

# Town of Sandisfield

Select Board  
February 7, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, February 7, 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 to appoint Janey Beardsley as Assistant to the Select Board and Town Manager**

Kevin Flynn requests Janey Beardsley, current Select Board Assistant since July 2021, be appointed as Assistant to the Select Board and Town Manager for \$21.17/hour, she is scheduled for 32 hours a week, but can work up to 40 hours. Ralph Morrison questions whether this is in the budget, George Riley confirms that due to the surplus in this year's budget it is; in fact, the position could be paid up to \$36/hour without going over the budget in the current fiscal year.

Barbara Cormier notes that the COA also hired Janey for some administrative work and assistance with their budget. This position will be completely separate from the Select Board & Town Manager Assistant position, and she will be paid out of the COA budget.

George motions to hire Janey Beardsley as Assistant to the Select Board and Town Manager for 32 hours a week at \$20.17/hour. Alex 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**  
This item is tabled.
- **Common Victualler's License for William Riiska for Riiska Brook Orchard**  
This item is tabled.

Zoe Nelson from CW Nelson, Looking Glass Gardens and Sunny Rose Farm would like clarification why she no longer needs her \$40 annual business permits provided by the

Select Board. Kevin explains these permits have mistakenly been supplied to businesses that do not require them. Businesses do still require a DBA provided by the Town Clerk to open a bank account in their business' name, these certificates are good for four years.

Ralph Morrison requests an Auto Repair License from the Select Board, Kevin explains that this license only comes from the state. Steve Seddon supposes these types of licenses may have been requested years ago as a way to make sure businesses were paying their taxes. He suggests issuing the Auto Repair License to Ralph without an expiration date. Ralph explains the Department of Public Utility, the State Fire Marshal's Office, and the RMV request this license from him. Kevin explains the document he received after his Special Permit Hearing should be sufficient proof of the zoning of his establishment.

George explains there is no liability on the town by issuing this unnecessary permit, for the permit only states they are not in violation with any of Sandisfield's bylaws. He suggests issuing the permit because Ralph has now been informed that the town is not enforcing anything by issuing the license, nor are they liable in any way.

George motions that for the time being, the Select Board will continue to renew annual business licenses for the businesses in the town that have received licenses in the past. Steve seconds. Alex states he supports issuing licenses only where the Select Board has legal jurisdiction. The motion carries, with 2 votes for and one against.

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

Kevin Reports the Finance Committee unanimously voted to recommend Articles 2, 5, 7, and 8, the other Articles do not have financial implications.

On Article 1, George updates that the Miner's would like to subdivide their property. If the town abandons this portion of West Street, the Miner's will lose their road frontage. The Miner's are against abandoning the road, regardless that it has been treated like a driveway for many years. George notes the Shared Driveway Bylaw, which has yet to be passed, would allow property with no road frontage to have a house on it if they share a driveway.

Town Counsel has advised that a fixed tax rate for retail sale of cannabis be established in Article 2. A rate of 1-3% is suggested. George notes that the draft HCA for Berkshire Mountain Cannabis is 3%, and suggests that rate.

Article 3 discusses the sale of a small piece of property on Sandisfield Rd adjacent to the monument at the top of the hill. Currently, there is a driveway that cuts across the town owned piece of property; this Article would allow the driveway owners to purchase the portion of the property that the driveway is on.

Article 4 changes the Town Clerk position from elected to appointed.

George explains Article 5 would allow the town to take a portion of the \$199,714 that was refunded from FRRSD and put it into the following accounts:

- Treasurer /Collector Salary Account \$ 4,565.34
- Treasurer/Collector Expense Account \$ 4,000.00
- Assessors Salary Account \$ 3,668.52
- Assessors Triennial Recertification Account \$ 2,286.00

George explains that part of the increase in the Treasurer/ Collector salary noted in the previous Article is based on Article 6, which would deny any type of revenue to accrue to the benefit of any individual, and instead be paid into the treasury of the town.

Previously, the Treasurer/ Collector was authorized to keep the interest and penalties for past due tax bills. The Select Board decided to discontinue this practice and include this money into the Treasurer's salary instead.

Article 7 references the transfer of funds to support the tuition of a student at FRRSD attending vocational school. Transportation funds are not yet determined, so \$10,000 has been included in the total \$28,679.00 as a placeholder.

George reports that over the last five years, the town has spent over \$20,000 in repairs for the Ford 350 truck. Article 8's transfer of funds would pay for a new Ford 550 truck, and George notes that normally capital requests are reserved for the Annual Town Meeting, but there is a long wait time from when a vehicle is purchased to when it's received, and it is in the town's best interest to handle this as soon as possible.

Sandisfield already has a senior tax work off program, Article 9 would establish the equivalent for Veterans.

Article 10, which makes Saturday a legal holiday for the Town Clerk's Office gives the Town Clerk an extra day to make deadlines. Town Meetings and other similar events would still be authorized to operate on Saturdays.

George motions to accept the Special Town Meeting warrant and votes yes on all ten Articles. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

## **7. Town Manager Updates**

Kevin aims to post the Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Open Space Plan, and other similar documents/ reports on the town website.

## **8. Select Board Updates**

George updates he will not be at next week's meeting, 2/14.

The Berkshire Mountain Cannabis HCA has been approved by the company, and it is requested this document be posted on the website.

Don Torrico, Sandisfield's interim Building Commissioner cannot continue after the end of February, he would like to confirm the board is making progress in finding a replacement. Don believes it is important he have sufficient time to discuss SAMA with the new Commissioner before handing it off. Kevin reports there are two applicants.

Steve updates he has been preparing for the DPW union contract negotiations by researching different pay rates for different experience levels. This will incentivise DPW employees to acquire different licenses and make benchmarks. Currently, all DPW employees are paid the same regardless of licenses or experience. A work session to discuss these priorities will be scheduled Monday, February 28 at 6:00pm, and another meeting with the Union Representative will be scheduled shortly thereafter.

## **9. Future agenda items**

Steve would like to survey the Select Board to see how they feel about the amendment request he put forward on behalf of the School Options Exploration Committee. The vote will be put on the School Committee's agenda in March. A petition is recommended in the event the vote does not pass, this will require 50 Sandisfield member signatures. The petition will allow the amendment to be revisited.

Berkshire Mountain Cannabis HCA

## **10. Review mail**

## **11. Review and sign warrants**

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

George reads a resignation letter and motions to accept Christine O'Brien's resignation from the Recreation Committee. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Barbara Cormier requests the Select Board write a letter to the Select Board in the Town of Otis questioning how they feel about Sandisfield withdrawing from the school district. George expresses concern that this might be perceived as undermining the School Committee. It is suggested the School Options Explorations Committee send the letter.

Ralph references that the agreement with Tolland to pay a share of the cost for ambulance service has been on hold for some time, and needs to be revisited.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm.

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George Riley

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Alex Bowman

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Steve Seddon