

Minutes for the April 23, 2013, meeting of the Middlesex Select Board.

Present: Select Board Chair Peter Hood; Select Board members Mary Hood Alexander, Bill Callnan, Steve Martin; Rumney School Board Chair Julie Moore; Washington County Sheriff Sam Hill; Deputy Sheriff Bret Meyer; Onion River Soccer Club Director Mike Hepp and Doug Hayes.

Mary called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Julie Moore delivered a presentation on why the Rumney School Board supports the proposed \$4.5 million bond that is up for a town vote on May 14, 2013. She said it took the school board close to two years to settle on that figure after paring back TruexCullins's original plan of \$5.7 million.

She said the bond is necessary because the school of 184 students is at its maximum capacity. As many as 22 students are in some classrooms and studies commissioned by the school board show Rumney needs four more toilets. Also, the roof needs repair. In addition, the boilers are old – the backup was installed in 1971 - the kitchen is insufficient and the ventilation system needs upgrading. Finally, Rumney consumes 25% more energy than should be expected.

If the bond passes, Julie hopes to issue Request for Proposals by June so that an architect can be hired to draft a final design with construction beginning in the spring of 2014.

Bill noted that \$4.5 million was a big number. Julie agreed but said she hopes the actual construction costs will be less so a savings can be returned to the community.

Steve asked what the consequences are if the bond is defeated. Julie said that would be a serious problem since so many repairs are crucial. Unfortunately, previous school boards failed to set aside monies each year to consistently make repairs, so now we're stuck with a big bill, Julie said. She added that the board plans to designate as much as \$40,000 per year toward repair so the town won't have to face a bond of this magnitude again.

Steve echoed Bill's concern that it was a very high number. And Mary wondered why the kitchen at \$800,000 was so expensive. Julie said that included estimates of all new appliances.

Peter asked what if the State lifts its temporary suspension of construction grants after improvements are made to the school. Julie said it was unlikely Rumney would be eligible for such grants since the trend has been for the state to discourage smaller schools and encourage mergers.

Hopefully, she said, improvements paid for by this bond will last 15 to 20 years.

At the Board's request, Sam Hill provided an update on what services his office is willing to perform for the Town. In short, his department can handle speeding only. No dogs, no junk, no law enforcement other than being asked by the Vermont State Police to act as the first responder to an emergency.

Peter said he wasn't concerned about law enforcement – the State Police covers that – nor does he want anyone with a gun, but he would like a constable to write tickets. Otherwise, he said, we have no way of enforcing ordinances. Sam said he simply doesn't have the staff to absorb those additional duties.

Currently, the 2013 Town budget allows for \$5,000 to be paid to the Washington County Sheriff's Department for speeding enforcement. Peter said it would be better to go a little over the \$5,000 than under.

Deputy Bret Meyer listed the most recent violations (please see attached) and noted that the speed limit signs at the bottom of Shady Rill cannot be enforced because they are too far apart by law. The Sheriff's Department also needs four certified copies of updated town speed ordinances.

The Board suggested checking in with the Sheriff's Department in November.

At the Board's request, Onion River Soccer Club Director Mike Hepp was asked to appear before the Board to clarify how the ORSC received permission to practice on the Town playing fields near Rumney School. Doug Hayes, of East Hill, had expressed concern to Peter and the Town Clerk that ORSC had not received proper approval and might damage the field.

Mike said that after Vermont College canceled its longstanding agreement with ORSC six weeks earlier in an attempt to repair the college's fields, ORSC parent Brian Van Hoy of Middlesex suggested the Town fields. The Select Board considered the ORSC's request in March and then referred the matter to the Recreation Committee.

According to Mike, Brian told him that Mark Campbell of the Recreation Committee had approved the ORSC's use of the field for Monday and Wednesday evening practices as well as two games on Saturdays and another six on Sundays for the period of seven weeks this spring. Neither Mark Campbell nor Brian Van Hoy returned phone calls requesting their appearance at the April 23 Select Board Meeting.

Bill expressed concern about potential damage to the field. Mike said the ORSC could afford \$200 worth of grass seed that would be used by club volunteers to reseed the field.

Doug said he was concerned that the field would be off limits to Middlesex residents while ORSC was using it. Mike noted that several Middlesex kids are in the club which has 130 total from the Montpelier and U-32 School Districts, although only fifteen kids would be using Rumney's fields for a weekly total of about eight hours of use.

Mike promised that the ORSC would install portable toilets on the field during its season, spread grass seed and remove the goals so as not to interfere with T-ball. He also said he would produce a facilities use form and submit insurance naming Middlesex.

Doug asked to join the Recreation Committee and Peter said he should.

Peter also said that when it comes to outside organizations using Town facilities, the policy should be that the Recreation Committee submits to the Select Board for final approval.

In other business, the Board agreed that the Town should advertise for an animal control officer/constable to replace Eric Young who is stepping down June 1.

Also, the Board agreed the Town should advertise for a bookkeeper to serve as assistant to Treasurer Cindy Carlson.

All orders were signed.

The Select Board adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Merriman
Assistant to the Middlesex Select Board