

## SUNDERLAND SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Place: Sunderland Town Offices, 12 School Street

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

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

Absent: D. Murphy

Meeting Hybrid and In-person with portions recorded by FCAT

Meeting called to order at 5:31PM

### MINUTES

Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to accept MINUTES of 03/05/2024, Mr. Waring second, vote 2-0.

### BUSINESS

- Annual Appointment of DELTA SAND AND GRAVEL PUBLIC WEIGHERS: T.J. Conroy, Bridget Hammond, Brooke Hastings, Melinda Gibbons, Craig Warner. Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to appoint Delta Sand and Gravel Public Weighers as presented effective April 1, 2024, Mr. Waring second, vote 2-0.
- UPPER PIONEER VALLEY VETERANS SERVICES DISTRICT renewal for town to remain with the district for our Veterans' services. Individual towns must vote at their Selectboard meeting to continue for the next two years. Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to renew with Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Services District for two years. Mr. Waring second, vote 2-0.
- FY25 OPERATING BUDGET: Current draft demonstrates \$146,000 more in spending than revenue. The draft does not include free cash. Mr. Kravitz met with Deerfield Town Administrator and SoCEMS Chief to discuss budget presented and areas that could be addressed to reduce SoCEMS FY25 budget. No discussions with Whately at this time because their ATM is in June and they have an Interim Town Administrator. Other areas to re-examine include insurance rate increase of 8%, and would not recommending an additional 2.5% contribution from the town; PD requested a new full-time officer also.
- ARPA REQUEST SES ELECTRICAL REPAIRS AND FUEL REMOVAL. Electrical contractors will not accept any responsibility for previous wiring matters since the plans did not show accurate information. Highway Department has been providing excavating services for the project to save some costs. Change order request included cost for excess fuel disposal/relocation of 1,500 gallons, highway department was able to take 600 gallons in the town garage tank. Town was not notified of excess surplus needing disposal. Mr. Waring recommends not signing change order and requested information for a better understanding of the fuel matter. Mr. Waring noted that the town will have to pay \$5,000 for the electrical issues. Mr. Kravitz advised that plans have been updated accurately. Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to pay \$5,000 from ARPA for Electrical Repairs at SES Oil Tank Upgrade, Mr. Waring second, vote 2-0.

### SELECTBOARD UPDATES

- Mr. Waring announced the PASSING OF BARRY ROCK, husband of Caitlyn Rock, former Board of Health Chair. Requested observance of a moment of silence and sends condolences to the family.
- Ms. Drake-Tremblay had no reports.

### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

- Franklin County and North Quabbin Age-friendly project is completed. Town received an AARP Certificate for creating the action plan and are part of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.
- A CITIZEN'S PETITION was received to allow Sunderland Residents ages 16 & 17 to vote in local town elections only. This does not include state or federal elections. It is a warrant article that would allow the town to petition state legislators requesting special legislation with the state.
- PHONE SYSTEM –the board requested other options be explored. The “no device” option drew concerns as not all employees have a town cell phone; public perception with employees on cell phones and that employees are not working, and Microsoft teams has a minute limit on calls. The Verizon phones are free

devices and offer unlimited calling for \$25/mo. per phone. An app is available if calls are made from a cell phone it shows the town number. Preferred option is to continue with the Verizon plan proposed. After other options explored , the board supports going with the Verizon program as presented previously.

- Mowing contract has been prepared and Mr. Kravitz was able to incorporate all electric equipment favored from bidders.
- WWTP Operator, Rich Brynda spoke with the board a few months ago about a larger, 10-year plan as part of future projects. MassDEP has requested the status of the 10-year plan. Mr. Brynda feels if we are doing a larger project, it should be scoped out and develop to demonstrate we are making progress and not putting off needed repairs. Otherwise he recommends doing the most urgent repairs. Preference of a larger project would be a cost savings and not have to go back multiple times. Mr. Waring's concern is not to have the whole town pay for sewer matters. Costs would be for sewer users and how that would be paid for: raise the rates of users, general fund, sewer reserve funds, betterment fees or other options. Preference is to move forward with the larger project rather than fixing smaller items and still have the larger project to address in the future. Ms. Drake-Tremblay agreed but fixing the smaller items if urgent would need to be addressed.
- DITCH discussion tabled until next meeting.
- FRONTIER REGIONAL request EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY (E&D) FUNDS which is free cash that was budgeted but can be reallocated by the schools. They are requesting reallocation of \$200,000 for work on the fire alarm panel system. The town has 45 days to respond otherwise Frontier can move forward. The Board requested the matter be reviewed further at next meeting.
- 6:00PM – Selectboard attended remote presentation of Frontier Regional School Budget hearing.

Next Selectboard meeting March 25, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Drake-Tremblay motion to adjourn, Mr. Waring second, vote 2-0 at 6:57PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoff Kravitz,  
Town Administrator