

**Middletown Springs Selectboard
Approved Minutes
Regular Meeting • October 12, 2023
Start time 7pm**

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

TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT: At the NEW town office: Bill Reed - Road Commissioner/Road Foreman at 7:38pm. Via Zoom: Sarah Grimm – Auditor, Kristal Hier – Library board.

PUBLIC PRESENT: At the NEW town office: Ron Masleh, Aileen Stevenson. Via Zoom: Kimberly Bushnell - Librarian.

CALL TO ORDER: Herb called the meeting to order at 7:03pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a) Regular Meeting September 28, 2023.

Robin moved to approve the minutes of September 28, 2023 regular meeting as presented, Terry 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Before the meeting got underway, Herb asked to take a moment to express the board's appreciation for the innumerable people who made this building come together. We're happy to be in the new space and it's due to the hard work of an enormous number of people over the course of many years.

Peter would like to acknowledge the participation of the construction crew at Naylor & Breen. The attention to detail put into this building has been outstanding. Project Management – Leo Fairbanks, Site supervisor - John Crossman, his son Josiah Crossman, and Carpenter Mike Tomasi. Each of these folks put in hours of detailed work making sure we had a final product that would last and be highly energy efficient. The blower door test performed this week showed that the building is 3 times more air tight than the current building standards.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / GUESTS:

TOWN OFFICERS REPORTS –Treasurer | DTC | Town Clerk | Listers | EMD | Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Task Force| Auditors | Library (see also Town Lands) | Planning Commission | Trustees of Funds | Health Office | Other

Town Clerk – Patty reported that she and Meredith and Elizabeth attended an election training this morning in Manchester. She's also been spending a lot of time getting organized and getting used to working in the new space.

EMD – Herb reported that he has been working with Chris Baird to get him up to speed on the duties of EMD, and that the official handover of duties will happen soon. Herb will stay on to back Chris up if needed. We are very lucky to have Chris volunteer to step into this role as he

has a wealth of Emergency Management experience. He is currently the EMD for Rutland Regional Medical Center and has had a career's worth of Emergency Management training.

Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Task Force – Herb also reported that the Traffic Task Force is still working but we should expect to hear from them soon with some information and recommendations.

Library – Kristal reported that the Library Board has drafted a letter to the powers that be in the Catholic Diocese. That letter went out last week to multiple administrators from Poultney to Connecticut. They hope that their letter of appeal might have some positive effect on the decision-making process and help to speed things up. Kristal is planning to call the working group back together to continue their planning in the event that the diocese is willing to move this purchase forward more quickly.

Ron asked about the carillon and whether that would be part of the sales agreement. To the best current knowledge of the library that piece of the puzzle is not yet settled. Aileen provided a short history of the carillon and to her knowledge it was installed through a donation and was specifically given to the “people of Middletown Springs” and not the diocese itself. More research needs to be done on this to confirm the gift and recipient. The board asked Sarah as an auditor to investigate whether there is any record of this gift in the town's Public Monies records.

TOWN HIGHWAYS

Road Commissioner Report –

- Most pressing thing is to make a decision on winter sand. Bill has gotten pricing from Casella \$13 per ton mixed with our salt, Stanley Martelle \$15 per ton, and Brown's \$11.50 per ton of slate product, we did not get a price from Jim Mars.
 - Terry moved to accept the quote from Casella's for winter sand at \$13 a ton estimated purchase of 1500 tons to be premixed with our salt on site at Casella's pit, Robin 2nd.

Other Summer Work –

- **Other Highway Information and Concerns** –Service Request – potential tree hazard at 119 Spruce Knob Road. Request asks that the tree be removed, or at least have the non-living parts of the tree addressed. The tree is in the town highway right of way. Other people have noticed this tree as well over the years.

The board had a discussion on past practice, setting precedent, and making a determination. Terry, as the Town Tree Warden and Selectboard member will take a look at the tree again and will complete the service request form.

- Bill noticed some issues with Comcast lines being torn down because they are hanging too low, we'd also like them to get their lines off the old poles on West Street. Herb will reach out to Comcast to see if we can get any response and some resolution to these two issues.
- Bill talked about the paving repairs we have Tom Fuller coming to address this fall, and that we might also want to add the apron onto McIntyre Road to that list,

potholes there at the entrance are a constant maintenance issue. The board would like to get a price from Tom Fuller for this work before we make a decision. Bill will follow up with Tom Fuller for the next meeting.

TOWN LANDS - Town Office Construction Update: Peter reported that there are still some things needing to be complete before we can button the project up officially. We're waiting on the "heat recovery unit" which is a backup system for the heat pumps. That is scheduled to come somewhere around Thanksgiving.

