

Middletown Springs Selectboard • Approved Minutes Regular Meeting • September 10, 2020

BOARD PRESENT: Patty Kenyon, Heather Grier via Zoom. At the town office, Terry Redfield, Neil Russell, Buddy Russell SB Therapy Dog, Carl Haynes at 7:55pm

TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT: via Zoom; Jenny Talke Munyak - Treasurer, Sarah Grimm - Auditor. At the town office; Pat Hemenway - Lister, Sally Achey - Lister, Laura Castle - Town Clerk

PUBLIC PRESENT: At the town office; Kevin Eaton - MSFR

CALL TO ORDER: Terry Redfield called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 8/27/2020 Regular Meeting

Heather moved to approve the minutes of the 8/27/2020 regular meeting as presented, Neil 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE: (if any) - Herb Childress - EMD - Thanked the board and treasurer for finalizing the paperwork for the FEMA payment (April 2019 Flood event). Glad we are nearing the finish line on that.

Herb reported that most EMD's are turning their attention back to normal EMD stuff instead of COVID and that he will be working with Bill to work through the EMD plan for 2021/2022 in preparation for the next year's budget.

Herb reviewed the E911 letter we received from the state and reported his findings. Basically, the State holds three pieces of info for each town, primary law enforcement organization, fire organization, and EMS organization. This year they are allowing towns to add a second EMS group. We could have added MSFR if things were settled. We don't have to do it now, but if we make changes and gain MSFR back we can update the information at any time. Herb recommends that we send in the update now with no changes and revisit if/when things change moving forward.

Patty moved to have Herb complete E911 paperwork with no changes to last year's information and return it to the state. Neil 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Herb asked if the board had information that might be important for him to know about? There were no notes of consequence although Terry reported that the town received 500 masks through SWAC. These masks can be added to the distribution chain at Vicki's, the library, and the town office. Herb will take on the task of checking on current supplies at the three locations and will replenish as necessary.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & GUESTS: (if any) - Pat H gave the board an update on the status of the Fire Association's facilities work. They are currently speaking to contractors to get some estimates for possible renovations and repairs to the building as well as quotes for an entirely new facility.

Terry brought up that board members have received complaints about pigs, chickens, and turkeys on North Street. Neighbors are complaining of the smell. The board has no authority to address these concerns. The board did ask Carl as the Health Officer to do a cursory investigation, but unless there is animal neglect, there is not a lot to be done by the health officer either.

Kevin Eaton on behalf of the MSFR thanked the board for doing the research on a potential new EMS town agency. Kevin has received all the communications to date and will attend Tuesday's meeting at 6pm with the town's lawyer. He will also invite the full MSFR membership.

Kevin also reported that as of Sept 1, members of MSFR & Poultney who were volunteers received letters that they are no longer members of Poultney Rescue Squad. So former MSFR members can no longer respond to calls through their agency. James Reed remains a paid member of Poultney Rescue.

TOWN OFFICERS:

Schedule BCA Meeting - November election preparations - BCA meeting set for a week from tonight, September 17, 7pm. There was a short discussion on the timing for the state to send out absentee ballots. We'll have more of this discussion in depth with the full BCA next week.

Town Clerk / Treasurer / Auditors / Listers - Sally as chair of the Lister board reported that there was the need to make a correction to the 2020 grand list. The paperwork to report that correction (Listers Errors & Omissions Report) needs to be approved and signed by the Selectboard and then the Town Clerk.

Patty moved to approve the Listers Errors & Omissions Report as presented for two North Street properties. Neil 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Terry asked the status of Spruce Knob property under appeal. The listers met with the state assessor earlier in the summer and a final ruling will come at the end of October or early November.

Jenny had a couple quick things to report. Tuesday, Sept. 15th 1st quarter taxes are due. So far, we are on trend with receiving payments. Many people paying half year or whole year in advance. So that is good news right now.

Jenny also reported that we are in the home stretch of getting grant money from the April 2019 flood event. Paperwork has all been submitted and we are just waiting on the payment which was allocated to last fiscal year's budget (approx. \$40K).

She also gave the board a heads up that the Federal executive order for FICA tax deferral may be impacting us in the near future. Employees may be able to decide if they would like to take the deferral or continue on as is. Taking the deferral would result in a reduction in current payroll taxes for 2020 but would have to be made up in 2021. So far there has been no direct communication from the IRS as to how the

towns should account for and implement this program. She will keep the board updated as to what shakes out on that front.

