

Select Board Members
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peter Hood, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Mary Just Skinner, Vice Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Hyjek
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Martin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, February 15, 2022
REMOTE VIA ZOOM + Town Hall
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES.

PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Chair Peter O. Hood, Vice Chair Mary Just Skinner, Board Members Phil Hyjek, Steve Martin and Liz Scharf. Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. Budget Committee Member Randy Drury. Road Commissioner Vic Dwire. MVFD Chief Eric Metivier and President Jeff Koonz. Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman took the minutes and was present at Town Hall, which was recorded by ORCA.

Call to Order

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM. He asked for a moment of silence to remember Highway Department member Steve MacLaren who died that morning. The agenda was amended to include discussion of a possible capital-planning grant.

Discussing Applying for a CDBG Grant for Town Hall Planning

Liz said that with the capital spending plan study completed, the CVRPC has passed the torch to Elias Gardner of the Budget Committee. Liz said she will complete the final report and then that grant will be closed. The next task the committee will tackle is to determine the next steps for the Town Hall and/or the Highway Department. For example, the committee will look at all aspects of Town Hall including its structural state or possibly selling the building and finding a new building for the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall or, perhaps, a combined Town Hall/Town Shed. Because the Select Board doesn't have the capability to analyze this data, a Community Development Block Grant might be available to pay for planning, she said. This is a federal grant for municipalities that have a potential to serve a population of which 51% may be disabled and/or of low and moderate income. The maximum application is for \$60,000 which would be needed to pay for an engineering study. Liz said the grant cannot be too broad and, therefore, would focus just on Town Hall.

Liz said the Select Board should appoint a committee to oversee this grant which has a high level of administration. Christian Meyer from the CVRPC will help with the application and other grants may be available to pay for, say, repair of the lift or historic preservation. The grant has a 10% match, but that can be "in kind," Liz said. The due date for the application is the end of April.

Peter said the Town applies for the grant and, if it is awarded the grant, at that point the Select Board will decide whether to accept the grant. The Board will need to vote to support the grant. Peter pointed out this is just for planning. Dorinda asked when the grant would be activated; Peter said the Town would be informed sometime after June. Liz left the meeting.

2022 Certificate of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards

MOTION: Phil moved and Mary seconded approval of the 2022 Certificate of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards. The motion passed and those present will sign the certificate.

Joint Meeting with the Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department

Jeff ran through the calls to which the MVFD responded (including 12 calls to the FAST Squad) since the January joint meeting. There was combined training with Waitsfield and a meeting with local departments including Waitsfield and Moretown to discuss cooperative training. Jeff said there's a lot of good communication between the departments along with increased cooperative training. Peter brought up the possibility of merging the MVFD with the Town after Town Meeting and suggested they work out a schedule. Eric and Jeff concurred.

Vic asked if it's standard practice for Town road crews to be called out to assist the MVFD responding to fires. Jeff said this is common in all towns, the theory being that the Town owns the MVFD fire trucks and if they are damaged because of poor sanding/accessibility, they could incur thousands of dollars of damage. Vic said the Town Highway Department stayed all night for a recent Culver Hill fire. Jeff said there was a lot of travel for water and therefore Government Hill Road needed sanding. Eric reaffirmed that even Colchester does this. Mary asked who decides how long the Highway Department stays on the scene. Jeff said the MVFD. Steve and Peter agreed that this is part of working together and has historically been the way the two entities cooperate.

Jeff mentioned if there were questions about stipends; Dorinda said the Board asked her for a breakdown of stipends and the MVFD responded. Dorinda provided the Board with a spreadsheet. Eric and Jeff left the meeting.

Highway Department Report

The Board discussed the sobering news of Road Crew member Steve MacLaren's unanticipated death on Tuesday, February 15th. Peter asked if out of respect to Steve MacLaren the Board should hold off on advertising the vacancy created by his death. Steve Martin agreed that waiting a couple of weeks would be appropriate. Vic agreed. He said Steve MacLaren is sorely missed already, that he was personable and an asset to the Highway Department. Mary asked about support for his family. Steve said Shane, who's wife is Steve's Maclaren's sister, will return on Wednesday, February 16th.

A \$900 towing charge was incurred when a Town truck went off Government Hill Road because chains were placed on the front and not the rear tires as well. Vic said the Highway Department has a chain shortage. There was some damage to the sander that has since been repaired. Peter said the Town needs to do whatever it needs to do to get chains on the trucks to avoid injury. In response to Mary's questions, the Board discussed upcoming mud season predictions.

Treasurer's Report

Dorinda asked about a stormwater permit for Welch Park and whether that should be divided among all the Welch Park parties. Peter said yes. Dorinda informed the Board of the bookkeeper's schedule. Sarah and Dorinda praised new bookkeeper/ Assistant Clerk Cheryl Grandfield for doing excellent work on both jobs. Cheryl's a "true bookkeeper," Dorinda said and Sarah noted she learns fast and has great people skills.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Phil moved and Steve seconded approving the minutes of the February 1, 2022, Select Board Meeting. The motion passed. Mary abstained. The minutes passed.

The Board discussed Sky Barsch's request to hold yoga classes at the Bandstand this summer. Since this is part of her business, the Board requested more information along with a Certificate of Insurance. They would like more details about the fees she charges and what days she'd like to hold the classes so they can decide on a fee. She will have to fill out a use form.

All orders were signed.

Peter discussed the February 22, 2022 Informational Meeting about the March 1, 2022 Town Meeting ballot. Peter asked Phil to talk about the budge, and for Vic to talk about roads. Peter said he is prepared to discuss the Town employee pay raises.

Vic noted that Michael Bettis who works for Tenco, which is moving to New Hampshire, donated unused Tenco parts to the Highway Department. The Board thanked him.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM. Peter asked the Board to think about Steve MacLaren and his family.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant

THE ABOVE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS A WARNED AGENDA ITEM AT A REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD ON MARCH 1, 2022.

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

MARY JUST SKINNER, VICE CHAIR

PHILIP HYJEK

STEVEN MARTIN

ELIZABETH SCHARF

DRAFT