

Middletown Springs Selectboard • Approved Minutes Regular Meeting • April 22, 2021

BOARD PRESENT: via Zoom; Patty Kenyon, Heather Grier, Robin Chesnut-Tangerman. At the town office; Terry Redfield, Neil Russell, and Buddy (SB therapy dog).

TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT: via Zoom: Deb House - DTC, Sarah Grimm - Auditor, Jenny Talke Munyaiak - Treasurer, Pat Hemenway - Lister. At the town office: Bill Reed - Road Commissioner.

PUBLIC PRESENT: via Zoom: Art Castle - Fire Department. At the town office: no public present.

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

Terry shared two excerpts from the Vermont Selectboard handbook referencing the public comments period in our meeting of 4/8/2021.

From page 4:

“Vested with wide-ranging responsibilities and empowered with broad authority, the selectboard members are the leaders of local government. Conflict on any governing board is inevitable, but it is imperative that selectboard members take the lead in fostering communication and cooperation in town government, not only with each other, but also within and among the town’s other officers and boards. Effective service to your town requires no less.”

From page 7:

““The selectpersons thus represented a culmination of leadership and publicity – they were (as they still remain) the ‘first men’ of the community, held to an exacting responsibility that only the public criticism of neighbors can compel. A recital of their powers rings with the broad finality of dictatorship in local matters, but the spirit of their service resembles the humblest agent. It is probable that since the Prytaneis of the ancient Athenian Boule there has been no such breadth of authority so confidently granted nor so thoroughly and publicly checked as in the executive services of the early New England town.” John Fairfield Sly, *Town Government in Massachusetts (1620-1930)*, 382.”

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 4/8/2021 Regular Meeting.

Terry would like to table the approval of these minutes until our next meeting (May 13) to give time for some more input and more in-depth re-reading.

Approval of the unapproved minutes of 4/8/2021 tabled until May 13, 2021 meeting.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE: Terry reported to the board that Herb had a meeting today with RRPC to review the possible uses for some of the American Rescue

Plan money slated to come our way. The board had a brief discussion of their current understanding of the parameters for spending the money and some information on what other towns are planning to do with the funds they receive.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & GUESTS: Art Castle reported that the Fire Department has received the new air packs and bottles they were able to purchase with the FEMA grant they were awarded. They are currently working on getting the equipment fitted into the trucks. Equipment value is about \$130,000.

TOWN OFFICERS:

Town Clerk / Treasurer / Auditors / Listers -

Patty gave a brief update on the current day to day. Terry thanked those who have come in to spend time helping with the reorganization process.

Jenny explained the board order for a tax refund due to double-billing and double-payment for 680 South Street. A clerical error resulted in a newly combined property getting double billed for one portion of the whole.

Jenny also reported that taxes have been coming in fine despite the pandemic. She also wanted to thank Debra (DTC) for her work with delinquencies and cleaning up the list of delinquent taxes, we have made good progress.

Lastly, Jenny reminded us that the end of the fiscal year is approaching on June 30, so it's time to be mindful of where we are budget-wise and to begin to think about spending decisions accordingly.

Pat Hemenway reviewed the error mentioned above and presented the board with the Grand List Errors & Omissions Report that needs to be approved and signed by the board and then filed with the town clerk. The change will not impact the overall tax rate for FY2021.

Patty moved to approve the Grand List Errors & Omissions Report as presented on 4/22/2021 by the listers, Neil 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Pat also mentioned the mapping proposal from CAI Technologies and that the listers recommend we do just the mapping updates and forego the digitization portion of the proposal.

Robin moved to hire CAI Technologies to update the tax maps only for \$1900, Terry 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Deb House, Delinquent Tax Collector reported that she's entered into installment agreements with a number of property owners at risk of going to tax sale. On Tuesday a letter was sent by the attorney to the property slated to be put up for tax sale. Since that letter was sent, the property owner has reached out to Deb and requested they be given the opportunity to enter into an installment agreement to clean up their taxes. Deb will

make a decision about this particular property in the next day or so and will keep us up to date in how all the delinquencies are progressing. Deb also thanked Jenny for all her help and cooperation throughout this process.

