

# Town of Sandisfield

Select Board  
October 19, 2021

Minutes for Select Board meeting held on Tuesday, October 19, 2021 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon, Roger Brown

Called to order at 7:00PM

## **1. Discuss and vote to hire a Town Treasurer/ Tax Collector.**

George explained they have three applicants, the first being Sandisfield's Town Accountant, Margaret McClellan. Additionally, Margaret works for the Town of Tolland 36 hours a week as their Treasurer/Collector. Should she take on the additional position in Sandisfield, Margaret would work one to two days in Sandisfield, and the remaining in Tolland. However, George and Roger don't believe this is a position that can be done in two days.

Margaret responded over Zoom, stating that was an inaccurate rendition of what she said. She went on to explain she would be willing to give Sandisfield two full days, and complete any other tasks remotely or by appointment. She also offered to continue her work as the Accountant, paying the bills and closing the books, until that position was filled. George stated he still didn't think that was enough time and was not comfortable switching Margaret's position. Margaret requested they hire someone with Point and Softright experience because their interim Treasurer had trouble operating it, which caused problems and delays.

The second candidate, part-time Treasurer in New Marlborough, MA, Jessica Horan was interviewed earlier that week. She has already begun the three-year Treasurer/ Tax Collector training in Amherst, MA. George explained if Jessica could be properly trained by someone in Town Hall, she would be a viable candidate. However, since Sandisfield is not in that position, she proves too inexperienced.

The third candidate is Gina Campbell, the Treasurer in Washington, MA and Tax Collector in New Marlborough. She is certified as a Massachusetts Municipal Collector and very close to getting her certification as a Massachusetts Municipal Treasurer. Gina is familiar with both Point and Softright. Considering Sandisfield does not have someone to train an incoming Treasurer/ Tax Collector, Gina seems very capable to jump right in. George already sent her a letter offering her the position subject to full Select Board approval, which he shared with the other Select Board members.

George explained Gina requested a salary of \$52,000 a year. However, Sandisfield currently only has slightly over \$41,000 budgeted for this position. George suggested they change the unwritten policy which gives the Tax Collector any penalties recovered from late tax bills and add this money, which accumulates around \$7,000 annually, to the Treasurer/ Collector salary, as is currently practiced in New Marlborough. This would allow Sandisfield to increase the Treasurer/ Collector salary to \$48,000 annually, which

is still \$4,000 below her request. However, George explained should Gina accept the position and perform satisfactorily, they could request an increase in the Treasurer/ Collector budget in the next fiscal year at Town Meeting.

Town Counsel must be consulted as to whether they can dissolve the tax collecting policy and move those funds into the Treasurer/ Collector salary at any time or if this item will need to be taken to a Town Meeting.

Alex is hesitant to hire someone without having met them in person. George understands his hesitation, but also believed based on the resumes they received and time and skills each candidate can provide for the town, the Select Board could make a decision without having met all the candidates. Just as well, there are time constraints they need to take into consideration, for the Treasurer/ Collector position is officially vacant.

Alex expressed concern that he was not provided with sufficient information regarding the Treasurer/ Collector candidates until the time of the meeting, and stated he would have liked to have been involved in the interviewing process. George stated again they are under time constraints, but Alex reiterates that he believes there was still plenty of time to invite him and Steve to the interviews so they would have a better understanding of who they are hiring into a full-time position.

To remedy the situation, George suggested Alex and Steve meet with Gina at some point in the week. Steve agreed with Alex that all the Select Board members should have been involved with the interviewing process and the decision. However, he does recognize that Gina is the most qualified candidate.

George motions the Select Board hire Gina Campbell as Treasurer/ Tax Collector for the Town of Sandisfield. Steve seconds. Alex abstains.

## **2. Vote to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining**

George motions to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

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George Riley

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Alex Bowman

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Steve Seddon