

Middletown Springs Selectboard
Approved Minutes
Special Meeting • May 24, 2023
Start time 10am

BOARD PRESENT: At the town office: Patty Kenyon, Herb Childress, Terry Redfield, Peter Stevenson, Robin Chesnut-Tangerman. Via Zoom: none.

TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT: At the town office: Jenny Talke Munyak – Treasurer, Bill Reed – Foreman/Road Commissioner. Via Zoom: none.

PUBLIC PRESENT: At the town office: None. Via Zoom: None.

CALL TO ORDER: Herb called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

HIGHWAY END-OF-YEAR REVIEW:

Budget update and projections through June: Jenny gave a brief overview of where we stand right now on highway spending and revenues. The board reviewed expenses line by line with discussion on anticipated expenditures yet to come. It looks like we are in pretty good shape, we are over on repairs & maintenance but under on other items. We estimate just over \$25 to \$30k left to spend in the full budget after factoring in the anticipated expenditures.

Bill would like to use some of this money on processed gravel prior to the end of the fiscal year to get the roadways back in shape after the winter. This would bring our budgeted line item for gravel well over budget.

Herb moved to approve a reallocation of \$16,000 in unspent budgeted highway expenditures to the processed gravel line item, Peter 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Summer 2023 projects: Discussed above with budget update. Additionally, the summer Grants In Aid project will be done in the new fiscal year to keep things as streamlined as possible.

HIGHWAY CREW FUTURE

Planning for retirement and new foreman: The board had a lengthy but preliminary discussion as to some options for rebuilding our road crew. In consultation with Bill, the discussion touched on what we do now, vs what we could do differently in planning for the future. The question was asked “in a perfect world – what should the road crew look like?” There were numerous possible configurations, all are dependent on available talent and their capacities. The labor market, especially in the area of trained highway crew members, has been pretty slim and competitive. Timing will be key to keeping our crew fully staffed and adequately trained.

Some things that rose to the top of the list of needs beyond the basic CDL and road work experience:

- Training is key to managing the roads – so we need to embed this training time into our planning and searching schedule.
- We need someone who can do admin work, road work, employee management, and project planning.
- This person will need to be comfortable with computer programs, apps, and state reporting systems.

If we want to have someone online to work toward the future by October 2023 for winter road training, we need to make some decisions about hiring soon.

“Right-sizing” the equipment fleet: The board had a discussion about what’s the right fleet size for our town right now? Do we need to keep and continue to maintain the 2006 plow truck?

There are plusses and minuses to downsizing to two big trucks. The old truck would not be worth much on the market and so, is it worth getting rid of something that could come in handy and save you money down the road?

We’re not sure yet, so no decisions were made about downsizing. But it was agreed that we don’t want to spend a lot of money on re-outfitting or parts and repairs on this truck.

The board will continue to monitor and weigh the costs vs benefits of keeping this truck on the road.

OTHER HIGHWAY CONCERNS

After the meeting last week with the State AOT, Bill brought up an issue with the drainage ditch on North Street at the four corners. North Street ditch is not properly tapered into the drain. He would like to get that taken care of this summer. VT AOT consultant agreed that approach should help.

Bill will reach out to Tom Fuller to see if he can do some work on the issue to improve the flow and drainage. Stay tuned.

Peter brought up that on the state highway on South Street there’s a culvert that’s too high and needs some adjustment. He’s going to work on getting that taken care of.

ADJOURN: Herb moved to adjourn at 11:59am, Terry 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 11:59am

Respectfully Submitted
Patty Kenyon, Clerk

Next Regular Meeting – 7PM Thursday, May 25, 2023