

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board
March 14, 2022

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon

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**

George Riley summarizes that the Board took a vote at the last meeting to award the Webmaster a stipend of \$1,250 a quarter, but did not specify when this would begin. George motions to award the Webmaster a stipend of \$1,250 a quarter retroactive to January 1, 2022. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

- 3. Review and sign purchase orders**

- 4. Vote to appoint Douglas Miner as Town Clerk effective March 28, 2022**

George summarizes that Interim Town Clerk, Mary Kronholm has submitted her resignation effective March 25, 2022. Douglas Miner will be appointed as Town Clerk and serve in this position until the end of the Town Clerk's unexpired term, which is May 16. Douglas will then run for Town Clerk in the Annual Town Election. Once appointed Douglas will then appoint Mary Kronholm as Assistant Town Clerk.

It's noted that a vote to change the Town Clerk position from elected to appointed was approved at the Special Town Meeting. George reports that while it was approved at the STM, it will also need to be approved on a townwide ballot, which will occur May 16. However, in the case that this ballot item is defeated, someone would still need to run for the position.

This item is tabled until next Monday, after Mary has officially appointed Douglas as Assistant Town Clerk.

- 5. Discuss and vote to appoint Paul Greene as Building Commissioner**

Steve summarizes Paul Greene is an experienced Building Commissioner in Sheffield and Washington, and has already been briefed by Don Torrico and Matt Kolmer on the projects he will be taking on once appointed to the position.

Paul has requested a stipend of \$1,100/month. However, he will track his time and should he be putting more time into Sandisfield than anticipated, he will request an increase.

George motions to appoint Paul Greene as Building Commissioner at a stipend of \$1,100/month, this amount includes \$100/month for mileage effective immediately. Additional 100 per month can be paid from the expense account. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

6. Discuss and vote to approve annual business permits/licenses

- **Auto Class II license for New Boston Crane Service and Sleds**

George motions to grant an Auto Class II license to New Boston Crane Service and Sleds. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously. Select Board signs license.

7. Update on COVID policies in Town buildings

George notes they have been following state guidelines, and suggests Town buildings follow the Massachusetts policy, which states masks are optional.

8. Discuss and vote on BMC legal representation

George explains that Sandisfield's Town Counsel has been Jonathan Silverstein with KP Law, who is now leaving the firm. Jonathan had been handling Sandisfield's cannabis facilities, including the current project of Berkshire Mountain Cannabis. KP Law has requested a statement from the Board as to whether they would like to keep Jonathan on as the representative for BMC or transfer this portfolio over to another member at the firm. Considering Jonathan is the most knowledgeable about BMC, George suggests continuing work with Jonathan, and once things have settled with BMC, they will conduct all future projects with a new representative at KP Law, Brian Maser.

George motions to keep Jonathan Silverstein on as representative for Berkshire Mountain Cannabis, but will continue with KP Law for all other matters. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

9. Discuss and vote to accept Town Manager Resignation

George motions to accept Kevin Flynn's resignation as Town Manager effective Thursday, March 11, 2022. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

10. Discuss Coronavirus funding and difference between CARES and ARPA

CARES funding has closed, but towns can still utilize ARPA funds. The guidelines for what can be funded under ARPA are strict, but all questions can be referred to the Department of Revenue.

George notes that while Sandisfield had the opportunity to receive around \$80,000 in CARES funding, the town was only able to utilize around \$30,000 since large infrastructure for social distancing and other similar items were unnecessary. An ARPA Committee to recommend items to be funded has been approved, and anticipated to begin work soon.

11. Town Manager Updates

George clarifies that no severance will be given to Kevin Flynn for his time as Town Manager because he is in breach of contract, for he was required to give 90 days notice before resignation. Due to the abrupt vacancy, the Select Board has decided that George should once again step in as Interim Town Manager.

George responds to a question of past Town Manager severances, stating that during his time on the Select Board, there have been three Town Managers, none of which have received any severance pay. Georges goes on to explain that Joanne Grybosh was given partial compensation for pain and suffering, for she was treated poorly and the Town was advised to compensate her.

Steve notes he would be in favor of having both George and Laura Lee Bertram operate as Interim Town Manager, especially since George will be on vacation from March 30 to April 20. Laura has expressed willingness to assist with the budget on a part-time basis immediately. Steve also reports another candidate, Jonathan Sylbert has expressed interest in assisting. George explains the budget process is typically conducted over two months, but must now be completed in three weeks, which makes accepting as much help as possible crucial. There are also numerous day-to-day Town Manager tasks to be addressed. The Select Board will meet with Jonathan by the end of this week.

Alex motions to appoint George Riley as Interim Town Manager until March 30 at the previously agreed upon rate of \$45.97/hour. Steve seconds. George abstains.

Steve motions to hire Laura Lee Bertram as a consultant to assist with budget assembly for 16 hours per week, Mon & Wed 4:30-8:30pm and Fri 9-5pm effective immediately at a rate of \$50/hour. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

12. Select Board Updates

Steve reports Joanne Grybosh has been compiling the DPW budget, and it is almost complete. Once this is finished, she will begin work on closing out grants. Joanne will also be confirming the purchase process for the new dump-truck, for the Town Manager was serving as the Chief Procurement Officer, and it is unclear whether this was handled properly.

Solar panels will be installed at the Town Hall mid March. Larry Dwyer intends to hang plastic on the ceilings to prevent dust and debris from covering Town Hall employee workspaces.

New DPW laborer Thomas Pestritto has been terminated due to failure to report to work.

The Select Board would still like to put together a salary survey to compare what their town employees make to other similar towns. It is undecided whether this will be done by a committee or a consultant. Mary Turek requests this include committee members, not just employees who work in the Town Hall building.

13. Future agenda items

Appoint a Chief Procurement Officer
Jeff Bye in for Broadband report
Appoint Douglas Miner as Town Clerk

The DPW Union negotiation Executive Session has been rescheduled for Tuesday, March 22 at 5:00pm.

14. Review mail

15. Review and sign warrants

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

Alex motions to appoint Barbara Cormier to the Registrar of Voters. Steve seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Town mail deliverer Lisa Leavensworth reports she was unable to finish her mail route on Saturday due to poor road conditions. She was stranded for over half an hour waiting for a plow/salt truck to make the roads passable, and as a result one third of the mail did not get delivered. Steve suggests Lisa work with DPW Superintendent, Brad Curry to establish a route to help prevent this in the future. Brad is scheduled to attend the meeting on Monday, March 28 and the first Monday of every month thereafter, so all future discussions about road conditions or similar topics should wait until these meetings.

Public Hearing to address the installation of a jointly owned pole and the relocation of a pole located on Sandisfield Road. The pole is being moved in order to fix a culvert. No abutters attended the meeting to raise objections. George motions to approve the pole application from Verizon. Alex seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Jeff Bye reports that Spectrum would like to install high-speed internet at Town Hall as a testing site for residents to sample the service on Thursday. The Board agrees to allow this installation.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon