

Select Board Members

X_ Peter Hood, Chair
_ X_ Mary Just Skinner,
Vice Chair
_ X_ Phil Hyjek
_ X_ Steve Martin
_ X_ Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, November 14, 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, Liz Scharf and Phil Hyjek. Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. MVFD President Jeff Koonz and Fast Squad Director Marge Bower. MCC Treasurer Heather Katz. Budget Committee members Bill Dorigan, George Longenecker, Ruth Dockter, Barry Bolio and Elias Gardner, and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order/Welcoming of Guests/Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. The agenda was amended to include an Executive Session to discuss pending litigation.

FY 2018-19 Budget Workshop
MVFD Budget Request

Jeff presented the Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department Budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year of @\$63,000, not including debt service which brought it to \$138,271, according to Dorinda's calculations, for a total increase of 5%. Jeff noted that the Town had no control over certain increases, especially Capital West's dispatching fees which are slated to rise by 5.5%. In addition, the department will have to begin replacing three defibrillators which were bought ten years ago at the same time with grant money. A new defibrillator will cost \$3,000. The Board reviewed the number of calls the MVFD has responded to from January through October, approximately 48. In addition, the FAST Squad responded to 120 calls.

Bill asked about training. Dorinda and Jeff discussed breaking out training costs from fees and dues. Jeff asked for monthly financial reports from the bookkeeper instead of quarterly. Mary asked about fund raising and Jeff said \$750 had been raised from 50/50 sales which was used to pay for truck lettering. Jeff and Marge left the meeting.

MCC Budget and Conservation Fund Requests

The Middlesex Conservation Commission is asking for the usual request of \$500, Heather told the Board. The MCC is also asking for \$5,000 to be considered as a Special Article in the 2018 Town Meeting Warning for the Conservation Fund which usually goes toward land acquisition. She said professionals will have to be brought in to help with the Town Forest trail work since it cannot be done by volunteers alone.

REGULAR MEETING

Appointing Sorsha Anderson to the MCC

Speaking on behalf of the MCC of which he is a member, George said the Commission had unanimously voted to nominate Sorsha to the Commission at their last meeting on November 2.

MOTION: Liz moved and Steve seconded appointing Sorsha to the MCC. The motion passed.

Revised Town Class 4 Roads and Trails Policy

Peter moved this item up the agenda so Barry Bolio could attend before heading up to the Budget Committee organizational meeting. The Board reviewed changes to the Town's Class 4 Roads and Trails Policy that had been inspired by a memo from Scott Skinner. The changes included requiring the Road Commissioner to notify the Select Board at its next meeting of any permissions granted to private landowners to improve Class 4 roads, notifying other abutting landowners in writing of those improvements, and advising landowners executing such improvements that the Commissioner's permission is for a one-time project only. The Board also agreed that the Town's internal policy regarding Class 4 road maintenance should be revisited.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded approving the revisions to the Town Class 4 Road and Trails Policy. The motion passed and the Board signed the policy that

was then recorded in the Town records. The members of the Budget Committee, aside from Heather, left the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Welch Park

Dorinda asked for clarification on paying for recent paving of the Welch Park access road. She said there should be a separate account for Welch Park expenses such as paving the communal road and maintaining the communal well. Peter said the money should not come from the MVFD budget even though only the fire station is in Welch Park. There is other land there that is owned by the Town, but has nothing to do with the MFVD. The Board agreed a Welch Park line item should be created now for such expenses and that an annual meeting of the Welch Park Association should be held in 2018.

Contract with Jet Service Envelope for the 2017 & 2018 Town Reports

Sarah told the Board that after soliciting bids for the upcoming Town Report, four printers responded with the following offers: Jet Service Envelope: \$2,130, L. Brown & Sons Printing: \$2,720 + \$205.90 for mailing service. Repro: \$1,865 and Spaulding Press: \$2,130. L. Brown was quite a bit higher and while Repro was lower, the company also suggested that its production schedules were such that towns should plan on automatically running their town warnings in the newspaper of record to avoid violating state statute. Spaulding is out of Bethel, but Jet Service is local. She recommended them. **MOTION: Mary moved and Phil seconded contracting with Jet Service Envelope to publish the 2017 and 2018 Town reports for \$2,130 each year in a two-year contract.** The motion passed and the Board signed the contract.

Update on NEMRC Cloud and Remote Access

Phil researched technologies so Dorinda could securely access the Town's financial records from home where she most often works. One option is NEMRC's new cloud-based product. The Town already uploads all tax, grand list and financial data to NEMRC's server, so this would be logical. In the meantime, Phil suggested using GoToMyPc which will work with a firewall in a Virtual Private Network, which the Town has. He said TeamViewer, preferred by RB Technologies, was expensive and overkill. Peter said he liked the idea of storing information on the cloud on a month-by-month basis until the Town can switch over to NEMRC's cloud.

Creating a Central Vermont ISP District

Phil attended a start-up meeting organized by Berlin Select Board member and Norwich Professor Jeremy Hanson to create a virtual communications district. Modeled after electric coops which brought electricity to rural areas back in the day, the district would provide fiber-optic broadband to parts of Middlesex and surrounding towns that suffer from slow, and often nonexistent, DSL. From his research, it appears the Fairpoint, for example, has no plan to upgrade internet service in the area. Therefore, this district would address those needs. By state statute, it cannot be funded by tax dollars and, therefore, must be supported by voluntary fees which could be \$60-\$80 per month. However, the speeds would be lightning fast with downloads of 100Mbps to 700Mbps, thereby allowing people to work from home, etc. A minimum of two towns must bring the district before the voters as a special article on their town meeting warnings. If two towns approve, then the district is created. After that, individual Select Boards can vote to join without going to a town-wide vote. Grant money may be available and since the startup and installation costs will be paid for by municipal bonds, investors are almost guaranteed. Maintenance on the lines could be contracted out to WEC or Waitsfield Telecom. The Board expressed interest and will consider the question when it drafts the 2018 Town Meeting Warning.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Liz moved and Steve seconded approving the October 24, 2017, Select Board meeting minutes. The motion passed.

All Orders were signed.

Sarah told the Board that Paul Otenti does not want to seek an upgrade of the Class 4 portion of Zdon Road. Therefore, the Highway Department will not use its driveway as a snowplow turnaround.

The Board reviewed a memo from Maryke Gillis re: clarification of E911 road name changes. Since private roads are not owned by the Town, the Town cannot force landowners to change the names of the roads, nor is Select Board approval required to change those names.

MOTION: Liz moved and Phil seconded WEC's request to extend a 7,200-volt power line up Zdon Road. The motion passed and the permit was signed.

Peter conveyed a phone conversation he had with a woodworker interested in renting the old fire station behind down hall for his business. Peter said he advised him that the Town's insurance would go up with this use and he would need to cover that cost. There is also no heat in the building, the voltage is low, and the second floor is not structurally sound. The Board discussed whether Village zoning allowed for a woodworking shop and retail space.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Liz moved and Steve seconded entering into executive session to discuss pending litigation against the Town. The motion passed and at 7:00 p.m. the Board entered executive session.

MOTION: Peter moved and Mary seconded exiting executive session. The motion passed and the Board left executive session at 7:12 p.m.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 7:13 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant

ABOVE MINUTES APPROVED NOVEMBER 28, 2017

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

MARY JUST SKINNER, VICE CHAIR

STEVEN MARTIN

ELIZABETH SCHARF

PHILIP HYJEK