

SUNDERLAND SELECTBOARD MINUTES

September 19, 2022

Attending: T. Fydenkevez, C. Drake-Tremblay, N. Waring, Geoff Kravitz

Others: Fire Chief Benjamin, C. Larabee-Recorder

Meeting: Hybrid: in person with portions recorded by FCAT

Meeting called to order at 6:30PM

MINUTES: Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to approve MINUTES of 09/06/2022, Mr. Waring second, vote 3-0.

BUSINESS

- **FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE:** Fire Chief announced that October 9-15, 2022, is Fire Prevention Week and the theme is "Plan your escape, fire won't wait." They have several opportunities and mechanisms for kids to learn about fire safety as well as hands-on experiences. This year recognizes the 100th anniversary of Fire of Prevention Week which was started after great fire in Chicago in 1971. Media coverage and efforts were implemented in 1922 by NFPA (National Fire Prevention Association) to bring attention to fire safety. This year's theme focuses on planning your escape with your family and having a plan in place to get out safely and gathering place, etc. these exercises help family members, especially children to know what they need to do to stay safe. Recent calls have included several kitchen fires in recent months. Dryer climate has warranted extra caution with outdoor cook fires as well. Recently the department received a tone for an injured mountain biker near the Robert Frost Trail off of Bull Hill Rd. A companion was able to direct staff to the injured party. The department responded with SCEMS. Lifestar helicopter Baystate responded due to the expected injuries. Whately Police Officer on duty directed Lifestar personnel to the scene to assist with extraction and emergency evaluation. It was a successful response and are hopeful for the outcome of the patient. Mr. Fydenkevez noted recent conversations regarding a transfer station behind the PSC, which is a designated helicopter landing zone. Questions were raised recently asking when the last time a helicopter landed in town which was just realized of the importance of landing locations. Landing zones have changed; one is now a solar field, another area depends if the hay is cut, and Bull Hill is agricultural land and if it has been harvested which causes stubble particularly from corn stalks which create a dangerous debris problem and helicopters will not land on those areas. The pilots rely on public safety to identify a safe landing area with goal to not delay reaching the victims in a timely manner. The Chief also noted it is important for staff to train, get the equipment out, etc., to be comfortable with all the vehicles. North Franklin County has started a training program for neighboring firefighters which allows for more opportunities than waiting for openings in other farther locations. Mr. Waring noted that his kids enjoyed visiting the training trailer when it was last available. The Chief noted the next event, hopefully to include Smokey the Bear is October 15th, 10-2pm and advertisements will be made available to the community.
- **One day Liquor Licenses for Mike's Maze Beer Maze to be held** each Friday night from 6PM-9PM, 9/30/22, 10/7/22, 10/14/22, 10/21/22, 10/28/22. David Wissemann explained the Brew Maze has now become an annual event where they offer different breweries each week in a separate corn maze developed just for this event. Tickets are available online now. Number of guests is limited to 300 guests per event. Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to approve Five (5) one-day Liquor Licenses for Mike's Maze Beer Maze beginning 9/30/22 for five (5) consecutive Fridays ending 10/28/22 with rain dates on the following Saturday. conditional upon receipt of additional paperwork. Mr. Waring second, vote 3-0.
- **INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.** A retiree is still needed for the committee, but all the other seats are filled and feel the committee can begin direction for budgeting. Recommend the following appointments: Donna Carmody-Union38, Leah Cohen-Non-union school employees, Officer Ben Peters-Police Officers Assoc. Local 398, Kathryn Umstot-Library, George Emery-Highway Dept., Heather Davis, and Cindy Bennett-other town employees. Mr. Kravitz noted two (2) Dept. heads are on the list and was trying to avoid that but other employees were not interested in serving and agree to those presented to represent. Eligible: employees of the town, i.e., each group of the town was to nominate an eligible employee and then a retiree. Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to appoint

individuals as presented to the Insurance Advisory Committee, Mr. Waring second, vote 3-0. Mr. Fydenkevez advised to get a meeting as soon as possible and try to move forward. Mr. Waring asked what consequence would be if retirees were not represented. Mr. Kravitz noted that after talking to town counsel and other towns the town has made due diligence in having representation in every seat but every effort will continue to fill the vacancy. Ms. Drake-Tremblay asked if guidelines would be given to the committee regarding the affordability level for the town, etc. Mr. Kravitz noted that historical data can be provided, past budgets, future budgeting projects, etc. This is an advisory committee and the Selectboard still has the final decision of what moves forward for budgeting. Mr. Kravitz will be attending the meetings as well. Goal for the selectboard is what the expectation would be in a plan, affordability, differences of the plans etc. then committee will make recommendation to the board. Mr. Kravitz would like to bring in the MIIA rep and others to discuss costs options vs. services and their impact on the overall plans.

- Review of MOSQUITO CONTROL BOOKLET prepared by Mr. Kravitz was distributed to the board for review. It was a mild year for mosquitos compared to prior years. Different distribution options were discussed to maximize community outreach. Mr. Kravitz prepared the booklet with review of the state recommendations and other communities. The informational booklet is required because the town received permission to opt-out of spraying. It will be distributed in various places in town buildings and on the website.
- Mr. Kravitz noted it was recommended that the town hire a consultant to assist the finance team to close FY22 books. It is expected that this will allow us to get back to the October filing schedule with everything reconciled. Mr. Kravitz is requesting ARPA funds not to exceed \$2,000 for the consultant. Ms. Drake-Tremblay asked if this was a one-time need and the town will not need the consultant every year to finalize the books. Mr. Kravitz expressed this would be a one-time expense and along with the state management review of the financial office. Mr. Kravitz expects this will put the town back on track. The management review is expected to be in late winter/early spring and will be a good evaluation of how to maintain the financial office functions as expected or review what changes are needed. Mr. Fydenkevez acknowledged the difficulty of preparing a budget and fund stabilization, etc. if free cash balances are not available. Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to appropriate \$2,000 of ARPA funds for financial consulting services, Mr. Waring second, vote 3-0.
- DLS will release the second round of funds and expects the rest of the balance by the end of the month.

OLD BUSINESS

- SELECTBOARD UPDATES: Ms. Drake-Tremblay and Mr. Waring have no reports. Mr. Fydenkevez confirmed that the senior center is moving in today to a property in Sunderland.
- TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:
 - Police Department applied for and received a \$13,000 road safety grant.
 - Thank you to our legislators, in the final state budget, Chapter 70 was increased due to funding school choice at \$60 per student. Frontier lowered our assessment by \$3,500. Mr. Fydenkevez thanked Darius and his team for their fiscal management. Playground looks like it almost finished, structures are in and the surface needs to be finished.
- Community reminder - **deadline to pay taxes is Monday, October 3rd**.
- No meeting scheduled for next week unless an emergency meeting is required.
- Next Selectboard meeting scheduled for October 3, 2022 at 7:23PM

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to adjourn, Mr. Waring 2nd, Vote 3-0 at 7:23PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoff Kravitz,
Town Administrator