

Select Board Members

Peter Hood, Chair
 Liz, Scharf, Vice Chair
 Brigid Browning
 Randy Drury
 Vic Dwire

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, August 15, 2023
Middlesex Town Hall and via Zoom*
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Peter Hood*, Vice Chair Liz Scharf, Select Board members Brigid Browning, Randy Drury (who is also a member of the Budget Committee) and Vic Dwire (who is also Road Commissioner). Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. Road Foreman and MVFD Chief Eric Metivier. Aryka Radke, Deputy Commissioner of the Family Services Division of the Vermont Agency of Human Services. Deputy Secretary of the Agency of Human Services Todd Daloz. MVFD President Jeff Koonz. Emergency Management Coordinator Steven Dennis. CVFiber Executive Director Jenille Smith*. Lister Shelly Desjardin. Samantha Beaudoin. Former Road Foreman Paul Cerminara* and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman, who took the minutes. (*indicates attended via Zoom)

Call to Order, Welcoming Guests, Approving Minutes and Agenda

Peter asked Liz to run the meeting since he was participating remotely.

MOTION: Randy moved, and Vic seconded approving the August 1, 2023, Select Board minutes. The motion passed.

MOTION: Vic moved, and Peter seconded approving the amended agenda for the August 15, 2023, Regular Select Board meeting. The motion passed.

Plans to House Juveniles at the MTCR

Following up from the State's July 18, 2023, presentation to the Board, Todd, a Middlesex resident, said the State was committed to finding permanent location elsewhere, but that, for the time being, starting in January, his department would like to temporarily house three to four juveniles for approximately two-week terms at the Middlesex Therapeutic Community Residence on US Route 2. Since the closing of Woodside, there've been no adequate residential-treatment facilities for kids who've been found delinquent.

Aryka delivered a PowerPoint presentation that explained how child protection and youth justice falls under her Agency. The goal is to get kids the treatment they need so they can go home. However, with the closing of the State's only juvenile detention facility and the impact of the pandemic and then the July flood, there are 50% fewer beds for these kids than before. This has placed extraordinary pressure on the whole system.

The Agency has been greenlighted by the Legislature to build a permanent facility and is working on finding a place and a contractor while also pinning down a temporary solution, such as the MTCR. She said the US Route 2 facility will be "hardened" to keep kids from running away. (Todd noted that while the adults previously housed at the facility may not have been able to climb over the 12-foot walls, a hearty sixteen-year-old could). Staffing will be improved so that it's 1:1 and will be trained to handle this population. (When kids were temporarily housed at the MTCR during COVID, this was not the case, Todd said.) Liz said she appreciated the State's transparency and outreach. (Todd reached out to neighbors, as did the Town, to apprise them of this meeting.) She asked about "hardening." Todd said there would be minimal fencing, but more "robust" materials and that the extra construction would take place inside the current footprint.

Jeff said there was a problem this spring with kids pulling fire alarms. Aryka said this was good to know and she would research how other like facilities deal with this issue. Todd said more robust staffing will help. Randy asked if that staffing ratio would be 24 hours/day. Aryka said perhaps, but she didn't think so. Jeff asked if the MVFD could tour the facility to get a handle on the egresses and exits which can be complicated; Todd agreed. The Board thanked them for their update. Todd and Aryka left the meeting.

MVFD Monthly Meeting

Jeff delivered a monthly report (below) and said activity at the MVFD had calmed down since the flood. Dorinda said she needed a breakdown of hours the MVFD spent during the flood for FEMA. The Board discussed who removes trees.

Highway Report – Flood Recovery/Project Manager

Eric listed the roads that are mostly repaired: Culver, Brook, and Lower Sunny Brook. Macey Road is being worked on and soon the crew and contractors will move to Upper Barnett. Vic said Eric, Steve Martin and he inventoried the other roads and would like to improve East Hill Road from the Montpelier town line to Molly Supple. That kind of work would be put out to bid.

Randy asked about replacing the repaired culvert on Portal. Vic said because the culvert is so big, it may become a Vermont Agency of Transportation bridge that could be financed with 90% federal funds.

The Board discussed making Steve, who stepped in as project manager in the emergency phase of the flood recovery, a temporary town employee so he'd be covered by the town's insurance. The Board discussed his pay, and it was decided to redo the process of hiring a project manager. Vic agreed to contact three qualified candidates, including Steve, for their rates of compensation and experience. The Board set an Emergency Meeting for 3 PM, Wednesday, August 16, 2023, to choose a candidate.

Shelly asked about when the washout on Notch Road would be repair; Eric said it was on his list.

Treasurer Report: \$1.5 Million Line of Credit Approved to Pay for Flooded Road Repairs

Dorinda said all the bills for FY23 are in and the Town came in 8% under budget. She said she contacted RBTechnologies after the August 1st meeting and has received no response.

The Town has received over \$700,000 in bills for flood repair, Dorinda said. She said the Town's bank, Community Bank, N.A., can offer a line of credit at 3.99% interest to cover those until FEMA reimbursement comes through. However, the Town can "only go to the well once" and it could take two weeks to access the money. The Board discussed this, the possibility of using the remaining ARPA funds to pay for flood repair (as recently permitted) and dipping into the Town's fund balance. Dorinda said FEMA reimbursement might not come until the spring or summer of 2024. The Board agreed that \$1.5 million guaranteed the safest cushion.

