

Town of Sherman
Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting
November 18, 2021 at 7 pm
Mallory Town Hall

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

Member's Absent: None

Audience & Invited: Treasurer Eric Holub, Fire Chief Chris Fuchs, BOE members, and residents from the community

Clerk: Margaret Beatty

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance: First selectman Don Lowe called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: Susan Zeitler of 8 Curtis Drive commented about the direction the world is heading and its negative impact on future generations. She cited publications, one titled Agenda 21. She further explained that society, as a whole, are not seeing the signs of government control leading to vulnerabilities in judgement equating to society's potential loss of freedoms. She encouraged individuals to engage in research to help preserve future generations prosperity.

Correspondence: None

Administrative:

A) Approval of Minutes:

9/23/2021 Board of Selectman Monthly Minutes

Motioned by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky All in Favor: Unanimous

10/1/2021 Board of Selectman special Meeting

Motioned by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky All in Favor: Unanimous

B) Tax Refunds: First Selectman Don Lowe motioned for approval of a refund of \$2,276.78

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan All in Favor: Unanimous

C) Financial Review: First Selectman Don Lowe provided a brief summary of town finances. He noted that all expenses are tracking on schedule and that the Town is almost to the halfway point through the current fiscal year.

- D) Approve resolution for fiscal year 2021 Homeland Security Grant Program from Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection:

The authorization of the resolution allows the town to access FEMA funds.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

Resolution: I, Carol Havens, the Town Clerk of Town of Sherman, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Selectman at its duly called and held meeting on November 18, 2021, at which a quorum was present and acting throughout, and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked and is at present in full force and effect.

RESOLVED, that the Board of selectman-Town of Sherman may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Don Lowe, as First Selectman of Town of Sherman, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Board of Selectman and to do and perform all acts and things which he/she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

The undersigned further certifies that Don Lowe now holds the office of First Selectman and that he/she has held office since January 1, 2018.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has executed this certificate this day of November 18, 2021.

- E) Approve Town Calendar: The agenda items reflect the Board of Selectman calendar and can be subject to change/allow for flexibility. There will be a Town Holiday calendar that will be presented at the next BOS monthly meeting.

Motion: Make a motion to approve the Town calendar for the year 2022.

Motioned by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe

All in Favor: Unanimous

Information & Discussion:

First Selectman Don Lowe motioned that agenda item K) Commission on Aging /New Senior Center be moved to the first item under Information & Discussion.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

K) Commission on Aging/ New Senior Center: The Chair of the Commission on Aging Linda Arnold noted that an advisory workshop committee was established to determine a viable site for a new Senior Center. The Committees determined that Volunteer Field was a more appropriate site and that the Committee on Aging members voted unanimously to pursue Volunteer Field's location. The public would be informed in every step of the process. First Selectman Don Lowe added that one of the key components for a senior Center was the ability to provide an outdoor patio and that Volunteer Field provided the space to accommodate those requirements.

A) SVFD monthly report: Chief Fuchs noted that the department to date has responded to 357 calls. He members have been working intimately with Town seniors on fire prevention, awareness, and education. SVFD members have been teaching senior residents exit strategies, changing batteries in smoke detectors, that residents having working smoke detectors, and installing knock boxes. He also added all residents take the time to change batteries in all smoke detectors present in you homes and confirm that they are working. The department is in the process of re-bidding the Paramedic Oversight Committee contract for the next fiscal year which will result in an increase. The department will begin their Christmas Tree sale fundraiser on November 27, 2021 along with the annual Breakfast with Santa to follow in December. Lastly, Chief Fuchs requested for the next BOS monthly meeting an opportunity to do a presentation on possibilities for recruitment/retention. First selectman Don Lowe added that the next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2021. The Selectman expressed gratitude to all the members for their hard work and dedication.

B) Covid 19 report/vaccination report: At the current moment Sherman has no positive cases but as of November 18, 2021 First Selectman Don Lowe was notified by the health department that 2 cases were identified but not added to the current statistics in town. He also added that it does not take much for Sherman to be identified as red on the state Covid 19 tracker map due to the population of the town. Jim Reilly, the Emergency Management Director, noted that the information for identifying infection is in a 2-week lag but overall, the Town is doing well.

C) Happy Acre farm report: The farm is doing well, Dave Jellen is repairing equipment and preparing for the upcoming seasons. The Farm Day event held was a success and moving forward there will be more events held to engage the public.

D) Independence Village Senior Housing: An independent non- profit will be holding a Town forum on November 20,2021 at 10 am at Charter Hall in a question/answer presentation. The committee is seeking an 824 letter in order to move the idea forward. An 824 letter states that if a plan is to move forward on any Town property that P&Z has the opportunity to survey and confirm that it complies with conservation and development. (Note: the letter does not approve a project.) Selectman Bob Ostrosky raised concern as to the sequencing of the plan

and was worried about the public's perceived opinion as implicit approval. Spokesperson Barbara Ackerman noted that the letter does not imply approval for project but allows for P&Z survey the property and P&Z only has 35 days to confirm that the land complies with regulation. First Selectman Don Lowe commented that the letter needed will be resolved by December 1, 2021 for P&Z.

E) Solar panel Presentation: Representatives from Santa Energy presented analysis as to the benefit of solar energy in Sherman. Analyst William Ostrander explained that towns have the ability generate and store energy in batteries that can be sold back to power companies. The benefit of the program would generate found income to the Town resulting in an extra \$12,000 of revenue. Representative Andrew Kellar provided an overview of operations and potential properties that were in consideration for equipment. In order to explore Sherman's energy potential, the Town would have to join in a letter of intent to facilitate the process.

