

SUNDERLAND SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Place: Sunderland Town Offices, 12 School Street

February 12, 2024

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

Others: C. Bennett, Finance Comm: S. Smiarowski (remote), V. Vorheis, L. Forget (remote), J. Elias (remote);

J. Sparks-SoCEMS; Jess. Corwin; Russ Kaubris, Elizabeth Bouchard-FCTS

Meeting Hybrid and In-person with portions recorded by FCAT

Meeting called to order at 6:01PM

MINUTES

Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to accept 02.05.2024 MINUTES, Mr. Murphy second, vote 3-0.

BUSINESS

- Introduction of new SoCEMS DIRECTOR, JOSHUA SPARKS. Mr. Sparks has been on over a week and expects to be assessing the program for some time. He is pleased with SoCEMS organization and notes a very dedicated staff. The service has been offering 1,400-1,500 calls per year. He welcomes folks reaching out for information or questions.
 - FRANKLIN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOL BUDGET PRESENTATION: Russ Kaubris, Business Manager and Elizabeth Bouchard presenting. Superintendent Martin is in another community this evening for budget presentation. Screen share of FCTS was made available online for presentation. An overview of their programs and updates on new offerings were discussed. Budget details included funding sources and uses of funding. Grants are not included in the general budget for consistency and sustainability in budgeting. They are proposing a 3% increase in town assessments. The prior capital assessment of ongoing projects for windows, doors, spray booth and other upgrades. Student enrollment has increased. Chapter 70 is less than previous years and hopes additional funds will be received when state budget is finalized. Facility expansion is in the future which requires a feasibility study with a cost of \$1.5 million. They will plan apply for MSBA funds when they are ready to move forward. Board and School Committee members offered support for FCTS school programs and success with their students.
 - OPERATING BUDGET FIRST DRAFT: Information presented by Mr. Kravitz. The first draft does not include numbers from SoCEMS, SES, FRS, and Non-union employee COLAS. No new growth and local receipts also have not been added yet. Health insurance rates have increased 8%; change in deductible could drop rates by 5.5%. Last year, Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC) requested a 2.5% increase of town coverage for this year. Discussed exploring changes in deductibles and impacts on rates for different plans. Changes must be presented to provider within next month.
 - PRIMARY ELECTION WARRANT: Per Town Clerk, Massachusetts Presidential Primary is March 5, 2024. Ms. Drake Tremblay motion to accept Primary Election Warrant, Mr. Murphy second, vote 3-0.
 - OTHER VOTING DATES FOR 2024: Presented by Town Clerk:
 - Town Caucus is March 4, 2024.
 - Annual Town Election: May 4, 2024
 - Register to Vote or change party deadline: Feb. 24, 2024, 5PM.
 - Vote by mail application deadline: Feb. 27, 2024.
- EARLY VOTING HOURS to take place in the Town Clerk's Office, 12 School St:
- Saturday, Feb 24: 9:00am - 5:00pm
 - Monday, Feb 26: 9:00am - 5:30pm
 - Tuesday, Feb 27: 9:00am - 3:30pm
 - Wednesday, Feb 28: 9:00am - 3:30pm
 - Thursday, Feb 29: 9:00am - Noon
 - Friday, Mar 1: 9:00am - 12:00pm
 - All information is on the town's website - VOTING INFORMATION.

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OLD BUSINESS

- ARPA REQUEST- SES LIGHTING REPAIRS: While installing new oil tank at SES, wiring for parking lot lights were severed/damaged. Wiring diagram was not on the plan for the install. Currently assessing who will bear the cost of the repair. Highway has already been providing construction support for the installation which reduces construction costs to town. Discussion with contractor for repairs is ongoing and plans need to be documented appropriately. Costs will be presented at a future meeting.

SELECTBOARD UPDATES

- Mr. Murphy reported that CPA application for sidewalk expansion is not an eligible project. This is being explored further to see if the project can fit within the requirements in another way. BoO for SCSC added 23 Plumtree to feasibility study.
- Ms. Drake-Tremblay met with SoCEMS.
- Mr. Waring discussed Capital Planning projects. \$600,000 in projects was requested this year. Requests were prioritized. Highway has requested a new loader. Reviewed with Highway Superintendent and request will be re-prioritized in the future since we are paying for a new truck and backhoe for the next 4 years. This is not an urgent request and was put on wish list. Police Union Negotiations are ongoing. Highway prioritization is more vehicle storage. Current projects total approximately \$380,000. Due to override last year, funds are available to fund more projects and have funds available for next year.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

- SES received rebate for Library mini splits installed last year. Mr. Kravitz working with accountants for appropriate account assignment.
- Complete Streets grant was not awarded to Town; will be reviewing application with state to see what changes can be made for future consideration.
- Town Office Building will be closed tomorrow due to the expected winter storm and schools being closed.
- Town Offices closed Mon. Feb. 19 due to President's Day.
- Mr. Kravitz will be on vacation Feb. 20-27th.
- Next Selectboard meeting March 4, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to adjourn, Mr. Murphy second, vote 3-0 at 7:54PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoff Kravitz,
Town Administrator