

Town of Sherman
Board of Selectman Monthly Meeting
March 24, 2022 at 7 pm
Mallory Town Hall

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

Member's Absent: None

Audience & Invited: Treasurer Eric Holub (joined meeting late), Fire Chief Chris Fuchs, and member from the community.

Clerk: Margaret Beatty

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

Public Comment: First Selectman Don Lowe reminded the public to keep the comments directed at the board and not engage other residents attending. Terri Hahn of 13 Pepper Pond Road shared that the Siting Counsel approved on March 10, 2022 the DM Plan (Design and Maintenance) for the Coote Hill cell tower. On behalf of the Sherman Telecommunications Committee, they are hoping with this approval residents and those passing through town will be able to successfully make calls to first responders/911.

Tara Clancy of Oriele Drive implored the board to research the negative health effects of 5G. She added that adults in a place of position are not safeguarding the environment of our children. She also reminded that the unintended consequences are children growing up with health conditions that otherwise could have been prevented.

Jen Freed of 61 Church Road began by acknowledging that she had provided materials to the BOS and brought a print out from a hearing in which Senator Blumenthal participated regarding 5G. She read verbatim information directly from Senator Blumenthal's website in 2018 blasting the Federal Communications Commission for failing to conduct adequate research on 5G and the links between radiofrequency and cancer. He concluded in a 2019 statement that no ongoing research is being conducted to answer simple questions. Jen Freed finished by stating it is important that all telecommunication companies provide information of where possible equipment is located in town.

Susan Zeitler of 8 Curtis Drive reminded that she sent the board videos approximately 45 days ago. First Selectman Don Lowe responded that he had viewed the material. She reiterated the same concern as the previous comments relating to 5G. She pleaded to keep an open mind to information not previously provided. She stated that she is not opposed to technology but rather opposed to purposeful implantation of a technology that can be harmful to life. She does not believe that anything should be forced on a population untested and known to cause harm.

Sabine Scherner of Cedar Lane shared a video to create more awareness about 5G. The video included commentary from Martin L. Pall, PhD, and Dr. Devra Davis. Everyone/anyone is welcome to research each speaker and their expertise in his/her free time.

Correspondence: Will be shared later in the meeting as it pertains to Item E) Friends of Happy Acres gift and acceptance under Information & Discussion of the agenda.

Administrative Items:

A) Approval of Minutes: 02/24/2022 Board of Selectman Regular Monthly Meeting

Motioned by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

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

B) Appointments:

To appoint Lauren Weber to a 3 year term on the Conservation Commission that expires on 1/1/2025.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

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

To appoint Anne Weisburg to a 3 year term on the Conservation Commission that expires 1/1/2025.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

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

C) Tax Refunds: Grant a refund of \$305.47 as per the Tax Collector's request.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky All in Favor: Unanimous

D) Financial Review: Business Manager Liz LaVia was unable to attend this evening meeting, First Selectman Don Lowe provided a brief review of the financials. Overall budget is tracking on point with a few line item exceptions. Questions can be directed to Business Manager Liz LaVia. To date, 76% of budget has been spent.

Information & Discussion:

A) SVFD monthly report: Fire Chief Chris Fuchs noted that to date, the department has responded to 81 calls. In the month of March, members have trained on quarterly air pack training which is an OSHA mandate. Members have also participated in CPR and cardiac emergency, and brush fire and portable pump training. Currently there are 8 members in the certification process for their emergency medical certification, 4 members continuing their fire

fighter 1 course, and 12 members in the fire officer class. The department has been heavy on training this month. Additionally, the department is planning activities for the summer for the 80th Anniversary of the department, more information to follow.

B) SVFD flooring bids and amount to possibly move to Town Meeting: The SVFD selected engineered coating for the floor type amounting to \$91,000, 20% of the expense will be covered by the SVFD the remainder of the expense will come out of the Town's Capital Nonrecurring Fund.

Motion: To bring to Town Meeting an expenditure not to exceed \$92,000 from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund for flooring in the bottom floor of the SVFD building.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

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

C) Covid 19 report and related issues to Covid: The Town has 1 confirmed case the week of March 21, 2022. Statewide rates are low.

D) Happy Acres Farm report: Property Manager David Jellen has been busy preparing the farm for spring. Discussion in the works to make the farm more public and accessible.

E) Friends of Happy Acres gift and acceptance: The organization is dissolving its 501-3C and have a surplus of \$8400 in their bank account. The organization is saving approximately \$400 for legal fees but would like to gift the remainder \$8000 to Happy Acres, specifically for the purchase of a new mower. The cost of the mower is \$9600. First Selectman Don Lowe read aloud correspondence directly relating to their wishes submitted by Bill MaCann, President of FoHA. Selectman Bob Ostrosky inquired as to the ownership of the mower and First Selectman Don Lowe responded that the Town would own it but would be purposely used by the farm.

Motion: Move to accept an amount, at least maybe more, of \$8000 as indicated by the letter from FoHA to the Town of Sherman.

Motioned by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

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

After the vote, the Board discussed and decided to re-motion and amend the previous motion to include more specifics.

Re-motion: Amend the previous motion to read that the BOS move to accept an amount, no less than \$8000, from FoHA to the Town of Sherman to be specifically used for the purchase of a mower to be used at Happy Acres.

Motioned by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

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

Selectman Bob Ostrosky questioned if the remainder of the expense for the mower would come out of the operating fund for Happy Acres.

Treasurer Eric Holub interjected that paying the difference for the mower could come out of the Restricted Fund since it falls under the maintenance for the farm or lump it in with the Operating Fund.

