

middle **TOWN NEWS** letter

February 2017

Town Meeting 2017

Informational Meeting - Monday, March 6, at 7:30 pm, at the Elementary School

Bring your town report and come get your questions answered in preparation for voting the next day. Come early and enjoy dinner served up by the 6th graders and their families as a fund-raiser for their class trip this spring to D.C.

The Town will go first this year. If staying through to the school portion of the meeting is past your bedtime, make sure to attend the School Board pre-Town Meeting Informational Meeting with detailed information about the **Wells Springs District merger and the School district budget, Wednesday, March 1, at 6:30 pm**, at the school.

TOWN MEETING VOTE

Polls Open - Tuesday, March 7 7 am-7 pm, at the Firehouse

Junk Cars & ATVs

Informational Hearing on Articles 6 & 7 February 15, 2017, 6:30 pm at the Town Office

Agenda for the Hearing:

1. Call to Order and Establishment of Ground Rules
2. Purpose of Meeting:
 - Article 6. 'Shall the voters of the Town of Middletown Springs approve that the Selectboard enact the proposed ordinance pertaining to junk and junk vehicles?'
 - Article 7. 'Shall the voters of the Town of Middletown Springs approve that the Selectboard enact the proposed ordinance pertaining to the operation of all-terrain vehicles on public roadways?'
3. Brief Background introduction:
 - Terry Redfield - Article 7 ATV usage
4. Discussion Q & A
5. Brief Background introduction:
 - Herb Childress - Article 6 junk/junk vehicles
- 6 Discussion Q & A
7. Wrap-Up and Thanks
8. Adjourn

Links to **Proposed Ordinances** available on the Town website or in hard copy at the Town Office.

Wells Springs Merger VOTE

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Not voting or voting NO will have significant tax consequences. Come to the Informational Meetings on **Wednesday, March 1, at 6:30 pm or on Monday, March 6** (after the Town portion of Town Meeting) to learn how.

Details begin on Page 2

Too hungry to attend Town Meeting??

Let the 6th grade feed you dinner.

Monday, March 6, at MSES

Food service begins at 6:15 pm
Homemade Soups, Salad, Bread,
Desserts, and more!

Fill up on Dinner & Local Democracy

All proceeds benefit the 6th grade class trip to DC!

Town Meeting Food Sale

Tuesday, March 7!

Vote then Eat - OR - Eat then Vote. Either way you can't lose. The Building Committee is hosting their 5th annual food sale. Stop in for delicious homemade soups and stews, chili, mac & cheese, fresh bread, muffins, and more. **Open 7 am-7 pm** in the dining room of the Historical Society.

If you'd like to help us out during the sale, or if you wish to donate food, ground coffee, paper supplies, please give a call or send an email. We'll be happy to have some extra hands. Then at the end of the sale, we send whatever is left over to the poll workers. It's a win no matter how you slice it.

Many thanks for your continued support of the Building Committee's efforts.
Patty Kenyon, pmhkenyon@vermontel.net, 235-2707

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Blind Date with a Book - all of February
Candidates Forum - February 26
Conservation Commission - February 27
Town Plan Hearing - March 2
Rabies Clinic - March 4
Pie for Breakfast - March 11
Property Tax Notice - March 15
Community Basketball - Thurs. & Sun.

Wells Springs Merger VOTE - Tuesday, March 7, 2017

The State has approved our plan to consolidate school boards and budgets. The next step is the community vote on March 7.

Thanks to everyone who came out to our community forum last week. As many of you heard, the State Board of Education approved a plan to consolidate the governance of five school districts in our area into two. Middletown Springs and Wells would combine to form the Wells Springs Unified Union School District and operate grades Pre-K through 6, with full choice for grades 7-12. In a separate merger, Poultney, Proctor and West Rutland would combine to create the Quarry Valley Unified Union School District and operate grades Pre-K through 12. Together, these two mergers would form a "Side by Side," one of the configurations for consolidation that meets the requirements of Act 46.

To move forward, all five communities need to vote YES. In Middletown and Wells, **a YES vote means:**

- One school board and one budget for the towns of Middletown Springs and Wells.
- Both schools stay open.
- Wells Springs qualifies for tax incentives offered under Act 46.
- Wells Springs retains the Small Schools Grants that each school district currently receives from the state (roughly \$170,000 between both schools).
- There is reduced volatility in school budgets as there will be more students and a larger tax base,
- There are more opportunities for sharing teachers and educational resources to improve student opportunity.
- Middletown maintains full 7-12 choice for its students, and Wells moves from designating Granville to full 7-12 choice.
- Middletown sees lower projected tax rates. (See graph attached to this newsletter.)