Also, Naylor & Breen would like to get the Selectboard together to go over the working and maintenance of the building and review the building maintenance manual they have put together for us. Peter will work on getting that meeting scheduled.

Peter has put together an overview of the building process including costs as a way to tell the story of where we started and the process to get to the finished product. He handed out a draft to the board to review and comment on. This is a document he'd like to be available to the public once it's complete.

Town Office physical move update: The move happened, things went well, the movers were very efficient and careful.

Town Office furnishings budget and procedures: Herb has purchased 20 nesting rolling chairs. We don't have a solid plan for the working tables in the large meeting room space. The board discussed some used options that are available in Springfield MA for pennies on the dollar compared to new options. Robin offered to go down to the warehouse and take a look at the furniture and come back with some possible purchase recommendations. Terry would be willing to transport said furniture if we decided to purchase.

There was also discussion on the small conference room furnishings, and the general look and feel that we want to present. There were differing opinions on whether or where it might be appropriate to incorporate the artifacts found under the ground on site. This discussion will continue as we move ahead.

Requests for landscaping and exterior signage: Herb reported that he has received requests to install a flagpole on site as well as permanent signage. There was discussion on overall site planning, ongoing maintenance, etc. This discussion will continue as well.

Ron shared with the board some ideas for plantings and placement of plantings we might consider as we work on the overall site plan. He's done some research and has many years of experience in his own gardens and feels he can recommend some good options to beautify the landscape. He will share his photos and recommendations with Herb via email so that they can then be disseminated easily as we move ahead.

Peter and Aileen, with planting help from Terry, put some spirea and mulch in the bed near the parking area this week. Many thanks to Terry and Peter & Aileen for the donation and hard work to help finish up this area before winter.

Review of Access & Use Policy: There was a discussion on specific items in the proposed policy, suggested changes made and comments on potential issues. The board did not feel ready to move forward with the comprehensive document. To move one piece forward, we reviewed the list of people who should be given keys and security codes and which keys they should hold. With that piece set, Herb will coordinate with Patty the next steps to get everyone on the list a key, a code and some general instructions on building use protocols.

Peter brought up an Issue that's been happening regularly for the last month or so. On Monday mornings upon arrival there has been significant amounts of trash (broken glass, car parts, burned cans, kitty litter) strewn across the entrance to the parking lot and up the sidewalk. It appears to be a deliberate act and he feels it's time to alert the Sheriff to the issue. We should keep an extra watch on this area as some of the trash poses a hazard to vehicles and pedestrians.

Update on Library Planning: See above discussion.

Other Town Lands and Facilities: Nothing tonight.

SOLID WASTE:

Overview of Large Waste Day: Terry reported that it was a fairly light day, a bit lower take than normal, but things went smoothly, and they dodged the rain during the event. We might want to think about one less container next spring.

Possibility of tire collection? – Terry did a tire event last fall and got a total of only 12 tires, so it was not worth the added cost or work to set it up. It's not off the table entirely for the future, but doesn't make sense in the immediate future.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Thank you note from Big Heavy World for 2023 appropriation.
- Appropriation Requests
 - Vermont Family Network - \$250 same as ly
 - ARC - \$500 same as ly
- Conservation Commission – Sullivan Wood Kiosk Replacement – Mill River High School will build - town is responsible for materials only.
- VLCT - Memorandum RE Act 76 Unemployment Insurance for small non-profits
- BC/BS Renewal Information
- ANR – Dam Inspection Report
- A copy of a letter from Fyles Brothers in Orwell addressed to the Fire Department with a donation of \$500 for their response efforts to a propane leak at one of their customer's residences on Mountain Road.
- Report from Green Mountain Enclosure Consulting – final blower door test results. Passed with a rating .095 cfm/SFBE (which is better than the most stringent standard) – an excellent result.
- VLCT/PACIF – Vehicle coverage - uninsured motorists has new standards for coverage – which is \$10m in coverage and an additional \$400 per year. According to Vicky Abare at VLCT there is no reason for a small town to carry that much coverage. Given that advice, the board authorizes Patty to request we stay with the

same coverage of \$250,000 we usually carry. Patty will fill out that form and get it back to VLCT.

FINANCIAL APPROVALS

a) Board Orders

Terry moved to approve board orders as presented, Peter 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

LEGAL: Further conversation about credit card use/policy – tabled

OTHER BUSINESS: nothing new

EXECUTIVE SESSION for Highway job descriptions – No Executive Session but a short discussion and request that member review these documents between meetings and send questions, comments, suggestions to Herb prior to the next meeting so they can be incorporated for an in-depth discussion at the next meeting.

ADJOURN: Peter moved to adjourn at 10:36pm, Robin 2nd. The meeting adjourned at 10:36pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Patty Kenyon, Clerk

Next Regular Meeting – 7PM Thursday, October 26, 2023