

Select Board Members

Peter Hood, Chair
 Mary Just Skinner,
Vice Chair
 William Callnan
 Steve Martin
 Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, July 8, 2014
5:00 p.m.
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

Present: Chair Peter Hood (by phone), Vice Chair Mary Just Skinner (acting as chair in Peter's physical absence), Select Board Members Bill Callnan, Steve Martin and Liz Scharf, Treasurer Cindy Carlson, Conservation Commission Chair Dave Shepard and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order

1. Mary called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.
2. The agenda was amended to add two more items: designating another public place to post agendas/minutes and validating town employee pay raises which were approved in December.

Setting the 2014 Town Tax Rate

3. The Board discussed what contribution should be made from the \$202,000 fund balance to lower the town tax rate in order to mitigate a 6.5% rise in taxes largely due to the increase in the homestead education rate from 1.5074 to 1.6328 per \$100 of valuation. Bill said he was not inclined to put money raised through town taxes toward lowering the education rate. Liz questioned whether the town should be holding a fund balance that large. The Board agreed to revisit the issue during the next budget season, though Peter noted a fund balance even that big can be wiped out through emergency purchases.
4. Cindy said a contribution of \$15,000 from the fund balance would lower the town tax rate to 0.4211, a decrease from the previous year.
5. **MOTION: Peter moved and Bill seconded a motion to transfer \$15,000 from the fund balance to lower the 2014 town tax rate to 0.4211. The motion passed.**

Renewing William Yacavoni's Contract for the Annual Audit

6. The Board reviewed Bill Yacavoni's proposal to audit the town's books in August 2014 for a fee not exceeding \$4,025.
7. **MOTION: Bill moved to approve renewing Bill Yacavoni's contract. Steve seconded. The motion passed.**

Ratification of Interim Management Plan for Three Mile Bridge Road Park

8. Dave clarified that the Conservation Commission would implement the interim management plan for the land at 191 and 195 Three Mile Bridge Road and that maintenance would not be the town's responsibility.
9. **MOTION: Bill moved to approve the Interim Management Plan. Liz seconded. The motion passed.**

Considering a Town Purchasing Policy

10. The Board was advised that during a recent “pre audit” by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, auditors suggested that Middlesex adopt a town purchasing policy delineating when bids should be sought, how they should be sought and when competitive soliciting would suffice for major town purchases. While such a policy isn’t mandatory under state statute, the auditors said having one in place reassured townspeople and vendors of transparent government.
11. The Board generally agreed that the current situation in which the Road Foreman and Commissioner bring informal bids – and, for larger purchases, formal bids - before the Board works fine. However the Board would be willing to consider a concise policy to clarify the process.

Approving Liz Fortman as Health Officer/Erika Holm as Deputy Health Officer

12. **MOTION: Liz Scharf moved to recommend to the State Department of Health appointing Liz Fortman as Town Health Officer effective July 31, 2014, and Erika Holm as an additional Deputy Health Officer effective immediately. Steve seconded. The motion passed.**

Designating an Additional Public Place to Post Agendas/Minutes

13. **MOTION: Bill moved to designate Town Hall as the third public place to post municipal agendas and minutes. Steve seconded. The motion passed.**

Validating FY2015 Town Pay Raises

14. **MOTION: Bill moved to validate a 3.5% pay raise for town employees other than the road crew who would receive a 2% pay raise plus an additional \$0.25/hour effective July 1, 2014. Steve seconded. Liz abstained. The motion passed.**

Other Business

15. **MOTION: Bill moved to approve the Jun 24, 2014 Select Board meeting minutes. Steve seconded. The motion passed.**
16. The Board reviewed a letter from the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District concerning changes in state recycling/trash laws that will be phased in over time.
17. The Board discussed a footbridge that had been built over a ditch to provide access to the bandstand area.
18. All orders were signed.
19. Mary signed the sales agreement for the 2014 Komatsu bucket loader purchased for \$118,289 with a \$30,000 trade-in of the 1996 Caterpillar.
20. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Merriman, Town Clerk/Select Board Assistant