MOTION: Peter moved, and Vic seconded, approving a Current Expense Note Line of Credit of \$1,500,000 from Community Bank, N.A. for a term length not to exceed one year to pay for expenses related to repairing damage from the July 8-10, 2023, storm/flooding incident in anticipation of reimbursement from FEMA, the State of Vermont and possibly other sources. The motion passed unanimously.

Dorinda asked about whether to wait for the line of credit to be activated or to start paying contractors from the Town's funds. Peter suggested using the line of credit; Liz agreed, noting that would keep it cleaner.

OTHER BUSINESS**Steven Dennis Appointed Emergency Management Coordinator**

Steve, the only Town resident to offer to serve as Emergency Management Coordinator after Paula Otenti's retirement, said he'd like the position because he wants to help the town. He has experience in construction which involved managing numerous projects and working with other foremen and project managers. He's interested in applying for grants to help with hazard mitigation as well. He said his current employer will allow him to rearrange his work schedule should an urgent emergency arise. Eric said he can connect Steve with some ICS training. Steve said he understands this is historically a volunteer position.

MOTION: Vic moved, and Brigid seconded, approving Steven Dennis as the Town Emergency Management Coordinator. The motion passed.

Welch Park update. No news.

Town Hall update. Liz said the subcommittee met with VIA to review the final drawing of the Town Hall rehabilitation and to discuss preliminary cost estimates. She said, roughly, were the rebuild to happen today, it would cost approximately \$2 million to refurbish the current Town Hall and perhaps \$2.2 million for a new building at another location. VIA will present its drawings and estimates to the Board and the public at the October 3, 2023, Select Board meeting. She said the project would be financed over 30 years and the Town would seek grants and fundraising to supplement bonds, if approved. She said the committee would likely recommend refurbishing vs. building new.

Regarding the Municipal Planning Grant, Liz said she recently learned the grant could pay for VIA's work after March 1, 2023, only. This might be a moot point since the Town funds used to pay VIA before March 1, might be written off as the Town's match.

Liz also said she has a meeting Thursday with Sam Lash from the CVRPC to do an energy walk through Town Hall, the MVFD station in Welch Park and the highway garage on Shady Rill. Peter asked about how to handle the Town's oil-based limping heating system in the interim before a Town Hall rebuild. Liz said she would inquire.

Community Resilience Capacity Grant. Liz said the Town has been approved for this \$4,000 grant, \$3,500 of which will be used to pay for a grant writer to write a MERP grant application and \$500 of which will go to the Energy Committee.

MOTION: Randy moved, and Vic seconded, authorizing Liz to sign the Community Resilience Capacity Grant agreement. The motion passed.

CVFiber Update. Jenille Smith said fiber has/is being strung along the following roads: Center, East Hill, Picard, South Bear Swamp, East Bear Swamp, Molly Supple, Tamarack, West Hill and Shady Rill. She encouraged those interested in the service to go to CVFiber's website - <https://cvfiber.net/> - to see on the map where fiber will be available. She said the group is looking for "friendly landlords" to test the network, the technology and billing system. The goal is to have the Town wired by the end of the year with some areas possibly activated in a few months.

Not every single road is on the build plan, she said. And, currently, off-grid addresses are not on the plan, though that doesn't mean they won't be lit eventually. The slowest speeds will be 100/100mbps (upload/download) at \$79/month to the fastest- 2,000/2,000mbps for \$199/month. Phone lines can be added for \$29/line/month. The connection fee is \$99. A long draw from the pole that's more than 400 feet will cost \$1/foot after the 400-foot mark. CVFiber is working on ways to make the services affordable.

6:30 PM

August 16, 2023

Liz said recently residents have inquired on Front Porch Forum about the unmarked CVFiber trucks and technicians. Jenille said they've been given stacks of handouts to give to anyone with questions.

Jenille thanked the Town for its generous commitment of \$100,000 of ARPA funds to CVFiber for installation in Middlesex. She said that will be matched by the VT Community Broadband Board so that \$200,000 will be allocated to Middlesex to pay for the connections.

All orders were signed.

Samantha asked Peter about Mead Road. Peter said her section of Mead Road will be regraded and once that happens, letters will be sent to neighbors outlining the rules regarding Class 4 roads, reminding abutters that they may not modify or work in the road without Town permission, nor can they park vehicles or block the road in any fashion.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

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 SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

ELIZABETH SCHARF, VICE CHAIR

BRIGID BROWNING

RANDY DRURY

VIC DWIRE

15 Aug MVFD Meeting Notes

Total calls to date: 62
Calls during the last month: 5
Mutual Aid out: 0
Mutual Aid in: 0
Max members respond: 7
Min members respond: 2
Avg members respond: 3.8

E-1 out 3 times
E-6 out 1 time
T-1 out 0 times
R-1 out 0 times
Tk-14 out 0 times

21 Jul, Notch Rd, Truck hit LP tank, E-1, 6, 3 responders
22 Jul, I-89, Car vs deer, E-1, 5 responders
02 Aug, US Rt 2, motorcycle accident, Canceled by P-11, 7 responders
04 Aug, I-89, Two car accident, E-1, 2 responders
11 Aug, East Hill and Portal Roads, Tree on power line, 2 responders direct

Training: Interior search and rescue

Work Night: Flood response after action discussion

Repairs: R-1 had gas tank straps replaced, should be the last repair we have to do on it.

Purchases: Two lengths of 4 inch hose.

Rescue Update: Took the deposit to North Hyde Park

FAST Sq:

11 total for the reporting period
9 medical only calls

Station 1 issue: Contacted Clear Water Filtration, Inc. are scheduled to put water softener and filter in on 01 Sep.