

Select Board Members
 Peter Hood, Chair
 Mary Just Skinner,
Vice Chair
 Phil Hyjek
 Steve Martin
 Liz Scharf

MINUTES
MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, September 18, 2018
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Peter Hood, Members Phil Hyjek, Steve Martin and Liz Scharf. Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. Martin Thomas of Edward Jones. Russ Bennett and Mike Pelchar of Planetary Matters. Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order/Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. The agenda was amended to include considering a new Community Bank note to finance the MVFD 2004 Freightliner tanker.

North Branch Cemetery Financial Portfolio Review

Martin Thomas, a broker at Edward Jones who's been managing investments for the North Branch Cemetery, presented the Board with an analysis of the fund's portfolio. Peter stressed that the Board's interest was generating enough annual income to cover maintenance of the cemetery to supplement fees raised by burials, etc. He asked that the fund be tilted more toward income than growth. Also, the Town did not need to worry about tax-free funds since municipalities are not taxed. Dorinda noted she would have a better sense of the cemetery's expenses next month. Since performance pages were not included in the packets, Martin said he would submit them the following day and the Board agreed Dorinda could proceed accordingly.

Considering a Planning Grant to Study the Route 2 Corridor

Mike and Russ of Planetary Matters, LLC., which, with partner Alan Newman, recently purchased the old "Camp Meade" property on Route 2, along with the house next door and the former Champlain Oil property across the street, presented a proposal to apply for a \$22,000 planning grant – with a \$2,000 Town contribution – from the VT Department of Housing and Community Development to study the Route 2 corridor in Middlesex Village, from approximately Center Road to Route 100. If approved, the grant would pay for a study of transportation options, particularly those focused on improving pedestrian/bicycle access and traffic calming.

Russ said Juli Beth Hinds, an instructor at UC San Diego who is also associated with Birchline Planning, LLC, would write the grant application at Planetary Matters' expense. However, the application needed to be submitted by October 1st so time was of the essence, especially since the next Select Board meeting would be October 2nd. Because the application was on the agenda for the September 19 Planning Commission meeting, Russ wondered if the Board could pass a resolution to approve the grant application before the Planning Commission in order to meet the deadline.

Peter noted the Town had been down this road – not to pun – before with the 2010 Village Enhancement grant that produced mixed results. Liz brought up several issues facing Planetary Matters' development plans, such as the lack of a municipal sewer system. Mike said one well on one of the properties Planetary Matters purchased produces 40 gallons/minute while the one across the street produces 60 gallons/minutes, plenty for the projects they're considering. In addition, the Camp Meade property has ample undeveloped space for a waste-water system that will meet their anticipated use. Mike said Planetary Matters was interested in bringing in arts and crafts stores, perhaps another restaurant to complement Red Hen, but not a gas station or hotel as rumored, so massive sewer systems were unnecessary.

The Board discussed the timeline for approving the grant application and whether to hold a special meeting after the Planning Commission meets. Russ said he didn't want it to appear as if Planetary Matters was "buying off the town" with the grant. Simply, a study of the Route 2 corridor would benefit both his company and the town, especially at a time when the Planning Commission was revising the Town Plan. Liz said she didn't have a problem with Planetary Matters hiring Juli Beth to complete the grant application. Phil said the projected went beyond expanding Middlesex's tax base to improving livability. Mike and Russ left the meeting.

Treasurer’s Report: Approving a 7-year Bond for the MVFD 2004 Freightliner

Dorinda said the one-year bond from Community Bank the Board took out last year to pay for the new/used fire truck had expired and needed to be renewed. The Board considered three options: a one-year bond at 3.12% (the previous one-year bond was at 1.85%), a five-year bond at 3.26%, and a seven-year bond at 3.38%. The Board discussed rising interest rates and the best financial strategy.

MOTION: Liz moved and Steve seconded approving a seven-year bond from Community Bank at 3.38% and authorizing the Select Board Chair and the Town Treasurer to sign the accompany documents. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded approving the minutes from the September 4, 2018 Select Board meeting. Liz abstained since she had not been present. The motion passed and the minutes were signed.

All orders were signed.

The Board discussed low water levels at the Welch Park fire pond and a report from Carl Bailin of Hartigan that underground pressurized tanks delivering fresh water to buildings in the office park were corroding. Peter and Steve agreed to meet with Carl and check out the problem and perhaps call for an emergency Welch Park meeting.

The Board scheduled a Special Meeting for 9 a.m. Monday, September 24, 2018 in the Town Clerk’s Office to vote on a resolution approving the Municipal Planning Grant application to the VT Department of Housing and Community Development if the Planning Commission so recommends at its September 19, 2018 meeting.

The Board discussed upcoming budget workshop hearings. Steve said the Highway Department could present a preliminary budget on October 2nd.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Merriman, Town Clerk/Select Board Assistant

THE ABOVE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS A WARNED AGENDA ITEM AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD ON OCTOBER 2, 2018.

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

N/A
MARY JUST SKINNER, VICE CHAIR

PHILIP HYJEK

STEVEN MARTIN

ELIZABETH SCHARF