

Select Board Members

Peter Hood, Chair
 Mary Just Skinner,
Vice Chair
 William Callnan
 Steve Martin
 Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, April 28, 2015
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

Present: Vice Chair Mary Just Skinner, Members Steve Martin, Bill Callnan and Peter Hood (by speaker phone), Treasurer and Zoning Administrator Cindy Carlson, Town Forest Stewardship Committee Co-Chair Bill Rossmassler, Recreation Committee members Jason Merrill and Mark Campbell, Listers Dick Alderman (by speaker phone) and Eric Young, and Select Board Assistant and Town Clerk Sarah Merriman

Call to Order/Welcoming of Guests/Agenda Amendments

Mary called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. since Peter was out of town. There were no amendments.

Vacation/Personal Time Clarification and Charging for Vault Time

After Board reviewed the financials and noted that town clerk fees were lower than expected, Sarah suggesting charging researchers and lawyers for "vault time" as permitted by state statute, a practice most Vermont town clerks follow. The Board discussed this and agreed with the suggestion that the new policy begin on July 1, 2015.

The Board also discussed personal and vacation time after a member of the Road Crew asked for clarification of the temporary policy the Board approved last summer - in light of Road Foreman Paul Cerminara's accident - to allow the Road Crew to not lose vacation days that weren't used by July 1, 2014. Bill said the Board intentionally ruled on only vacation, not personal, time. However, he said most companies now make no distinction between personal and vacation time and the Board supported Cindy's suggestion that she find a way to switch personal and vacation times so the road crew member wouldn't be docked.

Cindy said she preferred a system where town employees are awarded their time-off days on January 1st so they can plan how to use them throughout the year instead of following an accrual method of "earning time." The board agreed this was the best way and that the Select Board should update the town's personnel policy before the new fiscal year.

Town Forest Update/Paying for Surveyor/Steed Property

Bill Rossmassler said the town forest has been mostly mapped but that surveyor Mike Patterson suggested hiring a professional to finish the survey correctly. Mike could get it done in a day for about \$400 or less. Bill Callnan suggested that Bill Rossmassler find funds from sources available to the Conservation Commission and if they come up short to ask the Select Board to pay the difference, perhaps out of the Board's discretionary money. Mary said Bill Rossmassler should make sure Mike records the final survey of the town forest in the Middlesex land records.

Bill Rossmassler said it is likely the town forest will be harvested per a land management plan when abutting land owner Anne Villeneuve harvests hers, in 2017. In the meantime, forester Rose Beatty has asked to be reimbursed for some of the time she's spent consulting on the forest, approximately \$280. Bill Callnan said he would prefer that consultants, etc. state their fees and contracts up front instead of retroactively. Therefore, the Board asked the Conservation Commission to pay for her services.

Bill Rossmassler said Cynthia Steed is thinking of selling her 38.9 acres and camps which abut the town forest and he wondered if the town would be interested in buying. The parcel was assessed at \$89,800 in 2010 and provides much-needed access to the forest. The Board discussed this and said Bill Rossmassler should bring the matter to the Conservation Commission. Peter suggested trying creative approaches to financing the purchase if possible.

Town Field Update/Use of Baseball Field

In light of the construction at Rumney School, Jason said the Recreation Committee is speeding up plans to turn and improve the soccer field so that it is parallel to the bandstand and is regulation size. He is hoping to finance this project by soliciting funds from private sponsors, keeping the cost to \$20,000. Peter cautioned him to check restrictions, if any, imposed on the field dimensions when the town received a federal grant to create the town recreation area. Jason said the town road crew would be digging test pits to check the condition of the soil. Peter encouraged Jason to continue exploring all possibilities for the field.

The Board also agreed to let little league use the baseball area of the field, especially since kids that young can't hit the ball far. However, Peter said the soccer field needs to be cordoned off.

Offering Rich Lewis a Town-wide Reappraisal Contract

Per the Select Board's previous request, Eric said he contacted several towns that have recently town-wide reappraisals. Of those, the closest situation to Middlesex's was Northfield that received six bids ranging from \$62-\$103/parcel. They went with the middle one at \$80/parcel. This is the same rate offered by Rich Lewis who has appraised Middlesex three times before and wants to do it again starting this summer over two years. Bill noted that the latest Middlesex CLA was 97% and Eric said the coefficient of dispersal was "very good," so why do the appraisal? Eric said there were many properties that have been improved of which the Listers are unaware and it will be over ten years since the last real appraisal (versus a statistical reappraisal in 2009). Bill said since Rich has appraised the town before and we are fitting it into his schedule, the town should receive a price reduction.

MOTION: Peter moved and Bill seconded offering Rich Lewis a contract to conduct a town-wide reappraisal beginning the summer of 2015 and extending into 2016 for \$75 per parcel subject to Select Board approval of contract and payment schedule. Vote taken by roll call. All approved. The motion passed.

Mound System Behind Town Hall

Steve said he was still waiting for information about installing a mound system behind Town Hall

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Steve moved and Mary seconded approving the April 14, 2015 Select Board minutes. The motion passed by a unanimous roll-call vote.

All Orders were signed.

Correspondence: A VLCT letter urging municipal official response to a proposal to decrease statewide payments to communities from the PILOT program was entered into the record. The Board agreed it did not get involved in political requests.

Paul Cerminara's letter of resignation from the MVFD was entered into the record. Peter asked Middlesex Fire Chief Doug Hanson to attend the next Select Board meeting to address some of the issues Paul raised.

Adjournment – Mary adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant