

**Town of Sherman  
Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting  
January 27, 2022 at 7pm  
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, Fire Chief Chris Fuchs, members of the BOE, and residents from the community.

**Clerk:** Margaret Beatty

**Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance:** First Selectman Don Lowe began the meeting at 7:01pm by announcing all Selectman were present followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

First Selectman Don Lowe began the meeting by moving Acknowledgement under Administrative Items prior to Public Comment. At this moment, he welcomed newest board member Selectman Joel Bruzinski and was looking forward to working with him. First Selectman Don Lowe also acknowledged Selectman Bob Ostrosky for five consecutive terms serving the community and presented him with a custom plaque in his honor. Selectman Bob Ostrosky graciously thanked the board.

**Public Comment:** Craig Bell of 20 Cedar Lane revisited the barricade that he contends is presently blocking a portion of Cedar Lane. Mr. Bell suggested that the barricade is illegally blocking Town property and that his many requests to discuss the removal has gone unanswered. He cited previous meeting discussion to make his point. He argued that the selectman were unwilling to acknowledge his concerns.

Rick Hudson of Crooked Furrows interjected that Mr. Bell's comments were unsubstantiated and be stricken from the record.

Selectman Bob Ostrosky followed with a comment not to engage with audience members and called for a point of order.

**Correspondence:** The Sherman Chamber Ensemble submitted a letter addressing the hardship of Covid on the arts organizations. The letter highlighted the need to preserve these organizations and requested that a portion of funds distributed by the government be allocated to help sustain art organizations in the community. The letter was submitted by the President and the Executive Director of the Sherman Chamber Ensemble.

**Administrative Items:**

**A) Acknowledgements:** Moved to beginning of meeting.

**B) Approval of Minutes: 12/16/2021 Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting**

**Motioned by:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky

**Seconded by:** Selectman Joel Bruzinski      **All in Favor:** Unanimous

**C) Tax Refunds:** None

**D) Financial Review:** Business Manager Liz LaVia noted that the Town is 7 month into this year's expenses and expenses are tracking as expected and most accounts are at or under budget. The 2021 taxes have been filed and all state reporting has been completed. Budget submission for the upcoming year are being submitted ahead of next month's workshop. She reported that the Town is in very good shape.

**E) Appointment/Reappointments: Motion:** To appoint Diane Laviano to the Inlands/Wetlands board for a 2 year term.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

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

**Motion:** To appoint Scott Murray to the Park and Recreation board for a 3 year term.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

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

**Motion:** To add an appointment to the Board of Assessment and Appeals.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

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

**Motion:** To appoint Scott Giunta to the Board of Assessment and Appeals.

First Selectman Don Lowe commented that a member left the commission abruptly and it was important to fill the vacancy.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

**Seconded by:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky

**Discussion:** Selectman Joel Bruzinski inquired whether that particular board has to have equal party representation. Rick Hudson commented that regardless of Mr. Giunta's party affiliation the board has a good mix of representatives and that there is no unfair advantage created.

**All in Favor:** Unanimous

**Information & Discussion:**

**A) SVFD monthly report:** Fire Chief Chris Fuchs noted that the department responded to 27 call in the new year and ended the previous year at 389. There are currently 8 members enrolled in an Emergency Medical Responder course and 4 members enrolled in a Firefighter 1 class. There are 14 department members enrolled in an Introduction to Company Officer class which is based on teaching leadership, fire behavior, and response techniques. Lastly, the department recruited a new female volunteer 18 years of age. The department has also revitalized its social media presence putting out press releases, recruitment ads and fundraising opportunities.

**B) SVFD presentation on a new floor for the engine bays:** Fire Chief Chris Fuchs began by thanking the board for help over the last few years addressing unexpected repairs with the SVFD building. He added that the current flooring housing department vehicles is painted cement and has been in steady decline for the last 10 years. He explained the most durable option would be an epoxy floor with a lifespan of 30+ years. The cost to revamp the entire floor is estimated between \$60-70K. The department is looking for approval from the board to carry on with the bidding process. The board was in agreement to start the process.

**C) Ordinance change concerning SVFD member tax abatements:** The ordinance would reflect a tier system rewarding members abatements for specific years of service in the department. The item will be brought to the February BOS meeting reflecting the appropriate verbiage which will be then discussed and potentially brought to a Town Meeting for approval.

**D) Covid 19 report/vaccination report:** The Town has reported 4 new cases, these cases do not reflect those who have tested positive with at-home tests. The Town has distributed 2 rounds of government issued tests and masks. The state's positivity is decreasing and everyone is encouraged to follow safety protocols to help mitigate the spread.

