

## **Town of Sunderland Selectboard Special Meeting**

**Monday November 27th, 2023 7:00 PM**

### Members in Attendance:

Alex Bresnick  
Andrew McKeever  
Dixie Zens  
Marty Nadler  
Bruce Mattison

### Others in Attendance:

Mia Smith- Secretary  
Todd Lawrence- Emergency mgmt coordinator  
Andy Holzman  
Charlotte Jacobson  
Neil Jacobson

1. Call to Order by Dixie Zens at 7 pm.
2. Introduction of Board Members: Alex Bresnick, Andrew McKeever, Bruce Mattison, Marty Nadler by Chair Dixie Zens. Secretary Mia Smith, Emergency mgmt coord. Todd Lawrence.
3. Approval of the minutes of the November 13th, 2023 Selectboard Meeting.

Mover: Alex Bresnick  
2nd: Andrew McKeever  
Result: Passed

4. Public Comment- none

5. Hill Farm Rd Church Status – Andy Holzman & Neil Jacobson

- Neil Jacobson, President of the Committee (Trustees of Sunderland Union Church- “Zion Committee”), Charlotte Jacobson, Secretary, and Andy Holzman, Vice President of Committee.
- In 1890, land passed by deed to the community from the past owner (Eben Graves).
- Deed says as long as church is used once a year then it continues to be “owned” by the community and managed by Trustees.

- Dixie Zens asks Trustees what their vision is, they respond that it just needs to be managed and maintained. Currently no water, septic, heat, parking- all make it challenging to use.
- Foundation is subsiding, roof is leaking, steeple with bell may not be safe to use. Family of raccoons have been living there for “as long as can be remembered”.
- Neighbors (Neil and Andy) try to have fundraisers, the last “most serious one” in the late 90s.
- Trying to be realistic in repairs/financial requests, basically to keep it from falling down, this does not include foundation repairs.
- Alex Bresnick asks if there is a Trustee Charter in order to write a check to even begin doing work.
- Trustees recommend using town lawyer to look at paperwork and trustee charter to see how paperwork/payment would all work.
- When Eben Graves deeded the piece of land to committee/trustees, as long as it is used for community use/religious use, when that ceases the land goes back to the original grantor (Graves).
- Alex Bresnick says that it doesn't sound challenging to establish an entity.
- Immediate issue is cedar shake around the steeple, open to the weather.
- Trustee requests permission to communicate with Merrill (town lawyer), to find legal pathway to pay for repairs.
- Andrew McKeever says the village center designation opens the door to state grants/funding ([State Historic Restoration Grants](#))
- Interested in town funding for replacing steeple, roof, painting, windows- to tighten it up to weather.
- Dixie Zens asks for motion for permission for Trustees to talk about Sunderland Union Church (Zion Committee)

Mover: Marty Nadler  
 2nd: Andrew McKeever  
 Result: Passed

## 6. Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) with BCRC & Planning Board

## 7. ARPA Funds

- Alex Bresnick and Marty Nadler met to discuss creation of a committee. It was decided that Marty Nadler will head up the committee.
- Meeting starting Jan 7, 2024 at 7pm-9pm. Every sunday leading up to Town Meeting.

- Working group of 9 people.
- Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) recommends moving the funds into the town budget so that spending doesn't have to follow federal regulations.
- Bruce Mattison watched the webinar about ARPA funds use, that it could go into lowering taxes of town instead of spending it.
- Marty Nadler says it doesn't have to be spent, but just obligated by the end of 2024.
- New recommendation is to obligate funds by March 31, 2024 because feds are changing rules.
- Council of Rural Development returning in the spring to brainstorm ideas and support communities in allocating funds.
- Dixie Zens shares opinion to come up with concepts to share at Town Meeting for vote by the town.
- Marty Nadler called Secretary of State (Municipal Assistance) for working group protocol.
- Alex Bresnick recommends Municipal Assistance center with VLCT, attorneys on staff.
- Name of Group? "Citizens Working Group on Use of ARPA Funds"
- Bruce Mattison wonders who other members will be? Marty Nadler ticks of names he has reached out to or has thought to reach out to.
- Volunteers for "Working group" welcome!! Starting Jan 7, 2024 at 7pm at Town Hall.

## 8. Road Liaison Report

- Everything is going well!

## 9. Emergency Management Plan Approval – Short Version

- Todd Lawrence, Emergency mgmt coordinator, shares additions of towns gravel and propane suppliers that have been added since last draft.
- Marty Nadler compliments Todd Lawrence on his outstanding work.
- In training in Arlington, learned that pets can be crated overnight in Arlington Shelter.
- Has been reviewed by BCRC. If adopted by Selectboard, BCRC submits to the southern district, returning with any questions or changes.
- Marty Nadler makes motion to adopt short form of Emergency Management Plan.

Mover: Marty Nadler

2nd: Alex Bresnick  
Result: Passed

#### 10. Energy Committee

- Meeting Weds on mini grant (~\$4k originally), maybe ~\$3k remaining.

#### 11. BCRC, SWIP

- BCRC has submitted annual report, budget has changed because of Sunderland's population growth (1,056 residents).
- \$5,000, up from \$4,600 to BCRC.

#### 12. Old Business-

1. Review "Welcome to Sunderland" Signage
  - no update, waiting on elementary school.
  - Marty Nadler recommends asking for a deadline.
  - Andrew McKeever asks if they should come up with a plan-B incase ideas from elementary school don't work out.
2. Review "Sunderland's Village Center Designation"
  - no update from BCRC.
  - Andrew McKeever and Alex Bresnick wonder if the town has done their bit, who's taking the next step?
  - Confusion whether the next step is with the Selectboard or Planning board.
  - Dixie Zens will communicate with the Planning board for next steps.
3. Sunderland Hill Road Properties
  - Town attorney has presented a letter to the occupant.
  - Unknown if taxes have been paid.

*Executive session entered at 8:01*

Mover: Andrew McKeever  
2nd: Alex Bresnick  
Result: Passed

*Executive session exited at 8:15*

Mover: Alex Bresnick

2nd: Bruce Mattison  
Result: Passed

4. ATV Winter Access on Kelly Stand Rd

- Dixie Zens repeats the law about ATV'S being outlawed from designated roads.
- Dixie Zens got in touch with VLCT, said with the [ATV Law](#) that was passed in 2020, the town has the right to grant access through a club (who would manage the road, carry insurance, etc)
- Marty Nadler asks when exactly the residents face challenges? The board discusses the winter months when the town does not maintain road.
- Bruce Mattison says it turns into a VAST trail, that it is groomed down to the parking lot.
- Dixie Zens is going to get back in touch with VLCT about creating a form re: ATV law to allow residents to pass.

13. New Business-

- Request to compensate Michael Tuller for 184 mi of travel, \$123.03.
- Alex Bresnick moves to compensate Michael Tuller.

Mover: Alex Bresnick  
2nd: Bruce Mattison  
Result: Passed

14. Review of Correspondence/Signing of Warrants-

15. Next Meeting December 11, 2023, at 7:00 PM

16. Adjourn-

Mover: Alex Bresnick  
2nd: Andrew McKeever  
Result: Passed