

**Town of Sherman
Board of Selectmen Monthly Meeting
Mallory Town Hall
February 26, 2026 at 7PM**

Present: First Selectman Don Lowe; Selectman Joel Bruzinski; Selectman Bob Ostrosky; Treasurer Andrea Maloney

Absent: None

Invited & Audience: Business Manager Liz LaVia; PW Supervisor Kris Fazzino; Jean Robbins; Suzanna Marker; Ben Chasse and John Flis (Newfield); Missy Alexander; Nelson Fall

Clerk: Nicole Zegley

Call to Order: First Selectman Don Lowe called the meeting to order at 7:00PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Correspondence: None

4. Administrative Items:

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2026 meeting.

Approval of January 22, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motioned By: First Selectman Done Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

All in Favor: Unanimous

Financial Review: Business Manager Liz LaVia updated the Board that everything is tracking as expected 8 months into this budget. In April further funding will be needed for Happy Acres. This year they have needed new appliances and barn repairs, paint and carpet removal. Park and rec will also need further funding.

Tax Refunds: First Selectman Don Lowe announced the tax refunds for approval.

A Motion was made to approve a tax refund in the amount of \$3006.80.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

Acknowledgments/Appointments:

Zoning Board of Appeals

A Motion was made to appoint Ged Diemer as an alternate commissioner for 2 years, term ending 1/1/2028.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

A Motion was made to appoint Christina Warner as an alternate commissioner for 2 years, term ending 1/1/2028.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

Commission for the Arts

A Motion was made to appoint Caitlin Mandracchia as a commissioner for 3 years, term ending 1/1/2029.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

A Motion was made to appoint Donna Kennedy as a commissioner for 3 years, term ending 1/1/2029.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

A Motion was made to appoint Brett Pransky as a commissioner for 3 years, term ending 1/1/2029.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

5. Information & Discussion:

- a. **SVFD:** Fire Chief Chris Fuchs was not present with an update, but First Selectman Don Lowe shared that there was a banquet the previous evening. Member Kris Fazzone was there and many SVFD volunteers were honored. SVFD responded to 388 calls last year. Two new members have joined.
- b. **Public Works:** PW Supervisor Kris Fazzone updated the board that the snow has been keeping them busy. Salt is their major concern as they have been

waiting for more than a month. There is enough for one more storm. The crews have been working on road cleanup, especially intersections. The new equipment has been working out very well. The only issue to report is the outdated fuel management system. This system fuels all town vehicles and equipment from Public Works, Senior Center van, school buses and fire department trucks and equipment. The diesel switch is broken, the display is faded and hard to read, and the keys (used by the authorized entities) aren't working. Poses a serious issue if the SVFD can't fuel up their trucks.

Liz LaVia added that there is only one repairman who can service the machine out of Massachusetts and even he can't get parts.

Kris Fazzone continued to explain that Michell's doesn't offer a replacement. American Petroleum offers 2 new pumps, a new management system, training of PW employees and a 1 year contract. With the Sourcewell discount it would cost \$29,094.57.

Liz LaVia expressed that this item is not an emergency, but does need to be done. Occasional an insurance company will inquire about fuel usage for the town.

Selectman Bob Ostrosky suggested adding this item to the March meeting.

Selectman Joel Bruzinski requested that another vendor proposal be sought out.

- c. **Sherman School Renovation Update:** First Selectman Don Lowe opened the floor to Ben Chasse and John Flis of NewField to give a detailed update on the progress at the school.

Ben Chasse (project manager) explained that 30 to 40 guys are on site daily between all the trades contributing to this build. There will be an increase in tradesmen onsite in the next few weeks (electrical, plumbing, HVAC). Some exterior brick removal from some window openings, slab removals throughout the interior renovation space for underground utilities, (plumbing, electrical conduit, etc). Waters Construction did foundation excavations for music and art areas, as well as the pre-K and kindergarten classrooms. Ground heaters were utilized for concrete pours and thawing frost. Steem workers are doing braces and a structural upgrade of the stage and gymnasium. The exterior has been on hold with the snow. The 2nd through 4th grade classroom spaces have been drywalled and insulated. Early next week, they should know when these classrooms will be set up. Schindler Elevator will be doing the refurbishment of the existing elevator. Over President's weekend, a large crane removed rooftop equipment. Plywood is temporarily keeping the weather out of the interior.

Selectman Bob Ostrosky asked if the project was still on schedule.

John Fils answered that the schedule is tight but doing well and is tracking monthly. He also gave a shout out to the building committee, Tim and Kerry, as communications have been excellent between them.

The Board thanked them for all of their hard work and invited them to provide verbal or written updates for future monthly BOS meetings.

