

**Middlesex Town Meeting Solutions Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2017
6:00 p.m. Middlesex Town Office**

Present: Susan Clark, Tim Murphy, Barb Whitchurch, Greg Whitchurch, Dave Shepard

1. Planning Commission Survey

Susan met with the Planning Commission about getting input from Middlesex residents to inform the drafting of the update of the Town Plan through the survey they are developing to send to Middlesex residents.

2. Priorities for the Town Meeting Solutions Committee (TMSC)

Susan asked members of the TMSC for their sense of what the priorities of the TMSC should be over the next year. Tim asked about our school districts progress on responding to the requirements of Act 46. Susan said the committee is working on developing a proposal for an alternative governance structure. There was a good response rate for the survey the committee developed and distributed.

The Town Plan update was mentioned as a priority and making sure the updated plan is representative of the residents' wishes. Other avenues for seeking input from residents in addition to the survey were suggested including public meetings or smaller, neighborhood style gatherings. A series of meetings with each focusing on a different part(s) of the plan might be helpful. Regarding developing the survey, it would be advantageous to have the assistance of someone with experience designing surveys. Other factors suggested to incorporate in the process were:

- employing techniques to allow participants to feel heard and engaged to help defuse us vs. them tensions;
- allowing for remote participation if the Planning Commission holds public meetings;
- options for submitting questions or concerns if people can't or aren't comfortable attending meetings.

Since the outcome of the Act 46 process has the potential to cause tension within the town there could be a need to bring residents together for some follow-up. There could be potential to fold this into discussion of the Town Plan update.

Susan will check with the Planning Commission on the Town Plan update process and timeline and whether they would like assistance from the TMSC in soliciting public input.

3. Minutes of the May 9, 2017 Meeting

Susan provided more specifics on attendance at the 2017 Town Meeting noting that 160 chairs were set up and were filled and there were also 20-40 individuals standing at various times during the meeting. With this clarification the minutes were approved.

4. Meals on Wheels Program

Mary Hood has met with Karol from the Waterbury Senior Citizen's Center about information to be presented for support of the monetary assistance request for the 2018 Town Meeting. Tim is also willing to meet with Karol and could prepare or analyze available data to help her respond to the types of questions posed by voters. If some of the data hasn't been collected yet, it would still be helpful to collect it even for a few months to help illustrate the service that is provided.

Date of next meeting: November 30th

Minutes prepared by Dave Shepard.

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