

**Town of Sherman
Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting
Thursday, October 27, 2022 at 7 pm
Mallory Town Hall**

Member's Present: First Selectman Don Lowe, Selectman Bob Ostrosky, and Selectman Joel Bruzinski

Member's Absent: None

Audience & Invited: Treasurer Eric Holub, Business Manager Liz LaVia, representatives from Three Veterans LLC recycling center, Public Works Supervisor Kris Fazzone, Building Committee members, and residents from the community.

Clerk: Margaret Beatty

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

First Selectman Don Lowe began the meeting by reminding the audience that anyone who wishes to speak can do so during Public Comment. Secondly, he asked the audience to join him in a moment of silence to pay respect to the two fallen Bristol officers that lost their lives on duty, Lt. Dustin DeMonte and Officer Alex Hamzy.

Public Comment: Laurie Connor of 38 Holiday Point Road notified the Selectman that her neighbor has been renting his home as an Airbnb. She commented that the renters have been disruptive and creating safety issue. First Selectman Don Lowe commented that he is aware of the situation and the Town is working to remedy the situation.

Susan Zeitler of 8 Curtis Drive encouraged residents to watch a new film based off the book "The Real Anthony Fauci" by Robert Kennedy. She highlighted that the information in the movie could help us handle the next pandemic more appropriately and accurately. She also questioned the tree clearing on Town roads and whether the cutting is dealing with dead trees or for the implementation of 5G. She expressed concern over the needless destruction of nature in order to promote technology.

Correspondence: None

Administrative:

A) Approval of Minutes:

9/22/2022 Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting

Motioned by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe **All in Favor:** Unanimous

10/11/2022 Board of Selectman Special Meeting

Motioned by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

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

B) Tax Refunds: The Town accepts refunds of \$2,859.74.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

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

- C) **Financial Review:** Business Manager Liz LaVia noted that the Town is a third of the way through the fiscal year and general fund expenses are tracking as expected. She informed that the Town has entered a grant with DESPP, which was funded through ARPA. The grant is for funding Rural Road Speeding Enforcement and is reimbursed in \$5000 increments up to \$50,000 on a first come, first serve basis. This funding will cover the trooper's salary and fringe. This helps offset the trooper's overtime in combating speeding in Town. She noted that every year the state gives an estimated fringe rate and estimates salary rate for the trooper and the Town budgets according to the estimates. The actual rates come in October and this years' actuals are 25% less than estimated. Therefore, the trooper line will see a surplus which can also be used for speeding enforcement and related equipment. She noted that part of the estimates included hazard duty pay which was calculated by the state but was not applied due to lack of need.

Information & Discussion:

- A) **SVFD monthly report:** Fire Chief Fuchs was unable to attend the meeting but provided First Selectman Don Lowe a report of the department's current events. Before First Selectman Lowe went into the report, he acknowledged that Fire Chief Fuchs was promoted within ranks at his full-time firefighter job at Westport. He is now an Assistant Deputy Fire Marshal. The Selectman extend their congratulations to Chris Fuchs. Moving into the report, the department has responded to 315 EMS calls to date, the FF2 class is continuing with our crew's completing firefight rescue advanced skills portion of the program. This coming month our members will be performing our annually required live fire training exercises at the Lichfield County Fire school. The department welcomed 2 new members on October 13th, the department conducted 2 separate fire prevention presentations for school aged children at the library and Little Munchkins daycare. The department will be distributing fire prevention program bags at the annual Halloween Bash on Sunday October 30, 2022, from 4-7 pm. Lastly, as we head into the colder months, we remind all residents to ensure all their smoke detectors are in working order and functional. The SVFD is more than happy to assist any residents replace detector batteries or replacing outdated detectors.
- B) **Public Works report:** Supervisor Kris Fazzone noted that the department has begun trimming trees back from the roadsides. Care is marginal due to the budget, but Public Works is working on a larger scale list to provide to the Selectman for a potential increase in budget for tree care needs. Public Works has been diligently cleaning up the Town garage property. The department is working with a local contractor to service the equipment beyond their capabilities and working on a list for a capital plan to address repairs and replacement of equipment. Lastly, starting November 1st a new employee will be joining the team.
- C) **Recycling stickers and presentation by Three Veterans LLC:** Representatives from the company explained the current situation and confusion and are looking to streamline the process for Sherman residents. Presently, because Sherman residents are not in the New Milford system, tracking customers has been difficult. Sherman residents can apply directly with Three Veterans LLC and a sticker is issued, for an additional vehicle sticker you pay a nominal \$10 fee. Working directly with the recycling company will make the process streamlined for full time, part time, and weekend residents. The changes can begin by July 1, next fiscal year, if the Town decides to consolidate the process.

