

Sunderland Selectboard & Finance Committee Minutes
Monday, January 25, 2021

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

Finance Committee: A. Kajstura, E. Crowe, S. Smiarowski

Others present: Chief Benjamin, Chief Demetropoulos, L. Smith, K. McFarland, G. Gottschalk, E. Foster, J. Pelletier

Meeting via Zoom recorded by FCAT.

Meeting called to order at 6:35PM.

MINUTES

Mr. Fydenkevez motion to approve Selectboard minutes of January 19, 2021, Mr. Bergeron second, vote 3-0.

BUSINESS

POLICE BUDGET PRESENTATION: Chief Demetropoulos reviewed the FY22 budget request from the police department. It included a new fulltime officer, which would reduce the need for some overtime and part time shifts. Call volumes have been increasing year over year. Motor vehicle enforcement has been down, but other calls are steady or have increased. Capital requests included replacing a cruiser and upgrading the police and fire radios to the 800 MHz band, which will allow Sunderland to participate in the regional CoMIRS system. Discussion of the type of cruiser and the possibility of purchasing an electric or hybrid vehicle, the potential costs associated with the new requirement that police officers and departments be certified, and the details of the radio request, which includes one repeater mobile for the police department and one for the fire department to cover areas such as within basements.

FIRE BUDGET PRESENTATION: Chief Benjamin presented the FY22 fire department budget request. There is an increase in the request for the Public Safety Complex expenses because of variable oil prices and the fact that they have been on the rise. An increase in payroll was also requested to avoid reserve fund transfer requests, which have been a regular occurrence. The fire department expense request returned to the pre-COVID level. Although the number of calls has gone down, the time on calls has increased, in part due to the PPE requirements associated with COVID. Discussion of costs rising in the future and how to plan for large, expensive purchases. Chief Benjamin also noted that Hadley donated surplus jaws of life and now the Sunderland Fire Department has a backup.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Ms. Smith stated that Sunderland would likely be in the in the yellow risk category next week. Sunderland is trending downward. Sunderland currently has 6 active cases in isolation. The Governor lifted the stay at home advisory, allowed business to remain open past 9:30pm, but still at 25% capacity. Phase 2 of the vaccine distribution begins on Monday, 2/1, with those who are 75 years of age and older first. Mr. Fydenkevez asked about how the town is communicating vaccine information to residents. Vaccines will likely be available at the UMass Campus Center and in Greenfield, but we are awaiting details. Ms. Smith suggested distributing information with Senior Center meals delivery.

SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Mr. Bergeron stated that the Village Center Committee is meeting on 1/27 to receive updates on projects in town and discuss MassDOT's proposal for expanding sidewalks along Route 116. The Capital Planning Committee is meeting on 2/3 to continue review of capital requests. Mr. Pierce stated that the Personnel Committee is meeting on 2/2.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Foster noted that the Council on Aging is seeking volunteers to serve on the COA and interested residents should contact her or the town.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Fydenkevez motion to adjourn at 7:58 PM, Mr. Bergeron second, vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoff Kravitz, Town Administrator