

SUNDERLAND SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Place: Sunderland Town Offices, 12 School Street

August 21, 2023

Attending: N. Waring, C. Drake-Tremblay-Remote, D. Murphy, G. Kravitz

Others: J. Ewen, C. Bennett, C. Larabee-Reporter

Meeting Hybrid and In-person with portions recorded by FCAT

Meeting called to order at 6:30PM

MINUTES

Mr. Murphy motion to accept MINUTES of 08/07 /2023, Ms. Drake-Tremblay second, vote 3-0.

BUSINESS

- **RECREATION DEPARTMENT:** Recreation Coordinator Jim Ewen gave an overview of the program and the considerations for future program and facility needs. Mr. Ewen started in 2001 as an 18hr biweekly position which has fluctuated over the years due to budget changes, etc., with hours restored this fiscal year. There are no COVID restrictions at this time since the state has lifted mandates. Full program offerings will resume this year and hope to introduce new opportunities such as a Walking Club. Noted future changes to Sunderland Youth Baseball League (SYBBL) which is not run by the town's Rec Program. SYBBL is discussing its future and whether the town can take over the league in the next few years. This program is labor intensive and town would need to plan for that which would require additional personnel and funding. Besides the kayak kiosk, soccer fields & nets and new shed and bathrooms, everything else is owned by SYBBL including the field fencing, dugouts, field's underground water system, baseball shed; they have also maintained the baseball field to include weed growth treatment, mowing and underground water system. \$12,000 in capital funds had been appropriated for field maintenance before Riverside Park. Town provides \$6,000/yr. in the general budget for field maintenance but would need to increase quite a bit for baseball maintenance. Needs \$8,000-\$9,000 to address weeds on soccer fields and overall work on all of the fields. The best time to do this work would be fall into spring so fields would be unavailable for about a year of programs. Currently Frontier uses the fields 5x/week for middle school and JV soccer practices and games as well as use of SES fields in addition to town soccer programs. Town currently pays for mowing, and any additional mows as needed prior to games or conditions are paid by Rec outside the town's contract. Softball field at SES also needs yearly maintenance. Mr. Ewen understands the Selectboard now manages the Park. He also noted issues with picnic tables being moved frequently by guests and presents issues with game prep and use, he requested the picnic tables be anchored to remain stationary in a designated area. Town Administrator to reach out to the Superintendent regarding what Frontier pays for field use in other towns and determine appropriate fees for Sunderland field use including the Elementary School. Sunderland Elementary field usage is reserved through the school principal not Rec. Frontier pays for spray paint for line striping for games, etc. SYBBL manages their own accounts as a private league but does pay for all the maintenance of the baseball field and other previously noted items. It is not known if liability insurance certificates are collected for field usage by organizations or leagues behind town offices or at the Elementary School. Consider developing policy for field use for all organizations and request reservations. Mr. Murphy motion to pursue field maintenance costs with Frontier for current usage and explore a general policy for use of the park, Ms. Drake-Tremblay second, vote 3-0.
- **WIRING FEES** – tabled.
- **VILLAGE CENTER COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:** Request to appoint ROCK WARNER as a BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE and BENNETH PHELPS as an AT-LARGE MEMBER. Mr. Murphy motion to approve Village Center Committee Appointments as presented, Ms. Drake-Tremblay second, vote 3-0.
- **FINANCE UPDATE:** Mr. Kravitz noted an initial meeting with Accountants and Auditors was arranged earlier than usual because of the Finance changes recently. Audits are conducted annually but was delayed for FY22 because the books were behind. As happened previously, Capital Stabilization budget was not put

into Recap and has not been discovered elsewhere at this time. Finance group the town worked with previously no longer employs those that worked on our financials. It was decided the town will not pursue an audit for FY22 since FY23 books are closed already.

- FUEL BIDS: Mr. Kravitz noted at last meeting he misspoke about the bid selection and noted the Highway Superintendent requested the Board accept both Diesel and Gasoline Fuel Bids from DK Burke which is the same vendor discussed previously but for their FIXED PRICE BID. Mr. Murphy motion to accept Fixed FY24 Fuel Bids for Diesel and Gasoline from DK Burke, Ms. Drake-Tremblay second, vote 3-0.

SELECTBOARD UPDATES

- REP. NATALIE BLAIS CONTACTED LOCAL TOWNS IF HOUSING ASSISTANCE COULD BE OFFERED TO RELOCATE DISPLACED REFUGEES, Sunderland being one of them. There are emotional and fiscal components to consider; costs if a family with children are placed mid-year and towns would have to assume busing to previous schooling location in the state as well as housing options available. The town does not have housing capacity that could be readily available for families nor the financial means to address educational needs in addition to transportation, language assistance and the capacity of our school programs, building and staff. The state is proposing \$1,000 per student plus \$100/day per student but will not assist with transportation costs. Recent quote we received for the new school year for busing students out-of-district is \$150-\$175/day. Private homes may offer housing but student costs would still impact the town. Renovations to possible structures in town would not be attainable in the immediate future unless apartment complexes have housing available to offer at little to no cost for short-term housing possibly.
- WASTEWATER MONITORING FOR COVID REPORTS show COVID levels are elevated and wanted to inform the community to be aware that cases are still active.
- Mr. Murphy had no reports.
- Ms. Drake-Tremblay had no reports.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

- RIVERSIDE PARK RESTROOMS VARIANCE was approved by the Board of State Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters last week. Approval letter was just received and forwarded to the Plumbing Inspector for a final inspection. Restrooms may not be available for Wednesday Senior Center Cruise Night if not inspected in time.
- TOWN MOWING CONTRACTOR meet with Town Administrator last week and noted that contracted mows would be running out soon which is earlier than expected due to the weather. Four (4) additional mows are needed at the Town Offices and School. Mr. Kravitz requests approval for use of ARPA funds to pay up to \$2,000 for additional mows through the end of the season. Ms. Drake-Tremblay asked if this included the cemetery, which it did not. Board recommended accepting what was presented by Mr. Ahearn, our mowing contractor and Riverside Cemetery mowing can be addressed additionally by Trustees, if needed. Mr. Murphy motion to approve use of ARPA funds for up to \$2,000 to supplement this year's mowing contract, Ms. Drake-Tremblay second, vote 3-0.

Next Selectboard meeting is scheduled for August 28, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT: motion to adjourn, second, vote 3-0 at 7:36PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoff Kravitz,
Town Administrator