

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

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, April 14, 2015
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

Present: Chair Peter Hood, Vice Chair Mary Just Skinner, Members Steve Martin and Liz Scharf, Road Foreman Paul Cerminara, Conservation Commission Chair Dave Shepard and member Charles Merriman, Listers Dick Alderman and Eric Young and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman

Call to Order/Welcoming of Guests/Agenda Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

Highway Updates/Ford F550 Repairs/Revised Annual Financial Plan

Paul said the repairs for the Ford 550 cost \$19,300, approximately \$4,000 more than expected, although the new motor comes with a three-year warranty.

In preparation of making the town shed more energy efficient, Peter suggested that Steve and Paul review an energy audit done several years ago.

MOTION: Mary moved and Liz seconded approval of the Annual Financial Plan for the Town Highways after a previously approved plan was not accepted by the state due to missing information. The motion passed.

Proposed Wrightsville Reservoir Land Transfer to Middlesex

Due to unexpected delays, the Board agreed to move this issue up on the agenda. Dave, who works at the VT Department of Environmental Conservation, said he heard that his agency wanted to disencumber itself from ownership of the Wrightsville Recreation area and wanted to know if the town would be interested in acquiring the land for free. Mary said she contacted the Washington Electric Cooperative about this since it involves the dam, but Dave said the dam would not be part of the deal. Peter asked if there would be any restrictions if the town took over the land. Could the town sell it? Log it?

Dave said the total acreage is 677 with 500 acres of forest so a land management scheme might be feasible. Mary said she'd like to see the boat launch transferred to the VT Department of Fish and Wildlife which has shown interest in the past.

Charlie noted that if the town acquires the land, Middlesex will be forgoing approximately \$4,400 in PILOT payments from the state. He suggested asking for an opinion about the proposal from the municipal compact that currently manages the beach since representatives from Worcester, East Montpelier, and Montpelier are also part of that. Dave said residents of Middlesex are assessed 50 cents per person for management of the area, a rate that's remained steady for thirty years. Charlie noted that Wrightsville Manager Colin O'Neill said Barre residents are big users of the beach, so it's a regional resource.

Peter said he does not like the idea of the town owning large tracks of land and noted that when Wrightsville was first proposed, the idea of a beach was very controversial. However, it's worked out nicely with no problems. He suggested Dave find out how serious VTDEC was about relinquishing the land and then contact Fish and Wildlife for their opinions. Mary said she wanted to go on record as advocating that Wrightsville remain a resource for people in Central Vermont.

Considering Hiring Rich Lewis for a Town-wide Reappraisal

Dick said he recently received a call from appraiser Rich Lewis about doing a town-wide reappraisal that would begin June 2015 and end May 2017. The last such appraisal was in 2004 with a statistical upgrade in 2010 on the state's order because the town's Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) fell too low.

Peter asked why the town would spend money on an expensive reappraisal when the CLA is currently 97%. Dick said there are many properties the listers have been unable to visit, something Rich would be able to do. The cost spread over two years would be \$72,000. As of 4/13/2015, there was \$60,920.81 in the appraisal fund with another \$8,000 or so anticipated for 2016. Rich charges \$80/parcel. And Dick said Rich was familiar with the town, had done three reappraisals here in the past and was easy to work with. Eric said it really was an issue of fairness to Middlesex property owners.

Peter said even so, the town should do its due diligence by finding out what other towns pay. He suggested the Listers come to the Select Board's next meeting and report what they've found.

2015 Local Emergency Operations Plan

MOTION: After the Board reviewed the plan, Mary moved and Steve seconded its approval. The motion passed.

Town Hall Property Mound System

Steve said he was still investigating how much it would cost to put in a mound system behind town hall so the Board could determine whether to sell the abutting property to David Specht.

Milford Leonard Scholarship Representative

MOTION: Mary moved and Steve seconded appointing Liz as the Board's Milford Leonard scholarship representative. The motion passed and Liz received two applications from two students in town to share with the School Board's representative, Julie Moore.

OTHER BUSINESS

a.) **MOTION:** Mary moved and Steve seconded a WEC permit to cut and trim trees in the town's right of way along Macey Road for a 7200-volt electric distribution line. The motion passed.

b.) All orders were signed.

c.) Sarah relayed a conversation with Recreation Committee chairman Jason Merrill about the Rec Committee's plans for the town field, etc. Jason said the committee hasn't had a chance yet to meet, though he would like to appear before the Board on April 28, 2015.

d.) **MOTION:** Steve moved and Mary seconded approval of the 3.24.2015 Select Board minutes. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant