

Town of Sherman
Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting
March 25, 2021 at 7pm
Via ZOOM Teleconferencing

Member's Present: First Selectman Don Lowe, Selectman Kevin Keenan, and Selectman Bob Ostriosky

Member's Absent: None

Audience & Invited: Treasurer Eric Holub, Business Manager Liz LaVia, Fire Chief Chris Fuchs, and residents from the community.

Clerk: Margaret Beatty

Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance: First Selectman Don Lowe called the meeting to order at 7:06pm followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: Susan Zeitler of 8 Curtis Drive expressed her concern that conformity to the information dictated from leadership paired with censorship of thought and opinion will be detrimental to our future, especially children. She emphasized the need for common sense when approaching information and provided literature to the chat for personal research.

Stan Greenbaum of 9 Peacepipe Drive voiced concern of the proposal by AT&T and Homeland Towers to the Siting Counsel for the cell tower on Coote Hill Road. He believes that the application contains misinformation and that the Town should engage the frequency engineer that conducted a study in 2013 to clarify any information applied in the application submitted by Homeland Towers.

Arthur Von Plachecki of 10 Sail Harbor Drive remarked that the BOS have done a wonderful job expressing their concern over issues that have been presented to the Town. He reiterated the falsity in engaging the BOS with concerns over the proposed cell tower. He acknowledged that the BOS has no jurisdiction over the tower and that it is misleading to residents.

Rick Hudson of 22 Crooked Furrows commented that he submitted a resolution on behalf of the Republican Town Committee against the state's proposed plan to relinquish small town municipalities planning and zoning to a centralized state approach. The topic will be discussed at the tail end of Administrative agenda items.

Correspondence: None

Administrative: A) Approval of Minutes:

02/25/2021 Board of Selectman Regular Monthly Meeting

Motioned by: First selectman Don Low

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan **All in Favor:** Unanimous

02/20/2021 Board of Selectman Budget Intake Meeting

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky **All in Favor:** Unanimous

02/24/2021 Board of Selectman Budget Intake Meeting

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan **All in Favor:** Unanimous

03/08/2021 Board of Selectman Budget Workshop

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan **All in Favor:** Unanimous

03/10/2021 Board of Selectman Budget Workshop

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan **All in Favor:** Unanimous

B) Tax Refunds: Motion: To accept a refund of \$654.53

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan **All in Favor:** Unanimous

C) Financial Review: Business Manager Liz LaVia remarked that the Town is 9 months and 75% through this fiscal year. Most figures are running stable with the exception of the building inspectors line which is running high due to outstanding open permits. She noted that there are 62 permits open with construction values of \$2,000,000. Lastly, she suggested that this meeting was an opportune time to move the budget to referendum. First Selectman Don Lowe agreed.

Motion: The Town of Sherman budget of \$5,038,141 as proposed by the Board of Selectman, acting as board of finance for the year 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022 be approved.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: selectman Bob Ostrosky All in Favor: Unanimous

Motion: Shall to budget of the Board of Education of \$9,380,166 as proposed by the Board of Selectman, acting as the board of finance for the year 7/1/2012 to 6/20/2022 be approved.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky **All in Favor:** Unanimous

Note: The referendum will be an in-person meeting held on May 1, 2021 to approve both budgets.

D) ZBA Appointment: Motion: To appoint Rich Devine as alternate commissioner to ZBA for a 2 year term expiring on January 1, 2023.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

E) Resolution from Board of selectman for Connecticut General Assembly concerning home rule and local zoning right: First Selectman Don Lowe addressed Senate Bill 1024, House Bill 6613, and House Bill 6107 that change local jurisdiction of planning and zoning in favor of state mandates that all municipalities must follow. The Bill's aim to adopt rules that do not reflect local leaders and their constituencies housing decisions. First Selectman Don Lowe read aloud for the record the exact resolution. All Selectman agree to sign the resolution and forward to the General Assembly. Selectman Bob Ostrosky encouraged residents to contact your local representatives and make your voice heard. First Selectman Don Lowe acknowledged Rick Hudson's resolution on behalf of the Republican Town Committee addressing the topic, stating two resolutions will be submitted on behalf of Sherman.

