

**Middletown Springs Selectboard • Approved Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting • July 28, 2022**  
**Start time 7pm**

**BOARD PRESENT:** At the town office: Terry Redfield, Patty Kenyon. Via Zoom: Heather Grier, Robin Chesnut-Tangerman, Neil Russell at 7:12pm.

**TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT:** At the town office: Jenny Talke Munyak – Treasurer, Bill Reed – Road Commissioner/Foreman, Sally Achey – Lister. Via Zoom: Sarah Grimm - Auditor.

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** At the town office: none. Via Zoom - Peter & Aileen Stevenson, Ron Masleh.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Heather called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** July 14, 2022 Regular Meeting

Terry moved to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2022 meeting as presented, Robin 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor, motion carried.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE:** Herb Childress – nothing.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS & GUESTS:** Nothing.

**TOWN OFFICERS:** Town Clerk / Treasurer / Delinquent Tax Collector / Auditors / Listers –

Patty updated the board on the status of elections prep – tabulator and accessible voting machine have been set up and tested. There was some interest in an opportunity to view the new tabulator in action prior to the election, Patty will try to set up a time that the BCA and election workers can come in and get an overview.

Heather will be available the entire day to work or pitch in where needed. Robin can also work any shift needed. Patty will update the work schedule and hopefully send out the final draft.

Jenny presented a recap of year end finances – we had a surplus of \$42,610.31 in the highway budget that will be put into our Highway surplus reserve account. On the town side we had a surplus of \$69,602.85, \$5,000 of that will go into our tax stabilization fund the remaining \$64,602.85 will be added to the facilities reserve account as voted in March 2022. These large surpluses were due to an increase in anticipated revenue combined with lower-than-expected expenses.

Jenny also presented the proposed tax rates for town and highway for FY 22/23 – highway .426 | Town .476 – 13% higher than last year a significant increase. The school rate this year is homestead 1.5552 and non-homestead 1.5830 which is less than last year.

Terry moved to set town tax rate at .476 highway at .426 resulting in an overall rate at .902 based on the worksheet presented by the treasurer, Patty 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor, motion

carried.

After a short discussion about the increase and the board's efforts to keep taxes as low as possible, Terry asked just how much money was in the Tax Stabilization fund currently. Jenny reported that with this year's addition we have \$15,000 available. Jenny offered to put together a new worksheet reducing the amount of taxes to be raised if we used the full reserve for tax stabilization.

At this point we moved on to Sally to give Jenny some time to re-do her calculations.

Sally requested that the Selectboard make a motion in regard to assessing a penalty on late filers of homestead declarations. She presented information on how many late filers we currently had (2) and how many people filed their declaration last year but had not yet files for this year (19). Town's are allowed to asses a penalty up to 3%.

The board discussed and confirmed last year's decision, which was to impose a 1.5% penalty on all late filers. The intention being to encourage people to file their declarations on time and to account for the added administrative work it takes to make the property tax bill adjustments after the fact for those who file late.

Neil moved to set the penalty for late filing of the Homestead declaration, that was due on 4/15/22, at 1.5%, Terry 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Jenny presented an updated tax rate worksheet based on using the \$15,000 in our Tax Stabilization reserve fund. This fund can only be used to reduce the Town portion of the tax rate and reduced that amount to .4600, Highway remained the same at .426. The totals tax rate would be .886 vs .902. Every penny counts.

Terry moved to rescind previous tax rate motion and made a new motion to use \$15,000 in the Tax Stabilization reserve fund to reduce taxes, approving a town rate of .4600 and a highway rate of .426 resulting in a total tax rate of .886, Patty 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor, motion carried.