If any of the five communities vote NO, there is a short window of opportunity for a revote. **BUT if voters DO NOT APPROVE a merger by July 1, 2017:**

- Middletown Springs would not receive any tax incentives.
- Middletown Springs would lose Small Schools Grant.
- Tax rates would rise to unsustainable levels, threatening the existence of our local elemen-

tary school. (See graph attached to this newsletter.)

- State Agency of Education would assign Middletown a merger partner and force a consolidation plan of their own design in 2018, but with no incentives.

There will be one more community meeting to discuss the Wells Springs merger proposal before the March 7 vote. **A Wells Springs Merger Informational Hearing, followed by the School Budget Informational Hearing, is scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, at MSES, 6:30 pm.**

Additionally, please contact anyone on the School Board (Clarence Haynes, Meredith Morgan, Sarah Haley, Jennelle Carr, Chris Smid) for more information about the Wells Springs merger plan.

Creative Intern

The Creative Economy effort continues to move forward, guided by a steering committee of community members. We are excited to announce that Tikko Sperling Freilich has joined us as a Creative Economy intern. Tikko graduated from high school in 2016 and is taking a gap year before starting college to work on creative projects both locally and around the world. We are glad to have this talented young woman working with us.

Rabies Clinic Saturday, March 4, 2017

Middletown Springs Firehouse
1 pm to 2 pm
\$8 per animal
Dr. Scott MacLachlan from
Poultney Veterinary Services
Town Clerk will be available to issue licenses before the April 1 deadline.

Community Basketball This Winter!!

Pick-up Basketball: All ages and abilities
4-6 pm Sundays

Children under 10 should bring an adult or a responsible older sibling

Pick-Up Basketball: 15 years old and up
6-8 pm Thursdays

All games at the MSES Gym
Contact Justin Hier for info, 235-1297 or justin-hier@hotmail.com



Photo by Emmett Francois

We Have a Well on the Corner! Building Committee Report

Mr. Jerry Parker, owner of Parker Water Wells, generously offered to drill a well for the Town of Middletown Springs for the cost of the materials, meaning he donated the use of his very specialized drilling equipment as well as the time of his crew of highly skilled employees to operate those machines.

A second generous offer came from Fred Bradley and Marilyn Trapeni, who have made a donation towards the materials and associated costs.

On January 17, the well was drilled to a depth of 700' in the location specified in permit documents, which were approved by the VT Department of Environmental Conservation. The well is producing 2.5 GPM, which is an adequate volume for the building, according to the civil engineer. The engineer states that the depth of the well provides adequate storage capacity so that supplemental storage within the building will not be required.

Water samples were to be drawn on Monday, January 30, and sent to a laboratory for testing. Once the testing is completed, the temporary power pole will be removed and the well will be ready to connect to the future building.

Thank you to Fred and Marilyn for your generous financial gift, and thank you to Jerry, Dave, and all the guys at Parker Water Wells for doing such a great job and for your donation of labor and equipment. Middletown Springs is very fortunate to have individuals like you helping to move the Town Office project from concept to reality.

The **Town Report** is going to the Printer this week. A digital copy will be available on the Town Website soon. A paper copy will be mailed.

PIE for Breakfast!

The trustees of the Middletown Springs Public Library have a sure cure for the Wintertime Blues: Pie for Breakfast. On **Saturday, March 11, 2017, from 8 am-11 am**, the trustees will be serving up All You Can Eat PIE for Breakfast with tea, coffee, or juice. The slices are cut thin so it is easy to try many different varieties. Pies are both sweet (such as pumpkin, apple, berry, chocolate...) and savory (such as quiche, spinach, ham...).

This delicious annual event is so popular that it has outgrown the Library building and the Historical Society, and is now held at the Elementary School. Same scrumptious pies, hot coffee, and fine conversation, just with more elbow room. There will also be a basket-type raffle with over 30 prizes, including maple syrup, books, craft items, housewares, and gift certificates from local businesses.

\$7 for adults; \$4 for children 5-12; under 5 FREE. All proceeds benefit the Middletown Springs Public Library.

Would you like to donate a pie?!?! Contact Alida at 235-2323 or randatarbell@vermontel.net and let her know.

