

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

MINUTES
MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, December 18, 2018
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Peter O. Hood, Members Phil Hyjek, Steve Martin and Liz Scharf. Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. Middlesex Budget Committee Members Bill Dorigan, Elias Gardner and George Longenecker. Kellogg-Hubbard Library representative John Puleio. Jerome Lipani, recording for ORCA, and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order/Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and welcomed Jerome. The agenda was amended to include a discussion about upgrading the RAM on the Assistant Clerk's computer.

2019-20 BUDGET WORKSHOP
Draft Budget Review

The Board reviewed the draft budget which initially showed a decrease over the current 2018-19 budget largely because an employee stepped off the Town's health insurance and debt on highway equipment had been retired. If the numbers were correct, the Board discussed imposing a 2% budget increase and using the difference to pay down some debt and devote other funds toward building maintenance. Issues to consider: how much to invest in the current Town Hall while considering future solutions – a total Town Hall overhaul with a vault expansion or selling the building and building a new Town Hall in another location, perhaps closer to the school. Phil noted there was value in continuing to make improvements to the current Town Hall in case it is put up for sale. Peter said, in addition, the Board needs to address the Highway Department garage off Shady Rill Road since that, too, is in need of renovation. Liz suggested creating a building fund which would require a warned article for the March 2019 Town Meeting and voter approval. The Board discussed wage increases. With the Social Security increase at 2.8% for 2019 would a standard 2% increase be treading water? Phil, Liz and Steve said they were interested in considering 3%. The Board agreed to consider issues at the January 8th meeting with numbers plugged in to decrease debt/add to building maintenance along with wage increases.

REGULAR MEETING
January Meetings

With the normally scheduled first meeting on the month falling on January 1st, the Board agreed to meet at 4 p.m. Tuesday, January 8. The second meeting of the month will be held at the regular time: 5 p.m. on January 22. Bill and Elias left the meeting.

FY18 Audit

Peter asked Dorinda for her opinion on the audit performed by Batchelder & Associates. Dorinda said there were no errors found in the information she provided and no corrective actions recommended. She was confident in the Town's books because she followed good accounting practices. She recommended the audit be accepted.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded accepting the FY18 audit as conducted by Batchelder & Associates. The motion passed and Dorinda said she would notify the auditor.

Appointing Theo Kennedy to the Planning Commission

MOTION: Phil moved and Liz seconded appointing Theo Kennedy to the Planning Commission vacated by Steve Martin's resignation until the March 5, 2019 Town Meeting. The motion passed.

Approving KH Library's Request to Appear on the 2019 Town Meeting Warning

Speaking on behalf of Kellogg-Hubbard Library Executive Director Tom McKone, George said the library is asking its special article requesting level funding from last year - \$29,801 – be placed on the March 5, 2019 Town Meeting Warning by the Select Board, instead of by petition, for several reasons. He said valuable staff time is devoted to soliciting over 75 names of Middlesex voters even though Middlesex has historically funded the library without significant qualms at Town Meeting and only two towns served by the library still require petitions. Peter said the Board has discussed this issue numerous times before. The question has always been, if the Board agrees to put the library on the Warning, will that open the floodgates for other organizations. He said if the Board chooses this route, it will do so only for the library – and the Town's Conservation Fund – and not necessarily for everyone else. John suggested requiring petitions only if the library is increasing its funding request. The Board agreed that, ultimately, the voters will make the decision at Town Meeting by deciding on the library's special article.

MOTION: Liz moved and Phil seconded adding the Kellogg-Hubbard Library's funding request of \$29,801 to the Warning for the March 5, 2019 Town Meeting. The motion passed and Peter asked that Kellogg-Hubbard submit a letter to the Select Board making a formal request. John said he would pass the message. John and George left the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded approving the December 4, 2018 Select Board minutes. The motion passed and the minutes were signed. Peter abstained.

All orders were signed.

MOTION: Liz moved and Steve seconded approving WEC's request to install a 7,200-volt electric distribution line in the Town's right of way on Culver Hill Road. The motion passed and the permit was signed.

CORRESPONDENCE: The Board reviewed an email from Richard Hoermann on Daniel's Farm Road noting he had registered several vehicles that were considered junk on his property. The Board agreed that in so doing the Hoermanns had complied with the Town's junk ordinance and were no longer in violation. A formal letter would be sent.

The Board agreed that RB Tech should either assess or review its previous assessment of Town computers to determine if they needed more RAM. If so, they should be upgraded since RAM was relatively inexpensive.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 6:23 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Merriman, Town Clerk/Select Board Assistant

THE ABOVE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS A WARNED AGENDA ITEM AT A SPECIALLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD ON JANUARY 8, 2019.

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

n/a_
MARY JUST SKINNER, VICE CHAIR

PHILIP HYJEK

STEVEN MARTIN

ELIZABETH SCHARF

DRAFT