

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board
May 23, 2022

Minutes for Select Board Work Session held on Monday, May 23, 2022 at 5:00PM at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

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

1. Discuss Select Board goals and initiatives

Alex Bowman reviews some of the larger goals he believes the Select Board should be working towards, which include transparency, openness to public input, and following through on tasks and promises.

Some other goals Alex noted include Highway Department organization, review financial policies, more frequent assessments from Assessor's Office, creating a metric system of fulfillment for all departments/positions, leading the Berkshire Health Alliance and moving towards partnership with the Berkshire Public Health Collaborative, creating comprehensive forms, switching phone services, Town Chart bylaw review, employee handbook update, and street lighting.

Steve Seddon notes that his goals include making the Select Board function better as a team. He mentions as Chair he should not be the only member making motions, for it may be interpreted as steering. He also believes tasks should more clearly be distributed among the members and Town Manager. Making each Select Board member a point person among all departments/committees may assist in creating better lines of communication and avoiding confusion.

Establishment of the Capital Planning Committee is an additional goal. Previously, an ARPA Committee was to be developed in conjunction with Capital Planning, but it has not been fulfilled. Instead Steve reached out to all boards/committees to ask for recommendations for ARPA funding allocations. The majority of respondents requested the funds be put towards paying down broadband. Some smaller items Steve thought might be a valuable use of the funds include a back-up generator for Town Hall.

Steve has begun a list of conditions of Town buildings, and how repairs and maintenance can be addressed. A thorough evaluation of all town equipment should also be conducted.

Last year, the Select Board applied to the state for a five year extension to the 65-year requirement for mandatory retirement. Both the Fire and Police Chief are closing in on the retirement age. A plan needs to be established to address this issue, which may involve combining the Public Safety Office salary and Fire Chief stipend to create one job with a decent wage. The possibility of regionalization for the Police Chief is proposed. A work session with Michael and Ralph Morrison is suggested to be held regarding this issue.

Creating a better sense of community within the town is an important goal. Steve notes the possibility of purchasing a piece of property, like Carr Field, to construct a Community Center. The library also needs a new playground.

The Highway Department should keep an updated work schedule on the town website. This will avoid residents being unaware they may experience delays due to work on their road.

John Field reports he would like to utilize his experience as a business owner and background with heavy machinery to better the town, especially with the DPW, Fire, and Police vehicles and equipment. He also notes the importance of better understanding and helping to prioritize tasks within the DPW.

There is a discussion about the Highway Department and the tasks that should be completed. Jonathan suggests Brad give more responsibility to his employees, and allow them to take the lead on projects.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37PM.

Steve Seddon, Chair

Alex Bowman

John Field