- D) **Resolution to opt out of the provisions of CT general statute 8-2(D):** The state would like local municipalities to participate in their ordinances which would allow accessory apartments to be built without zoning approval. The Town of Sherman already allows for accessory apartments but with Zoning control. The state allows for towns to opt out of the ordinance.
Motion: To opt out of the provisions of CT general statute 8-2(D) regarding accessory apartments and parking areas.
Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe
Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky **All in Favor:** Unanimous
- E) **Happy Acres silo and AT&T:** Currently the silo which holds the AT&T equipment is compromised by oxidation. The silo is not imminently in danger of falling but action will need to be rendered in the near future. The 2 options that have been discussed to address the issue are as followed, 1) at AT&T's cost, a new pole would be erected behind the silo with the transferring of equipment, and/or 2) build a new silo, with a gentleman's agreement, AT&T offered to cover 50% of the rebuild costs. The costs would come to \$300,000. ARPA funds could be considered to cover the costs. The rebuild could potentially attract more/new carriers. The Town will eventually have to make a decision on the choices presented. There is a possibility the Citing Counsel would be involved depending on which option the Town chooses.
- F) **Bridge: Old Greenwoods Extension:** There are 3 bridges of concern in Sherman. More information will be provided in subsequent meetings with cost analysis. Rough Estimates of \$450,000, \$350,000, and \$250,000 have been submitted but due to price changes in materials the costs will be variable.
- G) **Request of \$175,000 from the Sherman School Building Committee:** The request would cover consulting work, legal work, engineering services, and conceptual design consulting services. The request would cover preliminary work done by the Building Committee in order to present a plan to the residents. Pam Bonner, Building Committee member, explained that no plan can be rendered until the appropriate firms are hired to provide schematics of the proposed project.
Motion: Move the request, of an amount not to exceed \$175,000 from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund, from the Sherman School Building Committee to a future Town Meeting.
Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe
Seconded by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski **All in Favor:** Unanimous
The Selectman agreed to hold a meeting on November 10, 2022, at 7pm at Charter Hall. The Selectman requested the committee provide as much information with timelines to residents, at the Town Meeting, so that they can make an educated decision.
- H) **Speed enforcement:** The Town has been exploring options to combat speeding in Town. Currently, an extra trooper, 4 hours per month, has been added to monitor/ticket speeding. The Town will also investigate a speed indicator sign that collects data to study the patterns of drivers in Town and/or passing through. Signage is also in discussion.
- I) **Sherman residents who have not registered their vehicles in CT:** Working on internally. First Selectman Don Lowe investigated an enforcement agency but concluded that the services do not fit the area.
- J) **Short-term rental report:** Through social media, First Selectman Don Lowe along with Ron Cooper, have discovered an avenue to lodge a direct complaint with rental agencies about the illegal short-term rentals in Town. The agencies confirmed they do not want listing on their websites that are not legal.

- K) **Sherman Senior Center:** The property located by the community gardens is up for consideration to house the proposed new Senior Center. First Selectman Don Lowe wanted to gauge the temperature of the other Selectman on pursuing the new location. The respective Selectman support pursuing the new location.
- L) **Sherman Arts Commission proposal:** The Selectman agreed to continue discussion about the Commission on the next agenda. First Selectman Don Lowe will meet with interested members to discuss how the Commission should be organized. More information will be presented at the next BOS meeting before introducing the idea to residents at a Town Meeting.
- M) **Sherman Playhouse lease:** No action to be taken immediately. The lease expires on December 31, 2022. First Selectman Don Lowe would like to continue as is but noted that there is time to make changes. Will be discussed during the November BOS meeting. Treasurer Eric Holub commented that the Playhouse has not been paying their rent since 2018.
- N) **Native plant policy for municipal lands:** The Town will post recommendations for Public Works to follow on municipal properties as per request from the Conservation Commission.
- O) **School Building Committee report: Joel Bruzinski:** Nothing more to add as per the extended discussion during agenda item G) and the requested \$175,000.

Other Business: None

Public Comment: Fire Marshal Dave Lathrop provided an update on current work taking place at Mallory Town Hall. The chimney work has been done and roof work will commence. The roof has been replaced over a damaged portion at Public Works and trenching will begin to install a pole for lighting over the salt shed. A plugged water softener was the culprit for loss of water at the firehouse and will be removed by Werner. The boiler at the firehouse needs repair but is delayed due to lack of availability of parts. He has found an alternative way to source heat to the building and is getting quotes.

Rick Hudson of Crooked Furrows provided the Selectman information for alternative sources, such as rubber speed bumps, to combat speeding in Town. The Selectman agreed to review the literature.

Katy Osborn of 5 Osborn Road commented that she has been to several School Building Committee meeting and has been very impressed on how focused and diligently the group has been working. She admires the leadership on the Committee.

Sabine Scherner of 12 Cedar Lane requested a meeting with the Selectman to discuss the challenges of 5G. She has been working with a consultant who has 30 years of experience with technology and has a presentation that she encouraged the Selectman view.

Susan Zeilter of 8 Curtis Drive questioned which option the Citing Counsel would provide input regarding the Happy Acres silo. She also raised concern on the negative environmental impact of adding more antennae if more carrier's express interest.

Selectman Bob moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe All in Favor: Unanimous

Notes respectfully submitted on November 12, 2022 by Margaret Beatty