

Sunderland Selectboard Minutes
Monday, November 30, 2020

Attending: D. Pierce, S. Bergeron, G. Kravitz

Absent: T. Fydenkevez

Others present: P. Gagarin, L. Smith, C. Bennett, T. Foster, M. Kowaleck, J. Kowaleck, M. Skibiski, J. Pelletier, M. West

Meeting via Zoom recorded by FCAT.

Meeting called to order at 6:31PM.

TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING

Ms. Foster presented tax information for the town and the recommendations of the Board of Assessors to retain a single tax rate and set the FY21 tax rate at \$15.49. The rate for the water district, voted on the previous week, was \$0.57. The rate would result in a \$27.81 increase to the average taxpayer. She noted that the next revaluation is set to occur in 2022 and that houses have been selling at approximately 20% above assessed value. Mr. Bergeron motion to accept the Board of Assessors recommendations, Mr. Pierce second, vote 2-0.

MINUTES

Mr. Bergeron motion to approve Selectboard minutes of November 23, 2020, Mr. Pierce second, vote 2-0.

BUSINESS

SEWER CONNECTION FOR 170 OLD AMHERST ROAD: Mr. Bergeron noted that in the future it would be helpful to have a more comprehensive review that includes the sewer permit when the building permit application comes in. Mr. Bergeron motion to approve the sewer connection permit, Mr. Pierce second, vote 2-0.

COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY: Ms. Smith stated that there were 3 new cases on 11/25, 2 new cases and 1 close contact on 11/30, bringing the total for November to 26 cases. She stated that a tipping point would be 25 new cases in a 2-week period and at that point would recommend additional actions, such as closing the Town Office Building to the public and re-deploying the electronic signboard.

WAGE ADJUSTMENTS AND COLA: Revenues for FY21 are expected to be higher than estimated, primarily due to the Governor, House, and Senate budget's level-funding Chapter 70 and local aid. The wage increases and COLAs were recommended by the Personnel Committee and appropriated by Town Meeting, but not implemented because of the uncertain revenue forecast for FY21. Mr. Bergeron motion to execute the Personnel Committee's recommendation, Mr. Pierce second, vote 2-0. Mr. Bergeron also stressed that the Town Administrator should reach out to the police union because the contract calls for it to be reopened if non-union, non-contract personnel receive a COLA.

SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Mr. Bergeron stated that there will be a Frontier Capital Committee meeting on 12/2 to discuss the athletic fields and current capital projects. He expected to be meeting to negotiate with the police union soon. Mr. Pierce stated that the Personnel Committee was scheduled to meet on 12/1.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

The Town Administrator stated that a drop box for Toys for Tots was available at the Public Safety Complex. The Town's application to become an age-friendly community had been submitted. Also, the Town's Recreation Department is holding a "Lights Over Sunderland" celebration with prizes donated by local businesses.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bergeron motion to adjourn at 7:20 PM, Mr. Pierce second, vote 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoff Kravitz, Town Administrator