

# Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

November 29, 2021

Minutes for Select Board Work Session held on Monday, November 29, 2021 at 6:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon, Kevin Flynn, Roger Brown

Called to order at 6:00PM

## **1. Budget calendar**

Kevin suggests making budgets due in January, after the holidays. Roger and George note that while some department's needed some assistance, the budget process from last fiscal year went well, and they suggest keeping the process the same since there isn't much time left to adjust.

Roger suggests creating a spreadsheet that lists all town employees salaries and rates to allow for easier accessibility and comparison.

Alex expresses concerns regarding time spent on budgeting. He believes town departments spend too much time budgeting and it should be a basic process at this point, with little variance from year-to-year.

It is noted that the challenges the town faced when creating the budgets last year came from the DPW, Fire and Police Departments thinking about the larger purchases that might be necessary in the fiscal year. Roger suggests that all departments turn in preliminary ideas for any Capital purchases that may be made throughout the fiscal year before officially submitting their budgets.

Steve mentions he agrees with Kevin's idea that there should be a cut-off date for capital expense submissions. This will assist in avoiding any last minute requests and pressure set upon the Select Board to approve them with urgency.

Alex suggests creating a simplified warrant, rather than a detailed one. This simplified warrant would include a letter which would reference how the budget was created. This would allow unexpected purchases to be handled more easily. Roger suggests they check with Town Counsel about what is required in the warrant.

Roger also notes that while the warrant is detailed in numbers it does not provide much context. Alex suggests the Select Board write a letter attached to the warrant which would state the reasoning behind the budgeting and expenses.

George reiterates that the initial important questions all department heads need to ask are: what will be different in the next fiscal year, what are your major initiatives, and what are your initial capital requests? He suggests asking these questions during an all-boards meeting. The all-boards meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, December 7 at 7:00pm in the COA meeting room.

## **2. Capital Planning Committee goals**

Kevin explains he would like to receive capital plans for the next three years from all departments. Departments can determine whether they plan to focus on IT, vehicles, facilities, etc.

Alex recommends that the first step of the Capital Planning Committee be acquiring an asset list from all the departments.

## **3. Plan for revenue projections**

Kevin notes Sandisfield has not done revenue projections in the past. He is putting a database together which will show the levy each year and how much is unspent in each department. Already he has noticed a lot of annual fluctuation in free cash and line items.

Roger notes it needs to be determined who is responsible for doing the levy limit, for it has been difficult to determine in the past because no one person is responsible. Kevin states he will determine the levy limit.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

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George Riley

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Alex Bowman

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Steve Seddon