For more information, contact the Library at middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com or 235-2435.

Meet the Candidates

Sunday, February 26, 3 pm, at the Library

Join us for an informative afternoon. Candidates for School & Town positions will be invited to come and talk about their interest in serving. There will be an opportunity to ask questions to learn more about their reasons for running, moderated by Rep. Robin Chesnut-Tangerman.

And, of course, delicious refreshments will be served. Hosted by the Library Board of Trustees

Questions: 235-2435 or middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com

DRAFT TOWN PLAN

The Middletown Springs Planning Commission will hold a **Public Hearing on Thursday, March 2, 2017, at 6:00 pm** at the Town Clerk's office for the purpose of taking public comments on the revised Middletown Springs Town Plan as prepared by the Planning Commission and accepted by the Selectboard, and to consider it for submission to the voters. Copies of the proposed plan are available at the Town Clerk's office or on the Town website at: <http://middletownsprings.vt.gov/town-departments/planning-commission/>

News from the Elementary School

MSES is once again offering a Winter Sports Program. Students have the option of learning skiing or snowboarding at Pico Mountain or ice skating at Georgetti Rink in Rutland. All students signed up for one of these great lifetime sport activities. To make sure that cost was not a barrier to participation, Friends for Education (FFE) provided scholarships to those families who needed assistance. The school thanks the FFE for all that they do for our school and our students.

School Counselor Mrs. Houde has kicked off four weeks of "Family Conversations." Decades of research show that most happy families communicate effectively. But talking doesn't mean simply "talking through problems," as important as that is. Talking also means telling positive stories about yourself and your family. When faced with a challenge, happy families, like happy people, just add a new chapter to their life story that shows them overcoming the hardship. This skill is particularly important for children, whose identity tends to get locked in during adolescence. To help foster that conversation, a questionnaire called the "Do You Know" (DYK) Scale was developed to help start conversations about family history. Each week, the MSES school newsletter will include four questions taken from the "Do You Know" (DYK) Scale. Mrs. Houde is encouraging all students to ask these questions of their parents and then return a signed slip confirming that parents and students have had these conversations. Returned signed slips will be entered into a drawing to win some fun prizes prior to February vacation.

Basketball season is in full swing. The school is very fortunate to have a large turnout of students, allowing for multiple team configurations. During games, the players display great basketball skill and, most importantly, sportsmanship. This is a positive reflection on our students, coaches, and school. Community members are encouraged to come and see a basketball game at home or away. (The schedule can be found at our school website: www.msesevt.org.)

Sincerely, Rick Beal (Principal)

Conservation Commission Conversation Monday, February 27, 7pm at the Library

Join in a roundtable discussion of past and future community projects, and a brainstorm of possibilities for ways you and your family can participate in the coming year. All are welcome! Contact: Elizabeth Cooper naturewalk@vermontel.net

From the Town Treasurer:

3rd Qtr Property Taxes due on or before **Wednesday, March 15, 2017.**

The Town Treasurer will be in the Town Office on March 15 from 9 am-noon and 1 pm-4 pm to receive payments.

As always, checks can be mailed and post-marked 3/15/17 or before, to PO Box 1022.

NEW: If you'd like to submit your taxes in person, prior to 3/15, a dropbox will be available at the Town Office. If you'd like a receipt, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your payment.

Thank you, Jenny Talke Munyak (Treasurer)

Blind Date with a Book

Opening up a new book is like going on a blind date. For the **month of February**, stop by the library and select your "date" from the display of wrapped books, check it out sight unseen and don't unwrap it until you get home! Give your "date" a chance by reading at least 50 pages. If there is chemistry, read it all! If not, there will be no hard feelings; it is just a book after all. Return it and try again!

Each book comes with a rating card on which to score your date. Everything from "I love this book so much, I want to marry it! to "DNF = Did Not Finish: Escape-the-restaurant-through-the-bathroom-window level of awful." Every returned scorecard will be entered in a raffle for a large box of chocolates.

Books available for readers of all ages: adults, teens, kids, and tots.

Take A Chance ... who knows, you might just fall in love!

Library Programs

Toddler Time: Stories, songs, and a snack for our youngest patrons and their caregivers. Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am, Jan. 11-Feb. 15. Come to one, or come to them all!

Knitting Circle: First Monday of the month (7-9 pm), October-May. Novice to experienced knitters welcomed. Come for inspiration, technical support, and quiet conversation.

Library programs are free and open to the public. More information available at the Library. Stop in or call 235-2435, or make digital contact: middle-townspringslibrary@gmail.com.

Calendar of Events

February

Building Committee	Wed 1	7 pm	Library
Historical Society	Thurs 2	7 pm	MSHS
Planning Commission	Mon 6	4 pm	Town Office
Knitting Circle	Mon 6	7-9 pm	Library
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 7	6:30 pm	Firehouse
Schoolboard	Thurs 9	6 pm	School
Select Board	Thurs 9	7 pm	Town Office
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 14	6:30 pm	Firehouse
Ordinance Hearings	Wed 15	6:30 pm	Town Office
Building Committee	Thurs 16	7 pm	Library
First Response	Sun 19	6:30 pm	Firehouse
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 21	6:30 pm	Firehouse
Library Trustees	Wed 22	7 pm	Library
Selectboard	Thurs 23	7 pm	Town Office
Book Group	Thurs 23	7 pm	Library
Candidate Forum	Sun. 26	3 pm	Library
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 28	6:30 pm	Firehouse

March

Building Committee	Wed 1	7 pm	Library
School Budget/Merger	Wed 1	6:30 pm	School
Town Plan Hearing	Thurs 2	6 pm	Town Office
Historical Society	Thurs 2	7 pm	MSHS
Rabies Clinic	Sat 4	1-4 pm	Firehouse
Planning Commission	Mon 6	4 pm	Town Office
Food Sale	Mon 6	6:15 pm	School
Town Meeting	Mon 6	7:30 pm	School
POLLS OPEN	Tues 7	7 am-7 pm	Firehouse
BC Food Sale	Tues 7	7 am-7 pm	MSHS
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 7	6:30 pm	Firehouse
School Board	Thurs 9	6 pm	School
Selectboard	Thurs 9	7 pm	Town Office
PIE for Breakfast	Sat 11	8-11 am	School
Knitting Circle	Mon 13	7-9 pm	Library
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 14	6:30 pm	Firehouse
PROPERTY TAXES DUE	Wed 15		Town Office
Building Committee	Thurs 16	7 pm	Library
First Response	Sun 19	6:30 pm	Firehouse
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 21	6:30 pm	Firehouse
Selectboard	Thurs 23	7 pm	Town Office
Book Group	Thurs 23	7 pm	Library
Tea & Conversation	Sun 26	2:30 pm	Library
Fire Dept. Training	Tues 28	6:30 pm	Firehouse

Calendar Events – subject to change.

When in doubt, please check with the organization for details.

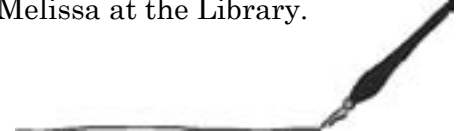
TOWN NEWSLETTER

Lots of information in a snippet & list format, plus a Calendar of Events. No ads, articles, or minutes.

This supplements and enhances the Town website & Front Porch Forum and will serve the needs of those who don't regularly use computers.

Digital copies are available as a PDF. The PDF is posted to FPF or the Town website or is sent free via email to those who sign up. It is also available in hard copy, delivered by USPS, to those who subscribe for \$6 a year postage. Copies are posted at the Town Office, Grant's Village Store, and the Library.

Questions: call 235-2435, or email middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com to reach Kimberly & Melissa at the Library.



Submit News & Events to:

Middletown Springs Public Library
PO Box 1206
Middletown Springs, VT 05757
middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com

Deadline: 25th of the month
for inclusion in upcoming issue.

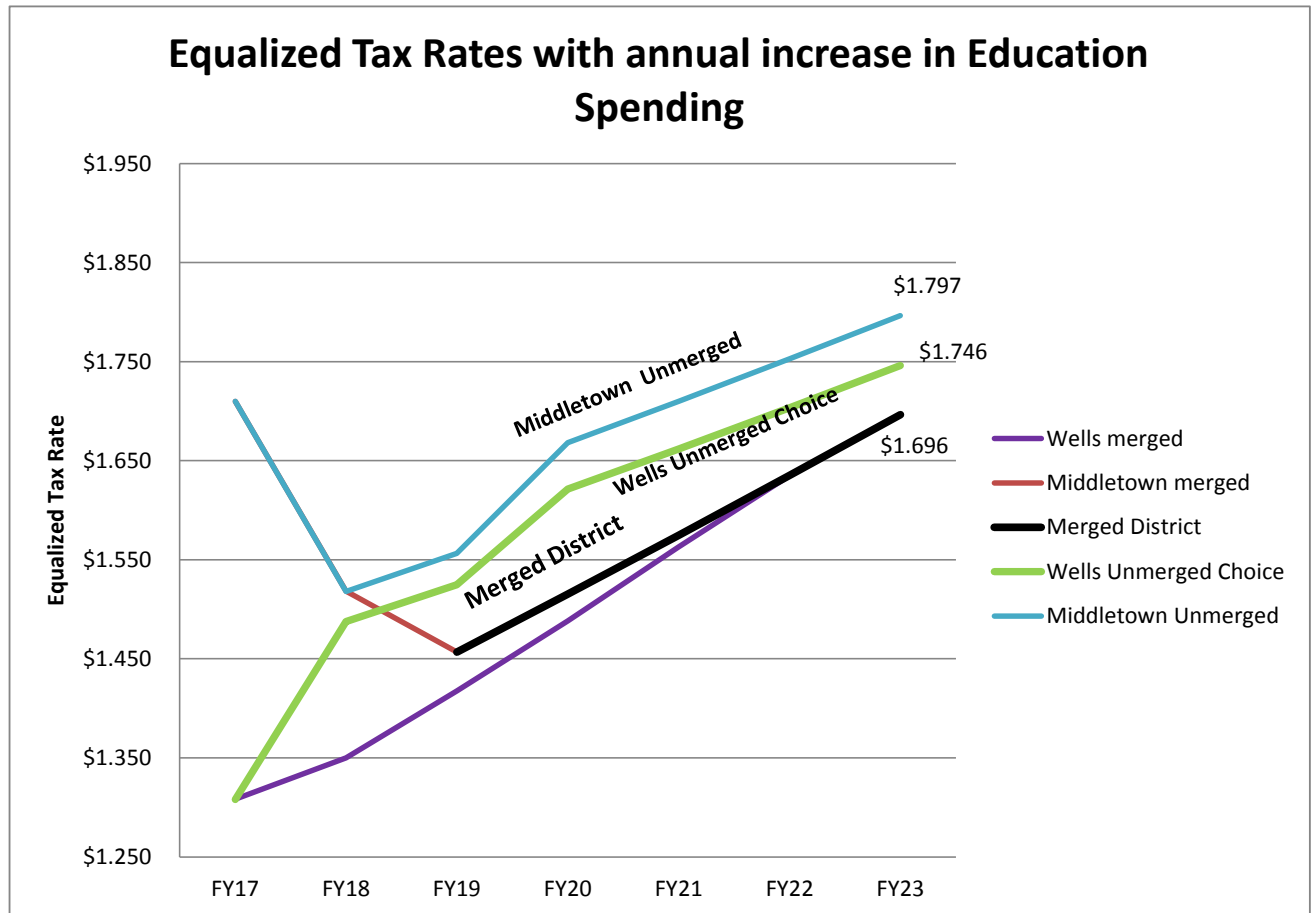


Middletown - Wells

Updated Financial Model Based on FY18 preliminary budget & FY19 Merger

Merged District Equalized Tax Rate w/ Increases in Education Spending

	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Wells merged	\$ 1.308	\$ 1.350	\$1.418	\$ 1.488	\$ 1.563	\$ 1.635	\$ 1.696
Middletown merged	\$ 1.710	\$ 1.518	\$1.457	\$ 1.515	\$ 1.575	\$ 1.635	\$ 1.696
Merged District			\$1.457	\$ 1.515	\$ 1.575	\$ 1.635	\$ 1.696
Wells Unmerged Choice	\$ 1.308	\$ 1.488	\$1.525	\$ 1.621	\$ 1.662	\$ 1.703	\$ 1.746
Middletown Unmerged	\$ 1.710	\$ 1.518	\$1.556	\$ 1.668	\$ 1.710	\$ 1.753	\$ 1.797



Assumptions:

1. All options assume 2.5% annual increase in Educational Spending from FY19 - FY23
2. All options assume State yield will remain at \$9701 from FY18 - FY23
3. All options assume Equalized pupils remain at FY17 level from FY18 - FY23
4. FY18 Educational Spending based on FY18 Budget 1st Draft
5. Unmerged options take into account loss of Small Schools Grant of \$85,000 per school in FY20
6. Increase in expense due to Choice is included