

# Town of Sandisfield

Select Board  
January 3, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, January 3, 2022 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

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

Called to order at 7:00PM

- 1. Call to order: Note that the meeting is being recorded**
- 2. Review and sign minutes of meetings. Points to minutes**
- 3. Review and sign purchase orders**
- 4. Discuss and vote on Senior Tax Work-Off credit value for CY2022**

Kevin Flynn explains that Massachusetts has raised minimum wage to \$14.25/hr on January 1, 2022, and will increase to \$15/hr in 2023. He asks the Select Board to increase the Senior Tax Write-Off rate to \$14.25/hr. Kevin also asks the Select Board to increase the credit limit from \$500 to \$1,000. People utilizing this program must complete their work and submit their hours by October. Types of tasks seniors complete within this program are stuffing envelopes, working in the library, and other clerical work.

George motions to raise the credit value for the Senior Tax Work-Off to \$14.25, and raise the credit limit from \$500 to \$1,000 effective immediately. The Select Board will reassess in 4-5 months to consider increasing the credit limit further. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

## **5. Review draft warrant for Feb. 26 Special Town Meeting**

George reads the drafted warrant aloud, which can be found on the town website attached to the agenda for this meeting.

Article 1 references a portion of West Street northerly from its intersection with Cronk Road that the DPW would like to abandon since it only serves one household. The road currently serves as a private road and does not benefit the town to plow. The homeowner's have reached out to George for discussion. Alex questions whether a public hearing needs to be had before abandoning this road. The Select Board will ask Town Counsel if this is the case.

Article 2 must be approved in order to impose a local sales tax upon the sale or transfer of marijuana or marijuana products by a marijuana retailer operating within the Town.

Article 3 references a portion of town-owned property being used as a resident's driveway. George suggests asking the resident to purchase this portion of the property. He will speak to them before this item is taken any further.

Article 4 amends the bylaws to change the Town Clerk from an elected position to appointed. Massachusetts General Law states this change needs to occur at least 60 days prior to the next election.

Article 5 references changes made within budgets including Treasurer, Town Clerk and Assessors salary. George notes Select Board Assistant salary should also be added to this Article. Alex questions whether money can be transferred from one account to another, or if the money will come from free cash. George suggests discussing this with the Finance Committee. Kevin will speak with the Treasurer and Assessors to finalize the numbers in Article 5.

The warrant must be finalized and posted by February 12, 2022. The Select Board must finalize the draft warrant by January 14, 2022 in order to send it to Town Counsel for approval.

## **6. Discuss and vote on Berkshire County Mutual Aid agreement for CY2022**

George explains this is an agreement the Select Board signs annually. The agreement authorizes Sandisfield's Fire Department to aid another city, town, fire district or area and assist in fire control or other emergency aid.

George motions to accept the Berkshire County Mutual Aid agreement for CY2022. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

While on the topic of emergency assistance, Kevin announces that Sandisfield has received notice from Division of Local Services that the state is inviting local communities to piggyback on their bid for COVID-19 rapid tests directly from the manufacturers. Kevin notes a minimum of 188 tests must be purchased, ARPA funds can be used to make this purchase. The Select Board supports this purchase and requests Kevin to look into this further.

## **7. Discuss and vote on remote work**

Kevin asks the Select Board to consider letting him work a few days a week remotely. Currently, he spends nights at motels in Great Barrington or Lee. However, there was an incident where some personal items were stolen from his unit and this arrangement has become less than ideal. Kevin has been searching for temporary and permanent housing in closer proximity to Sandisfield, but finds that all the homes on the market are selling too quickly or are overpriced.

Kevin has proposed working remotely on Wednesdays and Fridays. George states he supports Kevin working remotely on Friday but expresses concern with the Wednesday remote work, for it may cause problems with his ability to commute depending on the weather. Alex suggests experimenting with Kevin's requested three in-office days, George and Steve agree.

## **8. Town Manager Updates**

Kevin has been preparing the FY23 documents, and everything is complete except for the guidance form. This guidance is something he would like to discuss during the Work Session on Wednesday. He has created a webpage on the town website that will allow people to view the budget documents. This page will go live once the guidance can be included.

Kevin updates the phone and the internet went out at the library. Magna5 was called, but they claim there is no issue with the system on their end.

Kevin will schedule an all boards meeting for Wednesday, January 19.

Sandisfield's temporary Building Commissioner, Don Torricco started today. Don is set up with PermitEyes, but has requested a laptop to conduct his work on. Kevin spoke with John Shannon about a replacement laptop for himself, for his is severely damaged, and a new laptop for Don.

Kevin will be setting up interviews for the Town Manager Administrative Assistant later this week. Steve notes whoever does not receive the Admin position might consider taking on another vacant position within the town. Alex suggests floating employees into various roles within town hall.

## **9. Select Board Updates**

George updates that the Transfer Station stickers have arrived and the backlog is now being worked on. Keith Larson will accept 2021 stickers for two weeks. Stickers can be

purchased at the Transfer Station as well, but it is requested payment be made by check only.

Steve updates that at the last School Committee meeting there was a note from the Business Manager that their payment installments had not been received. He reached out to Gina for clarification, where she discovered payment had been made, but the check was never cashed. Stop payment has been made on the check. Gina suggests conducting future payment through Unipay, for there is little to no expense for inner-municipal transactions.

George states that the School Committee meeting occurring at the same time as the Select Board meetings will prove more of an issue as budgeting gets closer. George suggests considering occasionally excusing the Town Manager from the Select Board meeting to attend School Committee meetings.

#### **10.Future agenda items**

Finalizing the Special Town Meeting warrant.

#### **11. Review mail**

#### **12. Review and sign warrants**

#### **13.Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting**

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

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George Riley

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Alex Bowman

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Steve Seddon