

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Monday, October 17, 2022 at 6:30PM at the Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: Steve Seddon, Alex Bowman, John Field, Jonathan Sylbert

Called to order at 6:30PM

1. Call to order: Note that the meeting is being recorded

2. Tax Classification Hearing

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to open the Tax Classification Hearing with the Board of Assessors.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye
John Field	Aye

Board of Assessors, Chair Bethany Perry reports that the board makes the following recommendations:

1. Residential factor remains 1 - (Should the Select Board approve the Residential factor of 1, each class would maintain 100% of its full-value tax share.)
2. No residential exemptions adopted
3. No senior means tested exemptions adopted
4. No combined impact of senior means exemptions adopted
5. No small commercial exemption adopted

The tax rate for 2023 will be \$10.59. In 2022 it is \$12.90, and 2021 was \$13.35. Bethany notes that while the tax rate has decreased, tax bills will not decrease. Residential, commercial, industrial, and personal property values have all increased. Bethany believes the significant increase in residential values stems from property buyers paying over asking-price.

The LA-5 excess capacity for the fiscal year is calculated at \$401,284.57. The LA-5 excess capacity for the prior fiscal year is calculated as \$142,326.34.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adopt the residential factor of 1.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye.
John Field	Aye

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to close the Tax Classification Hearing with the Board of Assessors.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Alex Bowman	Aye
John Field	Aye

3. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) 2022 Forest Management proposals

Tom Ryan, Management Forester with DCR is in to discuss the 2022 Forest Management proposals. Tom briefly reviews the project proposal, titled Hyde Carlson Lot, which can be viewed [here](#). After DCR conducts a stand analysis and everything is ready to begin the sale, they will have a public walk-through of the property where residents can ask questions. Once the sale is finalized, wood can be harvested and Sandisfield will receive 2% of the sale of wood.

Alex expresses concern with clear-cutting the properties. Tom assures that he will reach out to all neighbors to explain the project and answer questions. The duration of the project will depend on the volume of the logging, but has been estimated at three years. There is potential to donate some of the wood to Sandisfield residents for use during the winter.

4. Michael Morrison in for Police Department Updates

Police Chief, Michael Morrison reviews the training officers have been involved with recently. He also notes their new Public Safety Officer has been able to effectively respond to medical calls while on duty. There are plans to develop a website for Police and Fire, so they can effectively alert Sandisfield residents of any road closures, accidents, traffic delays, etc. There are similar modules available for purchase on the Sandisfield website which may be another option.

5. Paul Greene in for Building Department Updates

Building Commissioner, Paul Greene reports the best way to reach him is via text at 413-446-0964. Please include name and Town in any text messages, as Paul works for multiple towns.

Driveway permits are briefly discussed. Paul reports these permits are not within his jurisdiction. Instead, the Highway Superintendent should be monitoring these permits. It's noted Sandisfield is in need of better enforcement. Paul notes that upon being hired, he asked not to be the enforcement officer, but has already served a few violation letters in town. Paul is requested to look out for temporary structures that are not within the proper setbacks.

6. Special Town Meeting Review

The Special Town Meeting will be held November 17, 2022 at 7:00pm located at Fire Station #2.

- **Board of Health Salaries**

Due to the unexpected vacancy within the Board of Health, it is estimated to cost between \$11,000-12,000 to cover the cost of the interim Sanitarian. During the FY22 Annual Town Meeting, the sum of \$9,500 was appropriated for the purpose of engaging an executive recruitment firm to assist, advise, and support the Town Manager Search Committee. However, since Jonathan Sylbert has been offered the Town Manager position, it is unnecessary to spend these funds this way. Instead the town will be asked to transfer the \$9,500 to Board of Health expenses to cover the cost of the Sanitarian.

7. Town Manager Updates

A number of grants have been applied for, including two best practice grants for Public Safety and the Town Charter, an IT grant for security updates, the ADA grant and a MIIA grant for the GPS units in town vehicles.

Jonathan briefly reviews the bridge projects in town.

8. Select Board Updates

Alex updates that in order to contest the rumble strip installation on Route 57's "dump hill," he was recommended to write a letter to Pedestrian & Cyclist Board within MassDOT. In order to avoid hitting the rumble strips, drivers do not move far enough away from cyclists, which could potentially cause an accident. Alex will write the letter and the entire Select Board will sign.

9. Future Agenda Items

- Notice of Proposed Land Acquisition
- Town Clerk Document Storage Update
- Surplusing Fire Truck
- Street Lighting Discontinuation

10. Review and sign minutes of meetings, purchase orders, warrants, and mail

11. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:32pm

Steve Seddon

Alex Bowman

John Field