Fraud Prevention Policy - The board had a brief discussion of their impressions and recommendations after their Initial review of the proposed policy. Patty will communicate our suggestions and questions to the auditors for their input as well as send the policy to other town officials for their input. The policy will need to be approved by the board and the town treasurer. We will revisit this at our next regular meeting.

Social Service Request Policy - Patty noticed in the policy manual that we have a Social Service Request Policy currently in effect and so wanted the board to be aware of that and that the motion we made earlier in the year regarding appropriation requests from new agencies should be incorporated into that policy and then that new version adopted by the board in order to be consistent.

Patty volunteered to work on the Fraud Policy and on the Social Service Request policy and send out to others that need to see it.

TOWN HIGHWAY:

Road Commissioner Report –

- **Road Grader Tires update** - as luck would have it, the morning after our last meeting's conversation about grader tires, a tire went on the grader. The grader sits in the field waiting for service and is slated to be replaced on Monday, April 26. We will have to take and pay for the tires in this budget year.

Terry moved to approve replacement of the grader tires as scheduled, Heather 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

- Bill did have to put salt down this morning - hoping it's the last time for this winter season.
- Bill is meeting tomorrow with Stephanie Bourque from Grants and Aid to talk about the parameters of that grant we recently received.
- Bill doesn't believe we got a Better Back Roads again grant this year. He'll bring a plan to us after talking to RRPC to see if we might be able to use the grant we do have to work on Dudley and Haley Road projects.
- Bill would like to hire Brent's son to work for highway crew and big dump day on an as needed basis. The Board needs to set the rate of pay.

Heather moved to approve the hiring of Chance Clark on an as needed basis highway crew person at \$14 per hour, Terry 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

- Bill reported that we need a new weed eater. It's 12 years old and seen better days. To replace it would be \$850 and would need to be ordered so would be billed in next budget year.

- Push mower for the old cemetery - Bill found one at last fall's big dump day and fixed it up so they now have a spare push mower. Next event, look for others to keep as spares.

Other Town Highway - nothing.

TOWN LANDS - Nothing.

SOLID WASTE: Big Dump Day preliminary planning (May 8, 2021) - Terry reported that Herb is willing to work the transfer station. Chance Clark can work at West Street with Brent running the backhoe. Neil can work part of the day, Glen will work at West Street. Terry contacted Richie Miller, Robin is willing to work taking money.

Terry ordered 6 containers from Hubbards - 4 delivered the week prior and 2 will come as replacements early in the morning the day of. Plan is in place and Terry will continue to check on it.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Two overweight permit applications-
 - Steven Newton - Single truck - pd \$5 cash w/COI
 - Duquette Forestry Transportation - pd \$10 ck - w/o COI - board will hold on approving until COI arrives.

Terry moved to approve the overweight permit for Steven Newton, Neil 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

BOARD ORDERS:

Terry moved to approve board orders as presented, Robin 2nd. All in favor, motion carried. (Electronic approval per COVID 19 protocols since there were only two members at the office.) Board members will stop in and sign if they have a minute.

LEGAL: None.

OTHER BUSINESS: Other ATV issues or concerns short discussion - There was a short discussion about creating an ATV ordinance and how we might approach that process in the future.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule:

Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, May 13 at 7pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (if necessary) - Terry moved to enter Executive Session at 9:17pm to discuss personnel inviting Bill to join us, Neil, 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Terry moved to exit Executive Session at 9:29pm, Patty 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Robin volunteered to work on a language revision in the personnel policy surrounding comp time. The board will review and consider adoption at the next meeting.

ADJOURN: Terry moved to adjourn at 9:30pm, Neil 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Patty Kenyon, Clerk