Information & Discussion:

A) SVFD: First Selectman Don Lowe began agenda item by paying respect to Jared Lloyd, a volunteer fire fighter. Mr. Lloyd lost his life attempting to save the lives of seniors in a community center in New York. Mr. Lowe acknowledged the hard work and selflessness of those who risk their lives and volunteer to help their neighbors. He turned the conversation over to Fire Chief Chris Fuchs to provide an updated report. Chief Fuchs expressed his gratitude towards First Selectman Don Lowe for his kind and poignant words. He highlighted the dangers of the job and willingness for members to devote time and energy into proper training and equipment maintenance. He noted that calls were up for the month totaling 88, which is 27 calls more from the previous month. There are two members currently enrolled in a Firefighter 1 class, two members enrolled in EMT courses, and three new members enrolled into the department last month along with two perspective this month. Selectman Bob Ostrosky thanked the SVFD for their dedication and unwavering commitment to the community.

B) Covid 19 report/ & C) Vaccination report: First Selectman Don Lowe gave a brief review of cases in Town. As of the week of March 25th, Sherman had 7 new cases and advised the Town to be diligent and practice safe-keeping protocols. He is anticipating reopening Town Hall June 1, 2021. He also expressed optimism that the Town will hold an in-person Memorial Day Parade this May. Lastly, First Selectman Lowe added that 31% of the Town has been vaccinated. He then turned the conversation over to James Reilley for an update on vaccination. James Reilley reiterated many of the talking points that First Selectman Don Lowe voiced. As of April 1st, ages 16 and up are eligible for vaccination. Participating establishments for vaccination include

hospitals, CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, and Stop & Shop. Please use VAMS for state registration and/or websites of participation pharmacies. Most significantly, the fatality rate has dropped substantially.

D) Happy Acres Farm report: Farm Manager Dave Jellen has begun his spring cleaning/work. He is still selling eggs, beef, pork, and chicken. The Town is in the process of gathering bid specs for the remainder of the painting/siding work on the farm. The items that were scheduled for auction are on delay but will be eventually auctioned.

E) Report on First Selectman's Sherman School tour concerning capital needs: First Selectman Don Lowe gave an overview regarding concerns at the school. He then provided a strategy in prioritizing the concerns. The most notable include the roof leaks, HVAC system, corrosion of the fire pump, issue with hard water and plumbing, updating fire doors, playground, and security concerns. He suggests hiring a roofing consultant and HVAC engineer and gather specs to solve the problem. In understanding the scope of the projects, he feels the best way to approach any work by 1) understanding the breath of the project, 2) estimated cost, and 3) ascertain effects of other parts of the building. All Selectman are aligned with Lowe's summary.

Note: BOE will be discussing suggestions for the schools capital needs at their monthly meeting dated April 7, 2021.

F) Storage space for Town organizations: Currently First Selectman Don Lowe is waiting for approval from P & Z for a new regulation allowing for Town space to be used as storage space. Once the regulatory aspect has been confirmed he will revisit the topic at a regular monthly meeting with specs for containers.

G) Public Works capital needs to possibly bring to Town Meeting: Selectman were satisfied with specs provides and are aligned with moving forward.

a) Kubota 1211 diesel mower/ snow blower

Motion: To take to a future Town Meeting the purchase, from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund, of a Kubota 121 diesel mower/snow blower for an amount not to exceed \$14,000.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

b) 15 XPC Brush Bandit wood chipper:

Motion: To take to a future Town Meeting the purchase, from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund, of a 15 XPC Brush Bandit wood chipper for an amount not to exceed \$65,000.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in favor: Unanimous

c) 550 Ford truck:

Motion: To take to a future Town Meeting the purchase, from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund, of a 550 Ford Truck for and amount not to exceed \$56,000.

Motioned by: selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

d) Trailer for landscaping equipment:

Motion: To take to a future Town Meeting the purchase, from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund, for a trailer for landscaping equipment for an amount not to exceed \$8,000.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

Note: Items were only approved to bring to a Town Meeting, it will be up to Town resident to decide at a Town Meeting to approve the expenditures.

H) Ordinance prohibiting the depositing of snow, debris, and obstacles in the Town roads and right-of-way to possibly bring to Town Meeting: The agenda item was discussed at a previous meeting. Selectman Bob Ostrosky understands the intent of the ordinance but feels it might be difficult to enforce. He has no problem presenting the topic at a Town Meeting for the residents to weigh in. Selectman Kevin Keenan clarified, in regards to enforcement, that Don Borkowski of Public Works can notify the State Trooper if he or any public works employee sees/witnesses a resident improperly discarding debris in the throughways. First Selectman Don Lowe concurred with both Selectman Bob Ostrosky and Selectman Keenan. All were aligned with bringing item to a Town Meeting for discussion.

