

Middlesex Town Meeting Solutions Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2015

Present: Susan Clark, Tim Murphy, Janette Shaffer, Dave Shepard, Barb Whitchurch, Greg Whitchurch

1. Front Porch Forum

The Town Meeting Solutions Committee (TMSC) originally promoted the launching of Front Porch Forum in Middlesex; this organization is now well established and operating without the need of any assistance from the TMSC.

2. Middlesex Town Website

The Middlesex website is a very useful source of up to date information for town residents. Town Clerk Sarah Merriman and Assistant Town Clerk Maryke Gillis have made it easy to get information posted and are helpful to town boards and commissions in complying with state requirements for public notice of meetings and with posting of agendas and meeting minutes on the website.

3. Remote Town Meeting Participation

Remote Town Meeting Participation (RTMP) will be offered once again in 2016 with Janette taking the lead on this project. As there were no participants last year, TMSC would like to make sure potentially interested Middlesex residents are aware of RTMP. There was discussion on how to get the word out about RTMP. Potential organizations in contact with Middlesex residents who might be likely candidates to use RTMP include Meals on Wheels, Home Health and Hospice and Project Independence. One possibility would be to prepare a flyer describing RTMP that could be made available to the above organizations for distribution to their clients in Middlesex. Local rehabilitation facilities are another location where the flyers might be made available but the former organizations would be more targeted to Middlesex residents. As an alternative or supplemental to direct distribution by handing out the flyers during visits, these organizations might be a source of addresses for residents that the flyers could be mailed to. It was noted that there might be privacy issues that wouldn't allow the sharing of names and addresses.

A limit of the number of RTMP participants hasn't been an issue since the inception of this program but Janette estimated that current capacity would be around five individuals depending somewhat upon their computer skill level.

Susan will contact Meals on Wheels about their drivers distributing the flyer to Middlesex residents they deliver to.

4. Town Meeting Preparation

There might be an earlier printing date for the Town Report this year, Dave will check with Sarah Merriman on this and also inquire as to whether there are any tasks to prepare for Town Meeting that TMSC might assist with.

Sarah Merriman is collecting the information from the not for profit organizations that seek funding from the town of Middlesex each year at Town Meeting, therefore there is no need to convene the discretionary funding task force for this task.

Greg will check with Town Treasurer Cindy Carlson regarding preparation of the charts that have been provided at Town Meeting that show the tax impact of each article on the Town Meeting warning. If these are available far enough ahead of Town Meeting Day they could be distributed to any resident participating through RTMP.

The provision of child care during Town Meeting and the post meeting meal will be addressed at the January TMSC meeting.

The presentation of the colors at the beginning of Town Meeting went well at last years' meeting and TMSC anticipates this ceremony will take place again in 2016.

There was discussion about the anticipated request for financial support from Meals on Wheels and the difficulty in past years of getting the service figures for Middlesex residents that voters have been wanting to help support the level of funding requested from Middlesex. Tim will follow up with the director of the Waterbury Senior Center on the type of information Middlesex would like to have prepared to support this coming years funding request.

5. Act 46 Education Governance Reform Statute

Susan gave an update on the status of the implementation of this statute.

Next meeting: Monday, December 14th

Minutes recorded by Dave Shepard