

Select Board Members

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

MINUTES
MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, June 23, 2015
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

Present: Chair Peter Hood, Select Board Members Bill Callnan and Steve Martin, Treasurer Cindy Carlson, David Specht and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order/Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The agenda was amended to add the following:

- a) A catering permit for Blue Stone Inc. to serve alcohol at #1 Simplicity Acres on July 25th
- b) Responding to complaints of barking/nuisance dogs at 81 Wood Road

Catering Permit /Authorizing the SB Assistant to Approve Permits

Motion: Bill moved and Steve seconded approving the catering permit for Blue Stone. The motion passed.

Motion: Bill moved and Steve seconded authorizing Sarah Merriman, as Select Board Assistant, to approve such catering permits in the future without Select Board approval. The motion passed.

Nuisance Dogs on Wood Road

Peter apprised the board of numerous complaints received by Animal Control Officer Erika Holm and Sarah about barking/threatening dogs at the home of Lauren Heyl at 81 Wood Road. The dogs bark at all hours and intimidate passersby, according to the complaints. Erika visited Lauren on June 11th, but no one answered the door even though all four dogs were out and a car was in the driveway. Sarah followed up with an email that same day to Lauren notifying her of the complaints and that she was in violation of state law because none of her four dogs was licensed, nor was there proof of vaccinations. The board reviewed the email. Lauren never responded.

As the complaints have continued, Peter said the next step would be for the Select Board to hold a dog hearing at 6 p.m. July 28, notify Lauren of such by certified mail, and, should the situation not improve, seize the dogs.

Implementing a Town Purchase Policy

In response to a June 9, 2015, audit conducted by the Vermont Department of Public Safety on behalf of FEMA, which required the town to adopt a purchase policy, the board reviewed a policy that was drafted by VLCT for communities in similar situations. The board decided that purchases under \$10,000 did not require Select Board approval but

that all purchases above \$25,000 needed to go out to bid as did recurring purchases that over a year's time equaled the same or above.

MOTION: Bill moved and Steve seconded approval of a town Purchase Policy. The motion passed.

Updating the Town's Personnel Policy

In response to the same audit, the board reviewed and updated the town's personnel policy. One issue was whether part-time employees were eligible for holiday pay as the former policy implied - even if they worked one day a week or a few hours every other week. By making part-time employees ineligible, however, that would mean Sarah, whose hours are split 50/50 into an elected (Town Clerk) and appointed (Select Board) position, would not be considered a full-time employee even though she is mandated to work 32 hours a week. Therefore, it was the sense of the Board that for personnel policy purposes, Sarah was to be treated as a full-time employee.

The Board eliminated Veteran's Day as a holiday because there would then be three holiday days in the month of November. Martin Luther King Jr. Day was made a holiday. The Board also rejected the possibility that domestic partners could receive town health benefits. However the Board increased the compensation to those employees who choose not to take the town's health coverage from \$100 to \$150/month.

Clauses about sick/personal leave and vacations were rewritten to include hours to allow for more flexibility. After some discussion, the Board agreed that vacation days should be fully earned by May 1st of each calendar year.

MOTION: Steve moved and Bill seconded approval of the updated Personnel Policy. The motion passed. It was requested that Sarah send copies of the new policy to the Highway and Fire Departments.

Johnson Environmental Review of Town Hall Septic – Morse Property

The Board reviewed an email from Johnson engineer Joel Behrsing who was asked to outline the town's septic options for Town Hall should the town sell the adjoining "Morse Property" to David Specht, owner of the Middlesex Country Store. The Board discussed Behrsing's preliminary findings, namely that the current system is illegal, but grandfathered. If a new system were installed, the town would have to seek variances from the state which would likely be granted provided that the use of town hall didn't change. The question was whether, knowing that, the Board would sell the property which could provide a backup septic site.

David asked if the town would sell the land if he granted an easement for the town's septic. Peter said the problem would be in engineering costs which could eat up the profits of selling the land to David. Peter said he did not want to sell the property for \$25,000 and incur an engineering fee of \$10,000. David said his engineer could design a septic system for the town based on gallons/day use at Town Hall provided it is used, on average, by 10 people per week. Steve noted that if David were to buy the land outright without figuring the septic/gas tank/well options for the store and the town, then he might find that he wouldn't be able to do everything with the land that he wanted to do and that would be his loss. David agreed to talk to his engineer and come back to the board with a proposal.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Board reviewed the June 15, 2015, decision by the Middlesex Zoning Board of Adjustment to grant a conditional use variance to Black River Design so they could build an addition to the school. The town is an abutting land owner.

The Board reviewed the annual list of dogs licensed in Middlesex by May 30, 2105. It was noted that Carol Picard's dogs were not licensed as stipulated during a December 2014 vicious dog hearing.

Peter signed the 2016 Letter of Agreement for Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) Cost Table.

MOTION: Steve moved and Bill seconded approval of the 6.9.2015 Select Board Minutes. The motion passed.

All Orders were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant