

**Middletown Springs Selectboard • Thursday, April 25, 2019**  
**Regular Meeting Approved Minutes**

**BOARD PRESENT:** H. Childress, C. Fenton, C. Haynes (8:00 pm), P. Kenyon, T. Redfield

**TOWN OFFICERS:** Sarah Grimm, Auditor; Bill Reed, Road Foreman; Jenny Talke Muniak, Town Treasurer

**PUBLIC AND GUESTS:** Mary Cohen and Tyler Richardson, Rutland Regional Marketing Initiative; Kathy Letendre, Middletown Springs Creative Economy

**CALLED TO ORDER:** 7:00 p.m.

Check for ticks!

**Minutes:** T. Redfield moved to approve the minutes of the April 11 meeting; C. Fenton 2<sup>nd</sup>; [*all in favor, motion carried*].

**Public:** Representatives from the Regional Marketing Initiative presented the work of their first two years of work. Their fundraising requests as ballot initiatives have passed in every community that has voted (twelve of twenty-seven); other communities build the funding of a dollar per resident directly into their budget. Their first target market was within the Rutland county communities (“selling Rutland to Rutland”); then through the Killington add-on marketing for ski and mountain biking; and third to the broader region and the Boston metro market.

The work of this year is focused on business development and workforce recruitment, bringing trained manufacturing and construction workers to the region (average age of a construction worker in VT is 56). The website ([realrutland.com](http://realrutland.com)) has been a great asset, and USDA Rural Development has contributed \$30,000 to the development efforts. This project is seen as a state leader, with the Legislature just now picking up on this kind of work in other areas of the state. They've also been working with the VT Department of Tourism and their “Stay to Stay” program, that tries to convert visitors to residents, and with the remote-worker recruitment program. The Selectboard expressed its appreciation for the efforts, and the quality of the work done to date.

**Town Officers:** Treasurer Muniak has been working to standardize some regular bookkeeping forms, and has sent out updated documents today. She is going to appoint Kimberly Bushnell as assistant treasurer in the short term for vacation and absence coverage, but is going to be looking in the longer term for someone interested in learning the position as an assistant to take it on once Jenny ultimately retires.

The payroll for library will become a Treasurer function. The Library Trustees will continue to approve their regular expenditures, with the Treasurer processing those expenditures beginning with the new fiscal year.

The external auditors are nearing their home stretch, with a handful of final items requested. They will make one final investigation visit before finalizing their report.

The Listers have submitted a requested increase in their hourly pay: \$18 for listers, \$19 for lister chair (current rates are \$13.71 and \$14.71). While appreciative of the work of all Town employees and officers, the Board would like to set a more gradual increase for Town positions, rather than have several years of level pay and then a sudden and large increase. T. Redfield moved to increase the Listers' rates of pay to \$16 for listers and \$17 for lister chair as of July 1 2019; H. Childress 2<sup>nd</sup>; [*all in favor, motion carried*]. Our intention is to review pay rates for all Town positions as part of each year's budget deliberations.

**Highway:** Bill has met with Josh Carvajal (Agency of Natural Resources) to do site visits and materials estimates for storm repair, and also has received permission to relocate and resize two culverts that presented particular problems (Lookaway, Orchard). His estimate of local storm damage (materials and labor) is just over \$40,000; the County is likely to receive disaster declaration, which will qualify us for partial reimbursement. Bill has been recording and photographing all before-and-after conditions to verify damage and work completed.

We have about fifty culverts that need to be reset from frost heave this past winter; most of them are intact, but need to be cut back in and then re-covered. The biggest concern we face is availability of materials; the quarries are low on supply, and every town is in competition for scarce material. P. Kenyon moved to authorize Bill to purchase one week's rental of an excavator from Winmill, at a \$1500 weekly rate; T. Redfield 2<sup>nd</sup>; [*all in favor, motion carried*].

Rob Ryan, the service manager from Liftech, will be on site tomorrow morning (April 26) to review repairs and billing, so that we can reconcile our understanding and attempt to improve their service response. Bill and Jenny will take the lead on that conversation, but at least two board members will also be present to relay their experiences of poor communication.

The road crew has had at least two somewhat heated interactions with property owners who had inappropriate expectations (maintenance of class 4 road in one case, demand to re-orient a drainage runoff in the other case). The Selectboard urges all residents to contact a Board member if they have concerns rather than to get all up in the grille of the road crew members, okay? Jeez...

**Town Lands:** The RFP for the West Street research has been issued, with half a dozen engineering and survey companies requesting the full RFP. The proposals are due on Monday May 6, with review and selection at the May 9 Selectboard meeting.

**Solid Waste:** Large waste and metal day will be Saturday 5/4. Either Bill or Brent will be on-site at the large waste center with the backhoe. We've requested that the containers be available on Friday: three in advance, and two replaced 9am Saturday.

In future years, we might consider doing our large waste the week after Green-Up Day, because the waste haulers have so much demand on that weekend. We have serious concerns about Hubbard's service, given their performance on the last few events, but Casella is unable to serve us on Green-Up Day. If we change dates, we might be able to consider other haulers.

**Correspondence:**

- Signed agreement for Sheriff's support for Memorial Day parade 5/26
- Notice from animal control officer re: loose dog on Daisy Hollow Road
- VLCT Accounting Symposium May 29
- Vermont Emergency Management preparedness conference September 6 & 7
- Price list from Brown's Quarried Slate Products
- E-mail correspondence from Taina Erlich regarding windblown debris from a neighboring property. H. Childress will contact the property owner in question to request cleanup.

As an interim measure while Bob Parker is out of service, the Board will hire a temporary worker to do cemetery maintenance.

**Board Orders:** H. Childress moved to approve the board orders as presented; P. Kenyon 2<sup>nd</sup>; [*all in favor, motion carried*].

**Other Business:** The Selectboard reviewed the Local Emergency Management Plan draft. P. Kenyon moved to set a \$10,000 emergency spending limit without prior Board approval; T. Redfield 2<sup>nd</sup>; [*all in favor, motion carried*]. T. Redfield moved to accept the LEMP and have Chris Fenton sign on behalf of the board; P. Kenyon 2<sup>nd</sup>; [*all in favor, motion carried*].

C. Haynes continues to investigate ways for the Middletown Springs First Response unit to operate independently of the Poultney first response group, now that they have changed their organizational structure and willingness to support our team. No resolution has been proposed yet.

**Adjourn:** H. Childress moved to adjourn; C. Fenton 2<sup>nd</sup> [*all in favor, motion carried*]. Meeting adjourned 10:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Herb Childress, Selectboard Clerk