Motion: Bring the ordinance of placement of snow and debris in public ways to a town Meeting.

Motioned by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

I) Playhouse electrical upgrade: First Selectman Don Lowe explained that the current electrical panel in the Playhouse is unable to safely accommodate new features for performances. He wanted to gauge the interest by the other board members and emphasized that the Playhouse is one of the only entities in Town that brings business to other establishments such as the restaurants, and IGA. Selectman Ostrosky asked to table topic because he did not have sufficient time to review the specs of the proposal. Selectman Keenan questioned the price tag and offered to do a walk-through of the building with respects to the quotes presented. The item will be revisited at a future BOS monthly meeting.

J) Revise job description: The agenda item seeks to clarify/revise the scope of the work and job description provided by the Social Services Assistant, which is now the Social Services Administrative Assistant. The job duties have evolved, with more intense social services work with the community, advising of clients, recording keeping, processing reports to charities, as well as, the acting liaison for Veteran's Affairs that provides resources to the Towns veterans. Business Manager Liz LaVia commentated that the position has evolved and that the new description is a more accurate reflection of the job.

Motion: To approve the new job description of the Town's new Social Services Administrative Assistant.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

Other Business: Selectman Bob Ostrosky would like to discuss the use of local parks. He commented that Sherman residents have been excluded from use of New Milford parks and he feels that Sherman is seeing an overflow from neighboring Towns. He also would like to discuss the banning of dogs at local parks, he remarked that he uses the parks regularly and that those enjoying our parks are not cleaning up after their pets. He also noticed that people have been neglecting to leash their dogs which poses a safety issue to the community. He is frustrated by the disregard of rules and that the Town should proceed with action. First Selectman Don Lowe will add topic to next meeting.

Public Comment: John Dwyer of Spring Lake Road understands the need to address the deficits at the school but noted was it poor engineering/planning that ultimately lead to the schools problems. He expressed support in identifying root causes so that moving forward the Town is not repeating the same mistakes with new projects.

Rosemarie D'Ostilio of 41 Cozier Hill Road encouraged the community to be proactive in the needs of the school. She also encouraged residents to participate in BOE meeting to get a better understanding in the schools thought process and goals.

Amanda O'Neill of 7 Big Trail remarked that the Friar Report supplied a list of costs associated with renovations at the school and questioned why it is necessary to seek more quotes. First Selectman Don Lowe responded that providing more quotes would validate the accuracy of the numbers provided by large architectural firms.

Al Zeisler of 4 Rising Sun Trail endorsed fixing the outstanding problems of the school but emphasized addressing the safety issues/hazards of the school before cosmetic upgrades. He suggests that the BOE look into alternate sources for providing funding for projects.

Treasurer Eric Holub questioned the expense associated with the Covid clinic partnership with New Fairfield. First Selectman Don Lowe responded that currently the expense accumulated

amounted to \$3400 to date. He would follow up with First Selectman of New Fairfield for exact figures.

Stan Greenbaum of 9 Peacepipe Lane commented that the fire department had the proper equipment to install on an antennae in New Fairfield that would provide emergency services to the Town. He feels the Town should refer back to the study commissioned by the Town 10 years ago and bring the topic to a Town Meeting for residents to discuss.

Rick Hudson of 22 Crooked Furrows commented on a theory for the source of contamination in the K-wing. He wanted to know the accuracy of the theory and if there was any written documentation to dispel or confirm the theory. Selectman Bob Ostrosky forwarded Mr. Hudson to the school website and confirmed that there was an abundance of information on the topic.

Arthur Von Plachecki of 10 Sail Harbor informed participants that the Commission on Aging is sponsoring an art show and encouraged everyone to take photos of springtime in Sherman. Please submit photos to the Senior Center, the photos will be put on display in an art show virtually.

BOE Chair Kasey Diotte encouraged residents to participate in the BOE meeting scheduled for April 7th and hear firsthand the deliberations of the school capital projects.

Rick Hudson of 22 Crooked Furrows commented that the RTC is looking to fill commission spots on Planning and Zoning and on ZBA. If anyone is interested or knows someone that would be interested in filling the spots to contact him.

Meeting moved to executive session.

First Selectman Don Lowe adjourned meeting at 9pm.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

Notes respectfully submitted March 30, 2021 by Margaret Beatty.