- d. **Sherman Senior Center Building Committee Update:** First Selectman Don Lowe updated the board on the work accomplished by the committee. They are currently in the third phase of executing the project. The time line is running as expected.
- e. **Accept Trucks from SVFD to Public Works (brush truck 4; Engine 3):** First Selectman Don Lowe explained that SVFD has offered to donate two retired vehicles to Public Works.

First Selectman Don Lowe inquired which truck was going to require the most work.

PW Supervisor Kris Fazzone explained that both trucks will need work, but engine #3 (only 7000 miles on it) will need the most work and will become a plow/dump truck. Most of the work can be done onsite by Kyle Thomson and salvaged parts from other town trucks will be used. The brush truck#4 (only 14,000 miles on it) will become a maintenance vehicle and fuel truck for other equipment.

Selectman Bob Ostrosky clarified that this will give the town an extra truck for the time being.

Business Manager Liz LaVia asked for the value of each of these gifts.

PW Supervisor Kris Fazzone will need to look into that.

A Motion was made to accept from SVFD, brush truck #4 and engine #3 on behalf of Public Works.

Motioned By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Seconded By: Selectman Joel Bruzinski

All in Favor: Unanimous

Selectman Bob Ostrosky asked if the lift had been installed yet. The electrician has not come yet, but the concrete has been poured.

- f. **Sherman Playhouse Power Upgrade:** Selectman Joel Bruzinski gave an update on the request to upgrade the 200 amp single phase system to a 400 amp single phase. The estimate came in at just over \$30,000 to upgrade from the meter in. The question was what is the cost of the upgrade from the meter to the

road. Al, the VP of the Playhouse and Rick from Hantsch Electric, worked together and developed a more effective way to get from the meter in, down to \$12,000. Rick then met with Eversource and determined that power comes from the transformer by Giddings and with some help from PW, would bring the whole project down to approximately \$15,000 (Solid number with a solid plan).

First Selectman Don Lowe inquired what the best time of year would be to do this project.

Selectman Joel Bruzinski replied that after the ground thaws would be best.

Don Lowe asked if more bids were needed since bid ordinances changed.

Business manager Liz LaVia confirmed that RFP goes out at \$5,000 to \$25,000 and needs 3 bids.

PW Supervisor Kris Fazzino suggested using Wright Electric since the town has used them for other jobs.

Missy Alexander clarified that Deak Electric was the first bid and Hantsch was the second and only one more bid would be needed.

Selectman Joel Bruzinski will follow up with Wright.

- g. Storage Shed:** First Selectman Don Lowe explained that the scouts approached him about more storage space, but since adding it to the agenda, they no longer need it. There was a town meeting where a \$10,000 storage shed was approved for Mallory Town Hall.

Business Manager Liz LaVia clarified that the approval read that the shed was to be near Mallory Town Hall.

First Selectman Don Lowe continued that if this project was needed that it would have to go through the Historic District and Planning and Zoning.

Selectman Bob Ostrosky was concerned about locations.

Selectman Joel Bruzinski was concerned that more space might lead to more stuff.

First Selectman Don Lowe will go back to the scouts and find if there is still a need for it before going any further.

- h. Cyber Insurance Premiums:** First Selectman Don Lowe turned the meeting over to Business Manager Liz LaVia to go over cyber insurance premiums.

Business Manager Liz LaVia explained that the town has been without cyber insurance for a while. The town was able to get some quotes with multiple options, but this item is not currently budgeted and would need to be added to future fiscal years. Rich expressed to Liz that he is comfortable with the town's current level of security (data loss collection of the cloud). The insurance does not cover telephone fraud.

Selectmen Bob Ostrosky and Joel Bruzinski both agreed that it should be tabled until after budget season and more research might be needed.

- i. **Happy Acres Fuel Tank Replacement:** First Selectman Don Lowe discussed that David Jellen at Happy Acres Farm has been finding particles in his diesel tank, which is over 60 years old. The tank needed to be replaced urgently and has been ordered from Jennings for \$6,397.53 for the completed job. This item will be moved to a future town meeting.

Business Manager Lz LaVia added that there were concerns that there was ground contamination, which there was not.

A Motion was made to approve an expenditure in an amount not to exceed \$8,000 from the Happy Acres Restricted Fund for an emergency expense of a new fuel tank at Happy Acres Farm.

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded By: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

All in Favor: Unanimous

- j. **Building Department Fees:** First Selectman Don Lowe received a request from the Building Department to increase their fees.

Selectman Joel Bruzinski inquired as to why the line "post facto" decreased from \$500 to \$0. Further research needed.

Selectman Bob Ostrosky suggested waiting on this item until after budget season.

- k. **HRRA Member Ordinances:** First Selectman Don Lowe moved this item to a future meeting. The list of ordinances from HRRA had not been received.

Other Business: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment:

Motioned By: First Selectman Don Lowe

Seconded: Selectman Bob Ostrosky

Time: 7:59PM

Respectfully Submitted By Nicole Zegley