TOWN HIGHWAY:

Road Commissioner Report - Terry reported in Bill's absence

- Bill is hoping to be back to work on Monday if COVID test comes back negative.
- Brent continues to work on the Spruce Knob project.
- Culvert install is expected to be starting in a week or so.
- Fuel tank replacement at the garage. Neil presented two quotes - Marcell \$1450 with \$250 rebate, and Irving \$2463. Straight tank is \$650 is we could replace ourselves. As discussed at the last meeting, final cost will be split 50/50 with the building landlord.

Patty moved to go with Marcell Oil to replace the garage fuel tank for a net of \$1200, the cost to be split 50/50 with the garage landlord. Heather 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

TOWN LANDS: Facilities: *Storage Tank, yes; Basement, no; 2300 +/- Sq. ft. footprint. Vault no less than 18 x 20; E/W orientation; "Open" floor plan concept with "walled" individual offices. Progress!!*

Nothing this time. Facilities meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 15 at 7pm.

SOLID WASTE: *Compost hauler updates* - Neil is pounding the pavement to see if he can find us a replacement hauler locally. Terry is also soliciting estimates. We have a standing estimate for an every other week hauler, Terry will check with that hauler to make sure the offer still stands. Carl will check with Martelle Refuse to see if he is interested in providing a quote. Carl & Terry will try to have answers for Tuesday, if possible, so that we can make a decision.

Terry checked with VLCT about a disclaimer on town liability on Big Dump Day. VLCT agreed that it was a good practice to add that to our announcements. Next large dump day is October 3. Terry will order containers from Hubbard. Their containers are bigger and fit our needs better than those offered by Casella.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- **Long Trail Engineering Invoice** - Question from Jenny - Corner Property or some other fund? This was corner property work.
- **Election Booth Sales Flyer**
- **Letter from Laura & Brian Pierce RE: tuition payment / school voucher** - should have been sent to School Board or Supervisory Union - forward or return or what?
 - Neil will take it back to them and explain who it should go to.
- **Invoice from Gary Kupferer** - should go to Jenny.
- **Letter from Pleasant View Cemetery Assoc** - requesting release of voted on

- funds - goes to Jenny
- **Genetworx Flyer - COVID 19 Software sales**
 - **VLCT News magazine**

BOARD ORDERS:

Neil moved to approve board orders as presented, Carl 2nd. Ayes - Terry, Neil, Carl
Abstain - Patty, Heather (not physically present at the meeting).

LEGAL: MSFR documentation materials / Gary K - There was another lengthy discussion. The focus was to try to establish any lingering questions or advice the board feels it needs from the town lawyer in order to come to a decision. The main concern is the financial and administrative impacts as well as the overall added responsibility and liability the town would assume by creating a town EMS agency. The board could not find any towns that were comparable in governmental structure that have municipal emergency services as part of their purview. Most towns with those services have Town Managers and a cadre of administrative employees to keep track of and oversee the functions and responsibilities. In addition, now that most former members of MSFR are no longer members of Poultney Rescue Squad, the question of dispatch and how that might work came up. Since there is no longer a working relationship with MSFR, would the town need to add the cost of a dispatch service? How would that work? What other ramifications might that have, both budgetary and administrative?

Board members continue to be concerned that this town does not have the resources to manage a municipal EMS agency within the town governmental structure.

Kevin agreed to look for other small towns who have this type of agency prior to Tuesday.

Carl maintained that it was up to the board to solve this issue for the townspeople. The majority of the board did not agree and continued to express their support of maintaining EMS services in town, but reiterated their responsibilities to the overall health of the town. There were suggestions as to other possibly less costly, more compatible options that MSFR could pursue. One being the local Fire Department, another idea was to explore creating a larger local agency by including towns who do not have EMS coverage i.e. Ira and Tinmouth.

The board will review any new information and discuss their lingering questions and concerns with the town lawyer on Tuesday. The goal is to come to a final determination then.

OTHER BUSINESS: Gold headed cane presentation - Friday September 11 at 1pm to Wilma Washburn on the green. Emmett will take a photo of Wilma with the cane.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (if necessary) none

ADJOURN: Patty moved to adjourn at 9:28, Heather 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 9:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Kenyon, Clerk