

**Town of Sunderland Selectboard Special Meeting
Monday December 11th, 2023 7:00 PM**

Members in Attendance:

Alex Bresnick
Andrew McKeever
Dixie Zens
Marty Nadler
Bruce Mattison

Others in Attendance:

Mia Smith- Secretary
April Hewes
Kevin Hewes- Constable, Animal Control Officer
Dara Zink-BCRC
Gordon Dossett- Planning Board Member

1. Call to Order by Dixie Zens at 7 pm.
2. Introduction of Board Members: Marty Nadler, Alex Bresnick, Andrew McKeever, and Bruce Mattison by Chair Dixie Zens. Secretary Mia Smith, Dara Zink of BCRC, Kevin and April Hewes, town constable.
3. Approval of the minutes of the November 27th, 2023 Selectboard Meeting.

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

4. Public Comment- none.
5. Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) with BCRC & Planning Board
 - Dara Zink explains MTAP- funds provided from state, town has no responsibility in managing funds.
 - BCRC helps support state facilitate funds within region/towns.
 - If town of Sunderland wants to opt into program, they make a motion tonight that indicates their interest to the state.
 - State/counties/towns will work together to look at different existing programs and begin discussion on what falls into such a program.
 - State offers development assistance in water and sewer, housing, climate change resilience, community and economic development, etc.

- AOA will review towns needs and program options, then allocate funds.

Mover: Andrew McKeever

2nd: Marty Nadler

Result: Passed

6. ARPA Funds

- Citizens committee is formed, 9 members.
- Meetings start Jan 7, 2024
- See article in [Bennington Banner](#)
- Marty Nadler says they will utilize a list of various ARPA fund usage for ideas.

7. Road Liaison Report

- Marc Johnston is working on the budget for next year.
- Andrew McKeever explains an article talking about use of salt brine on roads, and asks if it's been looked into.
- Bruce Mattison mentions many other options, i.e. beet juice slurry mentioned earlier by Alex Bresnick.
- Alex Bresnick emphasizes importance of looking into other environmentally friendly options besides salt.
- Andrew McKeever brings up cost considerations of use of other salting techniques re: mechanism of spreading, storing, etc.

8. Energy Committee to create and mail an Energy Committee Survey with a notice of energy saving sources to make homes in our town more efficient.

- Would like to send surveys to learn about residential concerns.
- Educate residents on energy saving programs (i.e. window dressers), heat squad, ([Efficiency Vermont](#) rebates).

9. BCRC, SWIP

- Solid waste program meeting in Arlington on Wednesday.

10. Old Business-

– 1. Review “Welcome to Sunderland” Signage

- Tomorrow afternoon the elementary school will have ideas for town sign!
- Marty Nadler asks if an award for students has been decided. Dixie Zens says a personal idea is to give something to each student who participates. Marty Nadler mentions a certificate of achievement with a town stamp/seal for each student.
- Alex Bresnick has the idea of art supplies for classes/school.
- April Hewes asks if the winner, specifically, will get an award (first place).
- Alex Bresnick says maybe the board will come up with an amalgamation of an idea for the sign, based on the students' images.

– 2. Review “Sunderland’s Village Center Designation.

- Working with Planning Board and BCRB. Assistant director from BCRC asked for warned meeting on designation.
- Warned meeting is Monday, December 18th at 6 pm.
- BCRC will explain designation and impact on town.
- Gordon Dossett says meeting will be useful in getting feedback and letting residents know about process.

– 3. Sunderland Hill Road Properties

- Dixie Zens thanks residents and any community members who have cleaned up properties over the last month
- Bruce Mattison wonders if the residents have fulfilled their obligation, does the board need to make a motion to follow-up?
- Alex Bresnick asks if the board believes that residents have fulfilled the town's requests at this point?
- Town wants a contract and transfer of ownership.
- Alex Bresnick asks if the town should ask to be reimbursed for the cost of insurance? Bruce Mattison and Dixie Zens say no.
- If there are complaints about properties, then once there is a new zoning admin, other properties will be reviewed.
- Previous admin, Mr. Tuller, was previously reviewing other properties before resignation.
- Junk ordinance itself is not a reason for the town to get involved, in this case it was only a part of the larger tax issue.
- Dave Kiernan (member of Sunderland Planning Board, Shaftsbury Town Admin until 2024) is interested/volunteering as interim, can the planning board make a recommendation.
- Alex Bresnick says that since this appointment wasn't warned, the board should wait to make any motion so that there isn't any pushback by the public.
- Dixie Zens clarifies that technically the Planning Board works with Zoning Admin, but is hired by Selectboard.
- Dave Kiernan would like to discuss the scope of job before formally applying.

– 4. ATV Winter Access on Kelly Stand Rd

- Dixie Zens says he wasn't able to find a form to allow residents to access properties.
- Kevin Hewes says he believes the town will have to make one themselves.

-5. Dog attack issue

- Letter from the town lawyer says Sunderland resident wants to pursue lawsuit against dog/resident from Whitingham that attacked Sunderland resident's dog.

11. New Business-

- Northshire Day School is requesting \$11,000, same as last year.

- Project Against Violent Encounters, requesting \$150, same as last year.
- Southwest Vermont Council on Aging, requesting \$700.
- Alex Bresnick asks what the Sunderland attendance at Northshire is.
- Marty Nadler and Andrew McKeever say that the amount is proportional to the number of students.
- Alex Bresnick wonders when the bulk of the work on the budget begins? Dixie says it begins the next meeting, January 8th, 2024.
- Preliminary budget created by Susan Whitney already.
- Gordon Dossett says that if the board is going to be present next week, then maybe they can make a vote on Zoning Admin.
- Dixie Zens says after the public meeting they will transition to a business meeting for a vote.
- Andrew McKeever brings up the 250 anniversary of Declaration of Independence, reminding about the resolution the town joined to be involved in activities/celebrations through state.
- Dixie Zens asks for a motion for Andrew McKeever to be representative for town on the 250th celebration commission.

Mover: Alex Bresnick
 2nd: Marty Nadler
 Result: Passed

- Bruce Mattison asks a question about using ARPA funds to lower taxes.
- Marty Nadler says new rules allow for paying taxes or paying for governmental expenses.
- Can be added to the general fund as revenue. The only consideration is that it can't be added to a project ongoing.

Enter executive session, with Kevin Hewes, beginning at 7:46 pm.

Mover: Marty
 2nd: Bruce
 Result: Passed

Exit executive session, ending at 8:10 pm.

Mover: Marty
 2nd: Alex
 Result: Passed

- Selectboard reviews quotes for repairing heating in the office/file room from two different companies.
- Funds available from maintenance fund.
- Board says they'd like to opt for John Bushee.
- Dixie asks for a motion to award John Bushee the job.

Mover: Andrew McKeever
2nd: Bruce Mattison
Result: Passed

12. Review of Correspondence/Signing of Warrants-

13. Next Special Meeting to discuss the Sunderland Village Designation will be December 18, 2023, at 6:00 PM at Sunderland Town Hall and selection of Zoning Administrator.

14. Next Regular Business Meeting for the Sunderland Selectboard will be TUESDAY January 9, 2024.

15. Adjourn at 8:15 pm.

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