

Select Board Members	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peter Hood, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mary Just Skinner, Vice Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Phil Hyjek
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Martin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, June 1, 2021
REMOTE VIA ZOOM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES.

PRESENT: Peter O. Hood, Chair, Members Phil Hyjek and Steve Martin. Treasurer Dorinda Crowell. Randy Drury. Road Commissioner Vic Dwire. Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman took the minutes and the meeting was recorded by ORCA.

Call to Order

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Imposing a 5% Penalty on Late HS-122 Filers

Phil said in light of the pandemic, he's willing to postpone imposing a potential penalty of up to 8% on residents who do not file their HS-122 (Homestead Declaration) forms with their state income taxes, thereby benefitting from a lower non-residential Middlesex tax rate. Dorinda said this has to do with filing the HS-122, not with the hardship of paying property taxes. Phil added that the tax filing deadline was extended, so the HS-122 deadline was extended as well. The Board discussed the burden late filers place on the Town, the extra notices that must be issued, the extra accounting that's often confusing for taxpayers. The Town has no recourse except to impose a penalty and/or ask the Listers to report non-filers who are believed to be homesteaders to the state tax department. It's unclear what happens after that. Phil said the whole thing seem backwards since if you don't file, you get a lower rate. Whereas if you do file a HS-122 in Middlesex, you're taxed at the higher homestead rate. Randy said that as a taxpayer it's irritating to know there might be those who are intentionally not filing their HS-122s so they can pay a lower rate.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded imposing a penalty of 5% on the education portion of 2021 Town tax bills for Middlesex homesteaders who did not file their HS-122 forms by May 17, 2021. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Dorinda apprised the Board about submissions she and former Road Commissioner Steve Martin turned into the state to draw down from an \$80,000 Highway Emergency Grant related to the May 19, 2019 storm. The Board reviewed the submissions and complimented Dorinda and Steve for their detailed accounting.

Highway Report

Vic said the speed signs approved by the voters at the March 2020 Town Meeting have been installed in Putnamville. He said the old Class 4 section of McCullough Hill Road would be closed for culvert replacement. Ditching along the bottom of Shady Rill and clean up on Wood roads have been completed. The Road Crew is headed to Bolduc and Tangletown roads to finish ditching by September 1st with the hope that a state paving grant will come through and they can prep Center Road from the intersection with Brook Road down to the interstate, though it's unlikely the work will be completed until spring of 2022. Dubois will start ditching along East Hill soon. Austin Weed is fixing the pump of the hydroseeder, which has put the Town behind schedule. The Town is going to hire McCullough Crushing to screen sand from the Town pit on Notch Road for storage at the Town Garage. The grader may be coming as soon as the second week of July. Randy asked about touching up the bottom of McCullough Hill Road when Center Road is paved.

Peter said it's his memory that the Road Crew has a year from July to use up all but 15 days (120 hours) of extra vacation time according to the revised Town Personnel Policy passed by the Board on May 18th. Vic said the crew was concerned about when they got their vacation time. Dorinda said nothing about that has changed in the new policy; vacation time accrues with each pay period. If they had 135 hours on June 30th, for example, they could carry over only 120 hours into the new fiscal year that begins July 1st. Dorinda said she did not think this was an issue for the Road Crew. Peter wanted to make it clear that the carryover provision regarding the 120 hours would not be implemented until July 1, 2022. The Board confirmed.

OTHER BUSINESS

All orders were reviewed and approved electronically.

MOTION: Steve moved and Phil seconded approving the May 18, 2021 Select Board minutes. The motion passed.

Correspondence: The Board reviewed the May 16, 2021 letter from the WCUUSD saying they were going to keep the charging station at Rumney, but they wouldn't pay for the electricity.

The Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department discussions - Peter said if the Board is thinking of asking the Town to overtake the fire department, then Board members need to keep this in mind during discussions about the future of the MVFD. He reiterated that it fundamentally makes no sense that the Town pays for the building and equipment and provides most of the funding, but has no control over the MVFD, which is a separate 501C3 organization.

Resuming in-person Select Board meetings with the addition of Zoom. Steve said he likes the idea of a hybrid meeting, but exactly when he wasn't sure. Peter suggested September since people will be on vacation and traveling. Steve and Phil agreed that September 7, 2021, would be a good starting date. Peter suggested researching camera and microphone equipment to enhance the Zoom meetings. As for an extra Zoom account as requested by the Budget Committee, the Board was in favor of upgrading if the cost is reasonable. Dorinda said Zoom has breakout rooms.

Dorinda said Welch Park owes the Town \$4,500 and some bills are over a year old for insurance and water testing. Bills have been sent to Benderson that owns the Consolidated building, but they've gone unpaid. Peter asked for the info to contact Benderson personally.

MOTION: Steve moved to enter two Executive Sessions, one as permitted under 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (1) (A) and the other as permitted under 1 V.S.A § 313 (a) (7) E and to include Dorinda and Sarah; Phil seconded. The motion passed and the Board entered Executive Session at 6:02 PM and exited at 6:08 PM. There was no action.

The Board adjourned its meeting at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Merriman, Town Clerk/Select Board Assistant

THE ABOVE MINUTES WERE REMOTELY APPROVED AS A WARNED AGENDA ITEM AT A REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD ON JUNE 15, 2021.

PETER O. HOOD, CHAIR

N/A
MARY JUST SKINNER, VICE CHAIR

PHILIP HYJEK

STEVEN MARTIN

N/A
ELIZABETH SCHARF