**E) Happy Acres Farm report/proposed change to the Property Management Agreement:** The agreement allows the property manager to give permission for hunting on the premises. The agreement does not change any insurance prerequisites. All hunting laws apply for use of the property.

**Motion:** To approve the proposed lease modification.

**Motioned by:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky

**Seconded by:** Selectman Joel Bruzinski      **All in Favor:** Unanimous

**F) Public Works request for a new sander to possibly bring to Town Meeting:** Public Works Director Don Borkowski discussed the need for new equipment in keeping with the same brands that are currently used by the department. Mr. Borkowski cited the inability to find parts to accommodate certain equipment, replacing old equipment with new comparable components from same manufacturer provides flexibility for replacing hardware in the event of breakdown. The current estimate for a replacement sander is \$7000 but subject to change due to inflation and manufacturing time. First Selectman Don Lowe proposed taking the item to Town Meeting.

**Motion:** Make a motion to requisition funds from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for new sander for a Public Works truck.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

**Seconded by:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky

**All in Favor:** Unanimous

**G) Public Works request for new 6 wheel dump truck to possibly bring to Town Meeting:**

Public Works Director Don Borkowski stated the need for a larger truck to keep up with higher demand of work. The department is operating with older equipment and are in need of adding newer more reliable vehicles to the fleet. The department has been spending large sums on repairs and replacement cutting into productivity. The estimated cost for a new truck is \$220,000 plus \$8500 for an upgraded stainless steel body.

**Motion:** A motion to requisition an amount not to exceed \$250,000 from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund for a new 6 wheel truck for Public Works.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

**Seconded by:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky

**All in Favor:** Unanimous

Rick Hudson asked a follow-up question on the design life of the trucks. Don Borkowski responded the trucks longevity can span 20+ years. First Selectman Don Lowe noted that the newest truck purchase will probably be the last gas trucks to be purchased due to the move towards greener energy.

**H) Progress report –proposed new senior center:** First Selectman Don Lowe noted that a workshop group has been working diligently on a wish list plan for the size of the building and amenities. The Town Meadows is still the proposed site.

**I) Sherman School maintenance/repair report:** Selectman Joel Bruzinski provided an overview of the goals of a new committee created to address the schools most pressing maintenance issues. The committee is comprised of local contractors. The goal of the committee is to provide a comprehensive approach addressing the most critical needs of the school as well as providing an open line of communication. Selectman Bob Ostrosky commented that the most common sentiment from the public that he hears is what the problem statement is. The word comprehensive needs to be defined. He welcomes the fresh committee but cautions that the committee stays on track with the needs of the school and what the constituents want addressed.

**J) Volunteer position: Environmental Team Leader:** First Selectman Don Lowe has been getting information from different entities that there is a need to make more of an effort towards green initiatives. The purpose of this position is volunteer based and he/she would take the lead in managing/advising green initiatives. Selectman Bob Ostrosky inquired whether the Town was responsible for any insurance if person got into an accident enroute to a function as well as mileage compensation. There is a person under consideration for the position. Some

adjustments need to be made to the description of the position, the potential volunteer will be requested at the next meeting in February to answer any questions by the Selectman.

**K) Town Hall Wi-Fi improvements:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky requested a more comprehensive approach to addressing the Wi-Fi issues in the building. There has been some miscommunication with the IT company about the requests. Selectman Bob Ostrosky will follow up with any possible solutions to make improvements to the system.

**L) Speed indicators and traffic report:** First Selectman Don Lowe noted that the new crosswalk signs purchased will be properly positioned once the winter weather ceases. First Selectman Don Lowe asked for the board's feelings on purchasing 2 new mobile speed indicator signs. After some discussion, the selectman agreed to bring the item to Town Meeting.

**Motion:** Bring to Town Meeting an amount not to exceed \$8000 from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund for 2 type TC-400C battery powered portable radar sign.

**Motioned by:** First Selectman Don Lowe

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

**Other Business:** None

Fire Marshal Dave Lathrop took a moment to report that when the SVFD members volunteered to clean out the gutters they discovered that the plywood was not properly run up to the chimney leaving a gaping hole where water has been running into the building. The area has been patched temporarily with tarps until a plan can be devised with a roofing company. Lastly, he updated that Samsung will be providing a new air conditioning/heating unit in the mainframe room, free of charge, because the initial replacement could not withstand subzero temps.

**Public Comment:** None

Selectman Bob Ostrosky moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm.

**Motioned by:** Selectman Bob Ostrosky

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

Notes respectfully submitted February 4, 2022 by Margaret Beatty.