

Select Board Members
 Peter Hood, Chair
 Mary Just
Skinner,
Vice Chair
 Phil Hyjek
 Steve Martin
 Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, July 24, 2018
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 Skinner, Members Steve Martin and Phil Hyjek. Patrick and Tammy White. Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order, Amendments, Guests

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM and welcomed guests Patrick and Tammy White. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Downgrading/Discontinuing Five Town Roads

After holding a warned site visit and public hearing on June 26, 2018, regarding the discontinuation or downgrading of all, or parts of, Bolio, Warren, Merritt, Chase and Knapp roads, the Board discussed and voted on each road, following the requirements for the "public good, necessity and convenience of the inhabitants of Middlesex," as set forth in 19 V.S.A §710.

BOLIO ROAD (TH42):

Mary said in light of the Bolios' request that their road be discontinued and noting it was an expense to the Town to maintain this dead-end road as a Class 3, especially since it was not used by residents of Middlesex, the Board should discontinue it.

MOTION: Mary moved and Phil seconded discontinuing all of Bolio Road from its origin at VT Route 12 to its terminus. The motion passed.

WARREN ROAD (TH23):

Steve noted Warren has a huge culvert that needs maintenance and it's difficult for plows to turn around at the end of the driveway. Mary said there was no question that it was not to the benefit of the Town to maintain this road as Class 3 since it dead ends at a house, does not connect to a trail or any other access and is steep. Peter discussed how the homeowner's property value would be affected. Steve noted that as a private driveway it might be worth more. Phil said there is a larger issue: if the Town does not maintain the culvert, then future private landowners might not because it's so expensive. It could wash out or become blocked, in which case the Town would be in much worse shape because Culver Hill Road would be damaged. Peter agreed and said downgrading Warren from Class 3 to Class 4 – which would allow the Town to maintain the culvert, but not provide winter maintenance – would be in the best interests of the Town.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded downgrading Warren Road from Class 3 to Class 4 starting at its intersection with Culver Hill Road to its terminus. The motion passed.

MERRITT ROAD (TH11):

Since Patrick & Tammy White were in attendance and are the only ones living on Merritt Road, Mary asked if they wanted to speak. Patrick said they would prefer the Town keep the road as Class 3, but if that was not an option, they would prefer to have it thrown up. He said he did not want to ask permission from the Road Commissioner to do work on the road, which is what would happen if it was downgraded to Class 4. Nor did he want to spend personal time, effort and money on maintaining a Town road. He asked what the savings would be to the Town by having this road discontinued. Patrick said he'd feel better knowing there was a savings. Peter said it was difficult to estimate how much savings there would be since other variables increase costs, but there would be some savings because the Town will not have to make a special trip down Route 12 to plow Merritt and Bolio. Steve said he and Paul had been trying to estimate savings and would make an attempt again. Tammy noted the snow plow doesn't have to drive that far from Shady Rill. Steve pointed out that a smaller truck is used to plow Merritt Road, whereas Shady Rill is plowed by a 10-wheeler. Tammy asked about the discontinuation process and when the Town's easement off the road would be lifted.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded discontinuing Merritt Road from its origin at Route 12 until its terminus. The motion passed and the Whites left the meeting.

CHASE ROAD(TH6):

Steve recommended discontinuing the road from the bottom of the hill at Casey Ellison's property to its end at her house. He said that would provide a turn around for the plow. The Board briefly discussed why it shouldn't consider discontinuing more of Chase Road since there is a long stretch without any houses and very few houses on the road in general. The Board agreed it had warned discontinuing or downgrading only the end portion, so the rest of the road was out of consideration. The Board discussed surveying and decided the statute required only that the end of the remaining Class 3 portion be surveyed to show the delineation between the Town road and what would become Casey's private drive. Steve said Casey's fence is so close to the road, the snow from the plow pushes up against it. As for her argument at the June 26th public hearing that she was planning to subdivide the property and build more houses for more families in the future, he said she had submitted no subdivision permit or survey to that effect. Meanwhile, if she does subdivide the land and more houses are built, she can petition the Board to upgrade that portion of her road then.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded discontinuing @1,014-foot section of Chase Road - depending on the exact footage as determined by a future survey - from the culvert to its terminus at Casey Ellison's house. The motion passed.

KNAPP ROAD (TH4):

Steve said he assumed Connor Construction, which recently purchased the three parcels on Knapp Road, would have wanted the road discontinued from the State's Park & Ride to what was once Erla Ryan's house. However, Connor said if that portion of Knapp Road were discontinued entirely, it would lose all the necessary road frontage for development as required in the Middlesex Land Use regulations and there would be complications with the State's right of way on US Route 2. Steve noted Knapp is relatively easy to maintain since there are no culverts and that it was once the old Route 2. The Board agreed a survey would not be necessary since it's clear where the entrance to the State's Park & Ride is located.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded downgrading from Class 3 to Class 4 the 508-foot section of Knapp Road from the Vermont Agency of Transportation's Park & Ride to its terminus. The motion passed.

The Board agreed to compile its review and decisions into a Findings of Fact to be approved at the August 7, 2018 Select Board meeting, barring any complications. From that, the Board would issue orders to be recorded, along with any surveys, in the Town records.

Replacing the Damaged Fuel Tank at the Town Shed

This item was passed over because the Road Foreman was not present.

Approving a 7-year Community Bank note to Finance a New Highway Truck

The Board reviewed the following Community Bank rates to finance the \$149,860 Freightliner from Charlebois with plow: 5 years – 3.15%, 7 years – 3.25%, 10 years – 3.35%. Peter noted no payment from the Town would be due until a year from now. He said the seven-year rate gives the Town necessary flexibility. Steve noted that the difference between the one-year rate and the seven-year rate was miniscule.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded taking out a seven-year note from Community Bank at 3.25% annual interest to finance the \$149,860 Freightliner and plow. The motion passed.

The Board signed the Community Bank equipment note of \$101,774 payable over five years at an annual interest rate of 3.15%.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Mary moved and Peter seconded approving the minutes of the July 10, 2018, Select Board Meeting. The motion passed. The minutes were signed.

All orders were signed.

MOTION: Mary moved and Peter seconded approving a 7,200-volt electric distribution line installed by Washington Electric Co-op along Culver Hill Road. The motion passed and the Board signed the permit.

The Board reviewed a July 17th email from Ansley Bloomer asking that the Town take action against illegal shooting in the Town's gravel pit on Notch Road. While the Board had agreed at its June 12th meeting to install chains across the pit's entrance along with placing signs, Peter suggested going further by setting up concrete barriers that would be harder to move than chains. The Board decided to try the chains first and to clean out the debris left behind by the shooters.

Peter discussed an email he and Steve received from John Svagzdys on Portal Road regarding the material the Road Crew used that kicked up a lot of dust. Peter said it would be financially prohibitive – at a cost of \$15,000 to \$20,000 - to spread chloride on all the Town roads to keep down the dust. However, now that the Town was in a new fiscal year, it could pay for chloride application on a limited basis. In the meantime, recent heavy rain has dispensed with the dust.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 6:02 PM.

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

THE ABOVE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS A WARNED AGENDA ITEM AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD ON AUGUST 7, 2018.

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

MARY JUST SKINNER, VICE CHAIR

PHILIP HYJEK

STEVEN MARTIN

N/A
ELIZABETH SCHARF