**TOWN HIGHWAY: Road Commissioner Report** – Bill reported the following work over the last two weeks and in the planning stages:

- Grading, ditching, adding gravel
- Replacing culverts
- GIA Grant work prep
- Filling Potholes
- Trimming and clearing guardrails
- Equipment & service repairs
- Pricing materials
- Admin – getting pricing on materials / vendor inquiries / contractors
- Plans to reach out to Dubois & King RE: Daisy Hollow Project
- Met with State yesterday on sidewalk at 4 corners & asked them to look at bridge on South Street.
- Roadside mowing starting tomorrow on Route 140
- Quote on new culvert materials – per foot price is now 26.94 per foot – increase of \$12 from last year. Budget is \$4500 quote is \$5388.
  - Patty moved to approve the purchase of culvert material as quoted. All in

favor, motion carried.

**Other Town Highway – nothing.**

**TOWN LANDS - New Building Project – In progress:**

Robin reported that we are expecting new bids to come in to us sometime in the next week or so as the bid deadline is tomorrow 7/29. Additionally, Naylor & Breen has given us bids on a few scopes of work so that they could provide through their firm. This ensures that their pricing is presented prior to seeing any of the other contractor bids to ensure a fair process across the board.

Patty gave a synopsis of the meeting with Brian Sanderson District advisor with AOT regarding the request to add sidewalks to our project. Brian, after viewing the site in person, recommended we add a sidewalk on South Street only and eliminate the requested sidewalk on East Street as it did not make sense in practical terms. Brian will compose a letter with his recommendations that we can present to the Engineer, the Architect and AOT permitters with our updated plans.

**Other Building Projects: MSVFD, MTS Library, 577 West Street site – none**

**SOLID WASTE:** Terry is working on letter to get confirmation from Hubbard's that we are paying the state mandated tonnage fees through our contracted services with them. It was brought to SWAC's attention that one town was paying the fee separately through the town, and at the same time their hauler was also paying the fee, but it was not clear on their billing or in their contract. Pam advised that we want to make sure we have documentation so that if we are audited it is clear we have followed the state rules and the appropriate fees have been paid on our behalf.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

- Service Request Form – From MSHS asking permission to move directional sign at South St & Burdock Ave to the opposite side of Burdock to increase visibility. MSHS will do all the work.

There was a brief discussion about the who's highway right of way this would fall into and who should be approached with this request. Bill and Terry will meet with David to see what exactly he wants and if the town is the appropriate party to ask permission of.

- Thank you letters to the town for supporting their efforts with an appropriation – American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, VT Center for Independent Living.

**BOARD ORDERS: Processing Payroll / Municipal Bills –**

Terry moved to approve board orders as presented, Patty 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ayes- Robin, Terry, Patty. Abstain – Heather, Neil.

Robin will come in and sign tomorrow.

**LEGAL:** No legal

## **OTHER LAWFUL BUSINESS:**

Bill would like to confirm permission to use town equipment to complete the rain garden on his mother's property that was designed to alleviate runoff onto Firehouse Lane and the church property. He is waiting for final approval of the design from Hilary Solomon PMNRCD before the work can be completed. He has and will continue to donate his time for the project but needs to use the town equipment to do the work. Permission had been previously granted, but the work hasn't gotten done, so he wanted to inform the board that he plans to try to get that work done and will be using town equipment to do it. Board is okay and thanked Bill for keeping us apprised.

Next meeting – August 11 – Heather is going to be traveling so not sure she can make it, would like Terry to run that meeting. Terry is happy to fill in.

The board intended to work on evaluations, but everyone was not prepared. We add this to the August 11 agenda.

There was a brief discussion on extending the Highway Crew Member ad. Consensus is to run two more weeks in the Rutland Herald and VTNY News Guides.

## **Upcoming Meeting Schedule: (In Person w/Zoom access)**

**Next Regular Meeting** – Thursday, August 11, 2022, at 7pm

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: (if necessary)** – none.

**ADJOURN:** Terry moved to adjourn at 9:03pm, Neil 2<sup>nd</sup>. Meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.

Respectfully Submitted  
Patty Kenyon, Clerk