for similar products, two of which were purchased on the same day. This has been viewed as an attempt to avoid following the Purchase Order Policy.

Fire Chief, Ralph Morrison tries to explain there was an issue with the vendor and all the invoices were dated the same despite being purchased separately over the period of a few weeks. Steve reports one warrant had two invoices, one dated 6/16/23 for collars and the other dated 6/19/23 for helmets, totaling \$908.74. One warrant was dated 6/19/23 for reflective apparel totalled \$400.00. And the last warrant had one invoice dated 6/14/2023 for helmets totalled \$935.00. All of which were from the same vendor. Steve explains his concern is why the Fire Department would need separate invoices for some of the same products, like helmets, especially if they are from the same vendor.

Jonathan explains there are numerous reasons why a purchase order is required for any purchase, if items are purchased on the same date, if they are from the same vendor, and/or if they are for the same item. Meaning, although the helmets were purchased on different dates, they were from the same vendor and for the same item, and therefore constitute a PO, as they total over the Fire Dept's PO limit of \$1,000.

Steve asks the Fire Department to include all products from the same vendor purchased/submitted at the time be included on one invoice to prevent suspicions that a purchase order was trying to be avoided. Additionally, they are asked to resubmit these specific invoices as a PO to be paid out of FY24.

Another issue regards utilities bills for Verizon and Eversource totalling \$446.99 submitted to be expended from the Fire Maintenance account for FY24. However, upon inspection the Accountant confirmed these are actually FY23 bills, which are now submitted late, as bills for FY23 were due no later than July 15, 2023. Additionally, this account has already been overspent by a little over \$400.00. It appears the purchase of four hand striking excavation tools put this account over budget. It is unknown how this issue can be resolved; the utility bills may need to be taken to Town Meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to lower the purchase order limit for the Fire Department/Ambulance to \$500.00 until further notice..

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| Steve Seddon | Aye |
| John Field | Aye |
| Robert Fedell | Nay |

7. Solicitation Policy/Bylaw

Trinity Solar reached out to the town asking what the solicitation policy is. Currently, Sandisfield does not have a policy in place. Steve came up with a few items that should go into the policy which include, a notice being published on the town website, the Police Department should be made aware of any proposed solicitation, the company must conduct background checks on all door-to-door solicitors, hours must be reasonable (9am-4pm), and the company must be registered with the state. Jonathan will compile all the suggested regulations and speak to the Police Chief to establish a complete policy.

It's noted that some Sandisfield residents may want to ban solicitation altogether. The Select Board will consider sending a postcard to all taxpayers seeking their opinions on this matter. Sandisfield will need to go to Town Meeting to make a solicitation policy an official bylaw.

Jonathan will reach out to Trinity Solar and let them know solicitation is not allowed in Sandisfield until the Select Board receives adequate approval from the taxpayers.

8. Zoom Policy for Boards/Committees

There have been complaints that certain Boards/Committees do not have Zoom participation available. The Select Board encourages all Boards/Committees to utilize Zoom. A laptop and Owl camera are available at Old Town Hall for Board/Committee use. Reach out to Janey Beardsley for Zoom credentials and training.

9. Town Manager Project List

10. Town Manager Updates

The DPW tractor was traded in for \$16,500, which reduced the purchase price of the new one significantly.

Sandisfield declared an emergency for the flooding on July 10, 2023. There are two phases of an emergency, the first part being any repairs done during the storms or immediately after, and the second part being repair work afterwards which includes grading, filling in washouts, and culvert replacement. Reimbursement for these repairs is not guaranteed. A second grader was rented to assist in speeding up repairs.

Route 57 is closed as of today, July 24, 2023 for the culvert bridge replacement by 90 Sandisfield Rd. Alternate routes must be taken; a detour map is available on the town website at <https://www.sandisfieldma.gov/home/news/rt-57-culvert-bridge-detour> The bridge work will take no longer than 30 days to complete.

Keith Larson has resigned from the DPW. His last day will be August 4, 2023. Jonathan notes Keith may return as the Transfer Station Attendant.

Bethany Perry submitted her resignation from the Board of Assessors. This position can be filled by appointment until the next election in May 2024.

The Town Charter Committee has completed their draft Charter. The Committee will meet once more to go over any new suggestions from the Collin's Center. There will be an article in the Sandisfield Times explaining the importance of a Charter and answering some frequently asked questions. The draft Charter will be made available on the town website under the Town Charter Committee webpage. The Public Hearing to review the draft Charter and receive public input will be held Friday, August 11, 2023 at 6:00pm at Old Town Hall.

11. Select Board Updates

Steve is having a contractor come look at the drainage at the Library, as it flooded twice during the heavy rain storms. Hopefully this issue can be remedied soon. Additionally, Steve has gotten quotes to redo the Old Town Hall and Library roofs.

Steve will be on vacation from August 3-12. Select Board meetings will return to weekly starting in September.

12. Future Agenda Items

- Work Session with Planning Board

13. Topics Not Anticipated

Ralph Leavenworth submits his resignation from the DPW to the Select Board. His last day will be July 28, 2023.

14. Public Comment

15. Review and vote to approve minutes of meetings

16. Review and sign purchase orders, warrants, and mail

17. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:22pm

Steve Seddon

John Field

Robert Fedell