

Select Board Members
_ Peter Hood, Chair
_ X_ Mary Just Skinner,
Vice Chair
___ Phil Hyjek
x Steve Martin
X Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, September 26, 2017
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

Present: Chair Peter Hood, Vice Chair Mary Just Skinner, Members Steve Martin and Liz Scharf. Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. Lister Dick Alderman and ACO Erika Holm. Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order/Welcoming of Guests/Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. He welcomed attendee Heather Katz.

Lister Errors and Omissions on Spang/Vonhemert Properties

Dick explained that Lot B of a three-lot subdivision at 144 East Bear Swamp Road sold to Scott Gurley in March of 2017. The Listers broke out that parcel in the 2017 reappraisal but inadvertently treated the two remaining lots – A & C – as contiguous, when they were not. Therefore one tax bill was sent to the property owners Spang/Vonhemert. The Listers did not realize their mistake until after the 2017 Grand List had been lodged and now asked the Select Board to approve a correction to the Grand List based on “errors and omissions,” so they could create two separate parcels with the right value and send two separate tax bills.

MOTION: Mary moved to accept the error and omission; Steve seconded. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

The Board reviewed the Town's total debt report as Mary had requested at the previous meeting. The Town holds \$758,336 in total debt. The Board reviewed VLCT's Renewal Application for property and casualty insurance through PACIF. Dorinda noted that a 1.4% inflation factor was being applied to the 2017 property values. She also questioned the values of certain buildings and wondered when they'd last been appraised by PACIF. Peter suggested she contact VLCT and ask them about how they arrived at the numbers. The Board also reviewed Rich Lewis's bill for preparing for the BCA hearings and other work.

Statewide Hearings on S.27 Requiring Towns to Provide Primary Police Coverage

The Board reviewed a schedule of hearings around the state to solicit input on S. 27, a bill in the Vermont Legislature that would require towns to provide their own police protection instead of relying on the Vermont State Police alone. Peter noted this was a big burden for small towns like Middlesex. Mary suggested inviting Middlesex State Senator Anthony Pollina and also VSAB members Kim Bolduc and Everett Coffey to the October 10, 2017, Select Board meeting for a more in-depth discussion on the matter.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Board passed over approving the September 12, 2017 Select Board minutes due to lack of a quorum.

MOTION: Mary moved and Steve seconded approving the August 15, 2017, Select Board minutes. The motion passed with Liz abstaining because she was not present at that meeting.

MOTION: Steve moved and Liz seconded designating Town Moderator Susan Clark as a voting delegate at the VLCT Annual Meeting on October 4, 2017. The motion passed and Peter signed the delegate form.

Correspondence: The Board reviewed a letter from Suzanne Larkin regarding the replacement of a damaged culvert on Portal Road.

The Board also read an email from Charis Churchill asking how she could get bus stop signs placed near the intersection of Culver Hill and Dolan roads where children from several families wait for the bus. She noted that commuters speed up and down the hill. The Board agreed that if Charis and her neighbors paid for the signs, poles and hardware, the Road Crew would install them.

All Orders were signed.

ACO Erika Holm Update on Lauren Heyl's Dogs

Erika reported that Lauren's dogs have been well behaved now that she had given two up for adoption. She met the deadlines imposed by the Board in response to neighbors' complaints that her four dogs ran at large, were threatening and barked constantly. Lauren also installed an electric fence and does not let her dogs bark at night. The Board was satisfied that she has complied with stipulations set forth earlier in the year and considered the case closed.

However, now Erika is dealing with errant chickens owned by Emily Bixby, a renter of Iris Davis's house on Brook Road. Erika said the chickens have been digging up gardens owned by neighbor Phil Hyjek, who is also a Select Board member. Oddly, it was Emily who first called Erika to complain that Phil and his wife, Roberta, were “harassing” her about her chickens. Erika told Emily she was in the wrong and explained that just because they are “free range,” doesn't mean the chickens have free license to trample the properties of others. The Board agreed the Town did not have the right to seize the chickens, but that Emily should be forewarned that Phil and Roberta - or any neighbors – have the right to do what they will to chickens who trespass onto their property. The Board hoped Emily would contain or remove her chickens.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Merriman
Town Clerk/Select Board Assistant