

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board Executive Session

Minutes for the Select Board Meeting held on Monday, October 20, 2025 at 6:00pm via zoom.

Members Present: Steve Seddon, Robert Fedell, John Field, Janey Snyder

Remote Participants: Laurie McArthur (SB Secretary), Mike Morrison, Steve Johnson, Esq., Attorney Andy Gambaccini, Zachary Nato,

1. Motion to enter Open Session

Steve Seddon introduced himself as the Select Board Chair for the Town of Sandisfield. The purpose of the executive session being conducted is pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 30A section 21 paragraph 1 to hear investigatory findings from Town Counsel regarding improper pay practices within the Town's Fire Department under the direction and/or control of Police Chief and Assistant Fire Chief, Michael Morrison. This matter was originally brought to the attention of the Board by Fire Chief, Michael Grillo, on July 1, 2025. Thereafter, the Board requested that KP Law conduct an investigation which was handled by Attorneys Deborah Ecker and Steven Johnson. KP Law issued its final investigation report to the Board on October 9, 2025.

Mr. Morrison is present at this hearing, along with Attorney Gambacinni. Counsel for Mr. Morrison, Andrew Gambacinni has waived the statutory notice requirement for this executive session.

The purpose of this executive session is to receive the investigation report handled by KP Law and make a decision as to whether to accept the findings contained in the investigation report and convene a subsequent hearing based on the findings. Mr. Morrison and Attorney Gambacinni both received a copy of KP Law's investigation report.

Steve allowed Attorney Steven Johnson of KP Law to speak on the findings contained within the investigation report provided to the Board. Steve noted that after Attorney Johnson has spoken, then Mr. Morrison and his Attorney will have an opportunity to speak. From here the Board will deliberate and vote on whether a second executive session will be required at which point the Board will discuss Mr. Morrison's possible discipline or dismissal from Town Employment.

Steven Johnson, Town Counsel from KP Law, reported that he and his colleague Attorney Deborah Ecker, conducted the investigation and drafted the report being presented tonight. Attorney Johnson reported that Fire Chief Michael Grillo sent a letter to the Board on July 1, 2025 regarding alleged improper pay practices within the Sandisfield Fire Department, facilitated by Mr. Morrison, in his role both as the Police Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief. It was reported that Chief Grillo believed that Mr. Morrison was submitting time sheets for hours not actually worked. It was noticed that members were consistently receiving three hours of pay per call, when there was a contractual provision for "minimum call hours".

After receiving Chief Grillo's letter, the Board contacted KP Law to facilitate an investigation and placed Mr. Morrison on administrative leave. The evidence reviewed consisted of Chief Grillo's July 1, 2025 letter, Police and Fire Department call logs from Berkshire Communications Center from June 2024-July 2025, Mr. Morrison's police department time sheets and detail records from June 2024 to July 2025, and Mr. Morrison's Town issued cellphone. No witnesses were interviewed for the matter.

Attorney Johnson conveyed that the intent was to compare the hours submitted on the timesheets to the times listed from both police and fire dispatch calls. In addition, Mr. Morrison's cellphone was utilized to determine whether there was any intent as to abiding by an informal practice of minimal call

hours. Nothing of relevance was found on the cellphone. A number of concerns were found regarding the time spent on calls and the timesheets.

Fire Chief Grillo informed Attorney Johnson that members should only be paid for actual time spent on calls in which a relevant Fire Department unit responded. Attorney Johnson reported that since both Fire and Police calls were listed together, they first had to extract relevant Fire Department calls, along with the exact time spent on the call. Mr. Morrison, and Mary Bredenfoerder had their own specific unit identifiers and were included on fire department call logs only. From here, they compared the time spent on calls to information listed on the timesheets.

Attorney Johnson reported that members consistently received three hours of pay for a call, even if it took significantly less time. This included Mr. Morrison. There were also instances where members were compensated for three hours for the Fire Department and three hours for EMS in the same day, suggesting that members were paid for six hours; even though no calls lasted or totaled six hours. There were instances of members claiming six or seven hours on a day where there was only a call lasting close to three hours, and the timesheets reflected payment for three hours when there were no relevant calls for those dates. Attorney Johnson noted that since Mr. Morrison specifically participated in these improper practices, and assuming he was responsible for submitting the timesheets to payroll, in his opinion these actions warranted discipline.

Steve asked if either Select Board member had any questions for attorney Johnson. Neither John or Bob had questions.

Mr. Morrison and Attorney Gambaccini, were offered the opportunity to be heard.

Attorney Gambaccini noted that there were no interviews conducted through the process. Chief Morrison's response was that he would prefer to participate in a hearing as opposed to an executive session via zoom.

John and Bob had no questions at this time.

Steve opened the matter for a discussion by the Select Board. Steve said that the information provided warrants moving forward with disciplinary action or dismissal. John concurred. Bob asked if Mike wanted to respond. Mike said it would be up to his attorney as to whether or not he would respond. Attorney Gambaccini said it would be better for the chief's response to be in a hearing.

A motion was made, seconded, and so voted to accept KP Law's findings issued in its October 9, 2025 report of audit of fire department pay practices and vote to convene in a second Executive Session, on a date that is agreeable to Mr. Morrison and Attorney Gambaccini, to discuss the discipline or dismissal of Mr. Morrison, based upon the investigation findings.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Robert Fedell	Aye
John Field	Aye

Attorney Gambaccini agreed to choose a date. Steven suggested Monday October 27, 2025 at 6:00pm. Attorney Gambaccini and Mike Morrison agreed to the date. Attorney Gambaccini suggested that they have a discussion as to whether or not virtual or in person would make the most sense.

2. Motion to enter Executive Session under G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(1) - To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. Not to return to Open Session.

3. Adjourn Executive Session

A motion was made, seconded, and so voted to exit Executive Session.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Robert Fedell	Aye
John Field	Aye

4. Adjourn the Meeting

A motion was made, seconded, and so voted to adjourn the meeting.

Steve Seddon	Aye
Robert Fedell	Aye
John Field	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 6:12pm.

Steve Seddon

John Field

Robert Fedell