

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board
January 24, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, January 24, 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. Anina Carr – Board of Health

Anina Carr clarifies how she came into possession of some PPE for the town. Anina spoke with BOH Secretary Kim Spring who reported the PPE from Great Barrington had not yet been picked up by the BOH. Anina felt it important to acquire the supplies, so she got permission from the BOH to pick them up herself. Once picking up the supplies, she spoke with George Riley who agreed to let her distribute the supplies at the Transfer Station. Linda Riiska delivered some additional supplies directly to senior citizen's homes. George mentions that any leftover supplies should have been delivered to Town Hall. Anina brought her remaining supplies earlier that day, and Kevin Flynn reports Linda was not left with any additional masks for use at Town Hall.

Anina requests the Select Board hold the BOH more accountable and request that they be more active and proactive within the town. The Select Board takes note of the complaint, and will reach out to the BOH for a resolution.

5. Discuss and vote on additions to Special Town Meeting Warrant

This item will be discussed later in the meeting.

6. Discuss and vote on disposition of 1999 Intl. dump by intermunicipal sale

Brad Curry reports he was approached by New Marlborough's Highway Superintendent for intermunicipal sale of their 1999 Intl. New Marlborough intends to use its parts for some of their other vehicles. Brad did some research on how much to ask for the 1999 intl. and found road-worthy ones go for around \$5,000-\$8,000. However, since this vehicle is not road-worthy, Brad is unsure what a reasonable price might be, and

requests the opinion of the Select Board. Alex Bowman questions whether this vehicle and the rest of the surplus equipment has been listed for sale. Brad informs the board that he has yet to complete posting all vehicles, but conducting this intermunicipal sale would allow the town not to put this vehicle out to bid, and would help a neighboring town. George proposes Brad offer the vehicle for \$4,000, and authorizes Brad to go down to \$3,500 if New Marlborough does not accept that offer.

7. Discuss and vote on offer of new pickup truck

Brad clarifies this would be a new dump truck, not a pickup truck. Kevin notes many of the DPW vehicles are inoperable or waiting for repairs, but the town has money saved in stabilization and capital planning that would be reasonable to use for this type of purchase. Brad reports that a fully outfitted dump truck would cost around \$72,000, while one not fully outfitted, without the sander or plow unit, would cost between \$62-63,000. Kevin notes the time constraints and increasing need for operable vehicles, and suggests adding this purchase to the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Alex notes this situation highlights the importance of having a Capital Planning Committee, equipped with a list of all large equipment/vehicles. He also notes that he does not traditionally support emergency purchases, but understands that this lack of preparation was before he and Steve Seddon were on the board. However, he does not want a similar situation repeated in the future. Brad reports he has already begun composing the list.

Alex agrees to putting one truck on the warrant, and Brad will put a deposit down within a week to place a hold on the vehicle. There are no funds available in the DPW budget, so the purchase could not occur until after the Special Town Meeting. Steve notes the turn around time for the vehicle would be fairly significant, for the STM is not until late February. If the town does not purchase a new vehicle, eventually the current trucks will no longer be usable, and response time for issues in the town for plowing, sanding, etc, would decrease significantly. Smaller areas would also be more difficult to access.

Roger Brown mentions that if they were to add this item to the warrant, they would need to include the request for the expense and how it will be funded. George suggests taking it out of capital stabilization. Roger hesitates to do so, noting the lack of a plan, and recommends finding alternate funding areas, like free cash.

George motions to include an Article in the Special Town Meeting warrant to see if the town will vote to transfer from available funds a sum of money up to \$65,000 or any

other amount. As the warrant is finalized, more information will be included in this Article. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

A meeting with the Finance Committee and the Select Board will be scheduled soon to go over the STM warrant and available funding.

5. (Returned to) Discuss and vote on additions to Special Town Meeting Warrant

In regards to Article 1 about abandoning a portion of West Street, Kevin reports he was contacted by Johanna Miner's attorney who would like to speak with the Select Board. The Select Board nominates Kevin to have a preliminary conversation with the attorney. Brad notes the DPW has not plowed this portion of the road for two to three years. George reports he spoke with Douglas Miner, and it was decided he would attend the STM and make his case.

George would like to wait until the STM warrant has been returned from Town Counsel before approving it.

It is determined that the Town Manager bylaw will be postponed until the Annual Town Meeting. This will give the Select Board time to compare the bylaw to the Town Manager contract, remove any unnecessary language and submit it to Town Counsel for review.

8. Town Manager Updates

Kevin would like to schedule a Capital Planning Committee meeting for next week.

Employees who were working remotely due to COVID have now returned. They are being monitored, but have proven to be healthy. The BOH is still trying to track down more masks and at-home COVID tests.

The Town Manger laptop has stopped working. A new one has been ordered and will be delivered soon. Kevin is now utilizing his personal computer for town business. An additional computer is needed for the Building Commissioner. Kevin suggests giving the Building Commissioner the laptop the Select Board uses to record their meetings, and purchase a less expensive laptop for themselves for this purpose.

Kevin has been putting together the Town Manager and Select Board budgets, as well as any other budgets they are responsible for. He will also be meeting with the Treasurer to go over the budgets she is responsible for this year.

9. Select Board Updates

George has received and reviewed a draft Host Community Agreement for Berkshire Mountain Cannabis from Town Counsel. George did not note any changes to be made to the draft. BMC will need to respond before the Select Board finalizes the HCA.

George reiterates that he would like to create a Salary Survey Committee. He notes that the Select Board had promised the Principal Assessor a salary survey be completed prior to the Annual Town Meeting, and should this survey prove she was receiving insufficient compensation, the Board would recommend the compensation be increased. Steve suggests speaking to a consultant instead, for finding committee members may be difficult. Alex suggests Kevin conduct research for the Principal Assessor position only.

George confirms that town employees do not receive a raise, but only receive a cost of living adjustment annually, with exception to the DPW who receive a raise every five years of employment. This cost of living adjustment has been an increase of 2% annually for the last three years. Traditionally once a COLA for the DPW union contract is negotiated, that increase carries over to the rest of the departments. Employees also receive a performance bonus. George notes that he believes the town should not wait until it's employees are about to leave before they offer a raise, and Steve mentions that he feels it's important to have an open conversation with all employees to make sure they feel appreciated and sufficiently compensated for their time.

10. Future agenda items

Meeting with Finance Committee is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, 2/1 at 7:00pm.
Review of STM warrant

11. Review mail

12. Review and sign warrants

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

Recreation Committee Chair, Lynn Rubenstein announces her committee is the recipient of a \$1,000 grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council which will be used for an event in June.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon