

Selectboard Regular Meeting • November 26, 2019
Approved Minutes

Selectboard Present: Herb Childress, Chris Fenton, Carl Haynes, Patty Kenyon, Terry Redfield

Town Officers Present: Auditor Juanita Burch-Clay; Auditor Sarah Grimm; Road Foreman Bill Reed

Public Present: Art Castle, Joe Castle, MSVFD

Called to order: 7:00 p.m.

Happy Thanksgiving, Everyone!

Minutes: T. Redfield moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 14th meeting; P. Kenyon 2nd; [*all in favor, motion carried*].

Public: Joe and Art Castle asked for next steps on the firehouse. We shared the draft of the public input instrument that we'll send to the voters this coming weekend. Whatever we do on behalf of facilities planning at Town Meeting 2020 will need to be ready by the second week of January, in order to be able to print for Town Report.

Town Officers: The Auditors are working on their annual report for the Town Report, which will focus on the external audit, its good outcomes, and the recommendations that stem from it.

We have two seemingly compatible record preservation funds, and the Auditors recommend combining them. We will likely have a ballot item at Town Meeting to ask the voters' permission to combine those.

The Copeland Milk Fund trustees will be re-investing all of their funds so that we can have a new investment-cost basis to start the new year's accounting.

Highway: The backhoe is running again, after a replacement of the fuel pump. We continue to have ongoing problems with both JCB corporate and the LifTech dealership. Town's attorney Gary Kupferer suggests dealing exclusively with JCB, since most of our concerns should be covered by warranty; JCB refers most questions directly to LifTech.

The roads are moving back and forth between freeze and thaw, and Bill is doing his best to work with them appropriately for the day's conditions.

Bill has submitted the reimbursement paperwork for the RT140 paving grant. Brian Sanderson of VTRANS encouraged us to continue to apply for further grant funding for other road improvements.

Bill and Herb will be meeting with the FEMA representative on December 4th to continue our work toward reimbursement for the April 2019 rain event.

Town Lands: Otter Creek Engineering has completed its hydrological study of the Poultney River adjacent to our West Street property, and has forwarded their findings to the Agency of Natural Resources for comment. This project is near complete, and the final report should arrive before year's end.

VTRANS has an annual Transportation Alternatives Grant program that has funded salt and sand sheds around the state; we will investigate that program for our needs next year.

There's a questionnaire under development to try to learn what the voters would like to prioritize and recommend for town facilities as we move toward Town Meeting. C. Haynes recommended a specific question allowing the voters to separate the Library and Town Office; P. Kenyon noted that the Library Board had made the recommendation to co-locate, and that it would be inappropriate to suggest dividing them without their input. If voters believe that those projects should be divided, they can easily make that clear in their comments. H. Childress will prepare this questionnaire for mailing by the coming weekend, along with a link to a web-based version of the questionnaire. T. Redfield moved to mail a copy of the questionnaire to all Town addresses every-door-direct; C. Fenton 2nd [*Aye—Childress, Fenton, Kenyon, Redfield; Nay—Haynes; motion carried*]

Correspondence:

- VT Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired, request for annual funding of \$300 (level with last year)
- Big Heavy World, request for annual funding of \$250 (same request as before)
- Greeting card from MS Historical Society
- [email] Jon Jesmouth, Accura Printing, with a quote for printing and layout of the Town Report—\$1,884
- [email] Patty Kenyon, letter of resignation from Building Committee. T. Redfield moved that we accept, with regret, Patty Kenyon's resignation from the building committee, and that we thank her for her years of service on that important work; H. Childress 2nd [*P. Kenyon abstained, all others agreed, motion carried*]
- [email] Michael Beattie, indicating that he is working on smaller/reduced cost options for developing the Town Office, with one option to include and one to exclude the Library
- [email] Maynard Yost, expressing interest in being named to the vacant fifth seat on the Planning Commission. H. Childress moved to name Maynard Yost to the Planning Commission through Town Meeting 2020, to fill the seat that had been held by John Arsenault; T. Redfield 2nd [*all in favor, motion carried*].

Board Orders: The Board Orders have not been prepared for tonight's meeting, due to the Treasurer being away from town. She will prepare orders for later this week, and the Board will drop in to sign them.

Other: Bill requested that the Select Board send Chris Smid a letter of thanks for the donation of 800 cubic yards of slate rubble to the Spruce Knob rebuild. T. Redfield moved to send such a thank-you letter, H. Childress 2nd [*all in favor, motion carried*]

Patty Kenyon asked to enter the following into the minutes:

I would like the following statement to be entered into the minutes and to become part of public record.

I believe that the actions of board member Carl P. Haynes in regard to the recent facilities vote were counter to his oath as a Selectboard member and contained an array of mistruths that exacerbated the divisions in town which posed a real threat to people in this community.

As a representative of the town, he has a duty to provide factual information to the public, even in his personal capacity, the two sides cannot be separated. The people of Middletown Springs deserve better than to be represented by someone who is willing to so quickly undermine his colleagues, knowingly spread falsehoods, and foment hate and discontent, all to further his own personal agenda.

Therefore, I call for his immediate resignation from the board.

Adjourn: H. Childress moved to adjourn; T. Redfield 2nd; [*all in favor, motion carried*]. Meeting adjourned 8:44 p.m. Happy Thanksgiving to all.

Respectfully submitted,
Herb Childress, Selectboard Clerk