

# Town of Sandisfield

Select Board  
January 31, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, January 31, 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 Veterans tax work off program MGL 59 Section 5N**

Kevin Flynn explains Sandisfield has currently adopted the section of state law that allows for a senior work off program, participants must be 60 or over. However, the town has not adopted a section comparable to it for veterans. This would operate under the same rules as the senior work off, but participants under 60 are allowed to participate. This will need to be adopted at Town Meeting.

Alex Bowman motions to include the Veterans tax work off program MGL 59 Section 5N on the Special Town Meeting warrant. Steve Seddon seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

- 5. Discuss and vote to approve annual business permits/licenses**
  - **Auto Class II License for Ralph Morrison at A&M Auto**
  - **Hawker's & Peddlers License for Victor Hryckvich for Vic's Seafood**

These items are tabled.

- 6. Discuss and vote on final Special Town Meeting draft warrant (warrant posted on website)**

Kevin reads the warrant response from Town Counsel. There are minimal edits made and all Articles are approved, except Article 4 which would change the Town Clerk from elected to an appointed position. Town Counsel reports that Article 4 would need a majority vote at Town Meeting and a majority vote on a ballot question at an Annual Town Election, the latter being held at least 60 days after the Town Meeting vote.

George Riley explains the Special Town Meeting is 60 prior to the Election, therefore avoiding any timing conflicts.

If the town votes not to make the Town Clerk an appointed position, this Article will not go onto the warrant in May and cannot be put on the warrant again for two years. Mary Kronholm explains a resident must run for the position of Town Clerk if the Article is not approved.

The numbers for Article 5 regarding the transfer of funds still need to be included in the warrant. The Treasurer and Accountant are working on getting these figures. The warrant must be finalized by February 7.

Kevin presents more information on new DPW truck options submitted by Brad. There is a gasoline and a diesel version of the truck; a cheaper truck mentioned in a previous meeting is no longer available. The diesel truck would be \$10,000 more than the gasoline. Brad reported to Steve Seddon that the diesel truck would have a higher maintenance cost, but a better fuel economy. Overall, he is unsure that it's necessary to spend the extra money on the diesel truck.

It is clarified that Finance Committee recommendations must be printed on the warrant, and their recommendations must be submitted before warrant finalization on February 7. Roger Brown will schedule a Finance Committee meeting prior to February 7, but will need the final numbers before this meeting.

Kevin spoke with the attorney for the Miner's, who have taken issue with STM Article 1 which regards abandoning a portion of West Street. They would like to delay or come to terms with the town that the Miner's would provide maintenance to the road themselves. Alex provides evidence that this portion of West Street is considered a driveway, rather than a public road. George notes that this section has never been officially declared a road or not. The Miner's will be able to bring their suggestions to the STM.

This item is tabled.

## **7. Town Manager Updates**

The Unrestricted General Government Aid is going up by 2.7%. Preliminary cherry sheets have come out within a thousand dollars. Regional School District numbers have been released; there is additional money for districts with moderate or low income households. Health insurance programs are increasing 8% starting July 1, 2022. Eversource will also be increasing their rates just under 6%.

The town's free cash was certified last week at \$1,231,127. Kevin questions where this money came from; Alex explains this is many years worth of underspent budgets. Everything goes into free cash, with the exception of some money going into stabilization, and recently the Capital Improvement Planning account. George explains the budget process has been changed because in the past budgets were based on the previous year's budget regardless whether it had been spent or not. Roger states the town has raised more money from taxpayers than it has used, he suggests questioning why the town is borrowing from the taxpayers for money that isn't going to be used. Roger also reminds the Board that there is almost another \$100,000 that cannot yet be reconciled.

**8. Select Board Updates**

**9. Future agenda items**

Return to Agenda item 5 and 6

Discuss the possibility of adopting a residential tax exemption

**10. Review mail**

**11. Review and sign warrants**

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:06pm.

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George Riley

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Alex Bowman

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Steve Seddon