Discussion took place deciding on which course of action would be best to balance the extra expense for the mower. Expense might be bundled into funds appropriated in the next agenda item.

F) To potentially move to Town Meeting a request to authorize an appropriation transfer of \$10,000 from the Happy Acres Restricted Fund to the Happy Acres Operating Fund for additional operating expenses through 6/30/2022:

Motion: Move to Town Meeting a request to authorize an appropriation transfer of \$10,000 from the Happy Acres Restricted Fund to the Happy Acres Operating Fund for additional operating expenses through 6/30/2022.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Discussion: Selectman Bob Ostrosky asked that the balance of the accounts be brought to the Town Meeting so that residents are informed of the history of the balance. Treasurer Eric Holub cautioned how funds are appropriated and asked to re-word the motion to adequately describe the need and use. Selectman Joel Bruzinski brought up whether the motion from FoHA effect the current discussion. The Selectman agreed to rescind the motion pertaining to the appropriation transfer.

Motion: The Board moves to rescind the motion that was previously made.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe

All in Favor: Unanimous

Re-motion: To move to a Town Meeting a request to authorize a transfer expense of \$11,639.74 out of the Happy Acres Operating Fund into the Restricted Fund consisting of a repair to the barn cleaner \$8977.74 and the purchase and installation of an overhead door \$2662.00 (retroactively). A mower mainly paid by a gift from Friends of Happy Acres will be due a balance of \$1600 to be paid from the Happy Acres Operating Fund.

Motioned by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded by: First Selectman Don Lowe

All in Favor: Unanimous

G) Board of Education budget: First Selectman Don Lowe clarified that in discussion during budget hearings the BOS proposed that the BOE decrease the negotiation line by \$64,500, currently the BOE has been unable to satisfy the line. Selectman Bob Ostrosky added that the BOE needs to provide more detail acknowledging the separation agreement with the outgoing superintendent so that the public can understand and that the BOS better understands what is being funded. First Selectman Don Lowe cautioned that the BOE be mindful on how requests are portrayed and should be composed correctly for funding consideration.

Comment: Rick Husdon of Crooked Furrows Road expressed his displeasure and opposition with nondisclosure agreements and hopes that the BOS champions against such agreements.

H) To potentially move to Town Meeting an appropriation from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund for materials associated with new dock slips: The project is being built by the Boy Scouts to satisfy their Eagle Scout project. The scouts will volunteer their labor but the Town will pick up the materials cost due to the fact that the Town will be collecting revenue from the new dock slips. The cost of the materials amounts to \$6,014.60, due to the cost of lumber the cost can vary.

Motion: Move to Town Meeting for the materials to build 8 new dock slips for an amount not to exceed \$12,000 from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

Note: Project is time sensitive, work should be completed before the summer season.

I) Town right-of-way survey: There is a strip of land that is a Town right of way at the end of Cedar Lane connecting between 2 developments. The survey would help pinpoint the exact location of the property. There has been ongoing confusion about the location of the right of way contributing to Town problems that cannot be adequately addressed until the exact location has been logged. The BOS is seeking an amount not to exceed \$4000 to bring to a Town Meeting to put to rest any confusion.

Motion: To go to Town Meeting for an amount not to exceed \$4000 from the Capital Nonrecurring Fund for a survey of the right of way at the end of Cedar Lane.

Motioned by: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

All in Favor: Unanimous

J) New Fairfield Covid vaccination site and contact tracing costs: The Town of Sherman owes New Fairfield \$19,945, which reflects 20% of the contact tracing costs. The bill can be paid for out of the ARPA funds. The board questioned the value of the bill's accuracy. First Selectman Don Lowe agreed to re-exam the value of the bill with New Fairfield and to agenda for next BOS monthly meeting.

Comment: Jared Bonner of Anderson Road commented that there is no data available from the state on the status of contact tracing in Sherman. He also said he could provide to the board information he has sourced.

K) Progress report: proposed new Senior Center: At the current moment, 16 different firms have reached out with interest. The workshop group will be meeting April 6, 2022 to wade through the packets and narrow down which firms they are interested in. The goal is to work with an architect to draw up plans that can be presented to the community to gauge interest in the project. The group would need to go to the Town and request funds to pay for any architectural drawings. Presently, \$2500 has been allocated to pay for engineering. Transparency is the goal of this workshop group.

Comment: Terri Hahn of Pepper Pond Road asked, as a point of information, how many seniors live in Sherman and is that determined by the prime voters list. First Selectman Don Lowe replied that 21% of residents are over the age of 65.

L) Sherman School maintenance/repair report: Selectman Joel Bruzinski provided an update. Due to budget season, the group has spent time looking through bi-laws to make sure that the BOE is working within the proper confines of the law with the maintenance committee. The goal for the future is to present a 3 prong approach, 1) physical nature, 2) procedural, and 3) financial. Messaging needs to be clear so that there is a continued trust maintained with the community.

Other Business: First Selectman Don Lowe suggested revisiting LoTCIP grant for \$750,000 that the Town was granted but lost due to an unfavorable Town Meeting vote. He received new information that indicated that the grant could be revived.

Public Comment: Susan Zeitler of 8 Curtis Drive followed up from previous public comment to provide more context to the speakers in the video shared by Sabine Scherner. She also shared a video and fire houses denying of 5G technology.

Selectman Joel Bruzinski moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Motioned by: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

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

Notes respectfully submitted March April 1, 2022 by Margaret Beatty.