Questions: Treasurer Eric Holub inquired if the generated power from back-up batteries is sold back to the grid. Representative Andrew Kellar replied that the power does go back to the grid by way of virtual purchase agreement. The batteries curtail the power without over consumption of energy to the power lines.

Pam Bonner asked where the batteries would be stored. Andrew Kellar replied with the solar panel equipment.

Patricia Bailey wondered about the dangers of keeping solar panel fields and the amount of heat generated whether it is harmful to those in close proximity. Representative Andrew Kellar assured her that the panel fields pose no risk/safety issues.

F) ARPA Funds: First Selectman Don Lowe informed that the Town acquired a reputable spokesperson that will advise the Town on appropriate ways to use the funds, her name is Betsy Painter with the Counsel of Governments. The Town is now moving towards a stage of action to allocate funds for projects/needs. The item will be up for further discussion on the next BOS monthly meeting.

G) SVFD request for an amount not to exceed \$140,000 from federal ARPA funds for 16 tri-band portable radios in addition to 8 Public Works Department truck mounted radios to possibly bring to Town Meeting: Fire Chief Fuchs provided a brief explanation of the radios and the need for the department to purchase. The equipment is low maintenance except for the occasional battery replacement. The radios provide a more sophisticated means of communication, allowing for connection with all emergency personnel. Public works radios are different radios and less expensive. ARPA funds will be explored for possible use to cover the expense.

Motion: A motion for an amount not to exceed \$140,000 from the federal ARPA funds for 16 tri-band portable radios in addition to 8 Public Works Department truck mounted radios to a future Town meeting.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

Selectman discussed scheduling a Town Meeting in early December to aid in ordering the radios in the event of supply chain issues.

H) SVFD maintenance request for 1) Divider wall in Charter Hall; 2) Heat pump/air conditioning wall unit in computer main frame room in the ESF building: Fire Marshal Dave Lathrop explained that the divider was not constructed properly from construction. He added that the best course of action is to remove it completely. He noted that on the 29th of November the hall will be refloored and the divider is in direct obstacle of the project. He suggested that the divider can pose a hardship to the flooring project because the company would have to return to finish the area that the divider currently takes up, possibly causing damage to the newly renovated space. The cost of removal is \$3800. The Selectman agreed to have Mr. Lathrop call the company to remove the divider prior to the floor install on the 29th. Mr. Lathrop also explained that the heat pump system has broken down, it no longer is able to maintain a safe room temperature to service the equipment. Bids were provided for associated costs of work.

Motion: A motion for an amount not to exceed \$9500 from the ARPA funds, or Capital Non Recurring for the installation of a 12,000BTU mini-split ductless air condition heat pump system using a Samsung model #SAMRXS12ABT and associated work.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe

All in Favor: Unanimous

I) Sherman School roof repair: BOE member Matt Vogt explained that the board is asking \$150,000 for patch repair work on the school roof and to bring the request to Town Meeting for discussion with residents. First Selectman Don Lowe inquired on whether attaining supply and weather would affect the project. Mr. Vogt replied that supply issues are across the board but the BOE is looking to stymie the most problematic roof leaking/issues. First Selectman Don Lowe also explained to Mr. Vogt that the BOE should be ready and prepared to field difficult questions from the public.

Motion: A motion to go to Town Meeting for an amount not to exceed \$150,000 from the Capital Non Recurring fund for roof repair at the Sherman School. (Motion has been tabled to address a previous motion regarding school roof repair.)

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Motion: A motion to rescind the amount of \$575,000 for roof replacement that was voted on unanimously at Town Meeting on September 14, 2021.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe

All in Favor: Unanimous

The Selectman reminded the BOE that they need to be ready to explain why the board is asking for a temporary roof fix as to the initial voted on replacement.

The Selectman referred to the tabled motion by First Selectman Don Lowe. The motion was seconded by Selectman Kevin Keenan.

Tabled Motion: Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan All in Favor: Unanimous

J) Town facilities management: Ed Hayes communicated that there needs to be a willingness to explore/develop a job description. The need for a comprehensive plan and vision to streamline the maintenance needs of Town facilities and school. The possibility of creating facilities management would help consolidate prospective contractors and providing a familiarity with town needs while working with local contractors. The concept could/would provide continuity in Town along maintenance needs. The idea will continue to be addressed in future BOS meetings.

L) Generators: Town Hall and Public Works: Fire Marshal Dave Lathrop informed that Public Works generator is in operation and the tank is in and the line is run for Town Hall. He added that he is hoping the generator will be in the week of the 22nd of November but due to backed up shipping container issues there is no guarantee.

M) Speed indicators and traffic report: First Selectman Don Lowe is exploring the ideas of installing more indicators around town. He asked the Selectman to compile a list of potential roads that can benefit from the speed signals. The agenda item will be added to the next BOS monthly meeting for more discussion.

Other Business: None

Public Comment: Richard Lenihan of 15 Osborn Road just wanted to confirm that the 16 tri-band radios request do not rely on cell service. Chief Fuchs confirmed that cell service is not needed to operate the radios. He also added the SVFD will be able to communicate with other agencies that they were previously unable to.

Dorinda Lenihan of 15 Osborn Road expressed her gratitude to the SVFD for all their hard work and unwavering dedication to the residents and community.

Pam Bonner of 44 Anderson Road endorsed the idea that Ed Hayes discussed about the facilities management but to caution the approach and refer to past experience for guidance.

Susan Zeitler of 8 Curtis Drive reiterated the need to educate yourself on current affairs, and as parents, be present in what is happening in our children's lives to better protect them and equip them with critical thinking skills.

First Selectman Don Lowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 pm.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Kevin Keenan

All in Favor: Unanimous

Notes respectfully submitted by Margaret Beatty on November 30, 2021.