

Middletown Springs Selectboard
Approved Minutes
Regular Meeting • December 14, 2023
Start time 6pm

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

TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT: At the town office: Bill Reed - Road Commissioner/Road Foreman, Kristal Hier – Library Board. Via Zoom: Sarah Grimm – Auditor.

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

CALL TO ORDER: Herb called the meeting to order at 6:03pm (Special Budget Meeting)

BUDGET: Town General Expenditures – Discussion of 2024-25 maintenance, plus remainder of 23-24 budget year.

The board made it through general expenses with a few questions still to be answered. There was discussion about the possibility of lumping all the town property maintenance into one line-item account. More research and thought needs to be put into this to determine if that makes sense in the long term.

There was also discussion about appropriations and how other towns deal with them. More research needs to be done to determine why the current procedures were put into place and what the process might be to make a change if. The impetus is to shorten the town warning and ballot items at the annual town meeting.

Other Brief Business: Setting budget board session for Thursday 12/21 7pm – see regular meeting minutes.

Adjourn: Terry moved Herb 2nd at 7:05pm

REGULAR MEETING SESSION

BOARD PRESENT: At the town office: Patty Kenyon, Terry Redfield, Herb Childress, Peter Stevenson, Robin Chesnut-Tangerman.

TOWN OFFICERS PRESENT: At the town office: Bill Reed - Road Commissioner/Road Foreman. Via Zoom: Sarah Grimm – Auditor.

Regular Meeting Call to Order: Herb called the meeting to order at 7:07pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a) Regular Meeting November 21, 2023, Special Budget Meeting December 7, 2023

Terry moved to approve the minutes of November 21, 2023 regular meeting including the list of correspondence that came in to the meeting, and December 7, 2023 special meeting as presented, Herb 2nd. Ayes – Terry, Herb, Robin, Peter. Abstain – Patty. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: none.

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 – nothing tonight

Planning Commission – Herb did receive a proposal from the RRPC for creating the Energy Component of new Town Plan, this proposal is in the correspondence folder. The board will take this discussion up in correspondence.

TOWN HIGHWAYS

Road Commissioner Report – Bill reported:

- Finished Better Back Roads Grant for proposed Haley Road work – hoping for a grant to do the work next year. All letters are now in place, Patty will put the parts and pieces together and get that submitted by the 12/20 deadline. Grant request is just under \$60,000
- Has been working on budgeting and putting together lists of things that need to happen in the next year's budget.
- Needs the boards support – would like us to send resident, Richard Alberty, a letter asking him to bring evidence to the board regarding his allegations and confrontations with the Road Foreman. Would appreciate it if the board to send a letter and ask for the evidence to be presented. Bill considers this to be harassment of a town employee. Herb agreed to craft a letter for review he will also send to the town's attorney for review before sending to resident.
- Bill still is not getting any response back from Dubois & King regarding moving the Daisy Hollow Road project forward.
- Bill is having issues with highway crew spending habits – general parts, supplies, etc. Do we want to talk about implementing a system? Employ purchase orders? Board will discuss further in an executive session for personnel later in the meeting.

Other Fall Work – none discussed.

Advertising for Highway positions – there has been some interest in the advertised positions. Herb will share more information in executive session later in the meeting.

Other Highway Information and Concerns – nothing discussed.

TOWN LANDS - Town Office Completion Update: Peter reported that the radium test failures were due to an issue with the initial installation. The contractor has fixed the problem and will re-test next week, he expects that this will pass and we will be able to drink the water.

Peter also reported that we are still waiting on M&M Plumbing to get the final installation done on the heating system and to complete some minor tweaks to the plumbing systems. He has handed over the hounding and scheduling to Naylor & Breen, since they are the project managers and this installation is holding up their final invoicing and official job closeout.

Update on Library planning: Nothing

Other Town Lands and Facilities: Patty presented two invoices from the MSVFD for parts for the relocation of the electrical service the board and the fire department discussed last spring. The fire department wants to do this work next week in the warmer weather and need to purchase the parts. One invoice is for moving the town's service off the salt shed and onto a pedestal, the other is for the work on the firehouse electrical system, that invoice request is to draw money from the MSVFD facilities reserve held by the town.

Terry moved to approve the necessary parts and equipment to relocate the power at the transfer station in the amount \$1644.17, Herb 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Herb moved to approve the expenditure of \$9487.49 from the MSVFD Facilities Reserve for upgrades to electric and lighting on the firehouse, Peter 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

These invoices will be added to the board orders with a hand written order.

Herb briefly discussed the potential for a few projects and grant opportunities that he has had discussion with RRPC about.

Bill reported that Grieg & Casey Costantino – Dot Reed LLC – would like to set up a meeting with the board to talk about the potential for better use of that land we rent for highway equipment storage. The board is happy to meet but would like to hold off until January at the earliest.

SOLID WASTE: Glen has given his resignation at the transfer station – he has gotten a full-time job working for Casella running their Gleason Road transfer station. He starts on Monday. We will need to fill in for the short term and then make a plan to move forward. Herb and Terry will split the duties until we can get a job description together and start a search for a permanent replacement.

Herb will send Glen a letter of thanks for his years of service. We wish him well in his new position.

Terry reported that electronics waste was picked up last week, and Glen submitted paperwork on the batteries he dropped off for shipment to recycling facility. There were 85.15 lbs of batteries sent for recycling.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Appropriation Requests:
 - Pleasant View Cemetery - \$1500 – same as ly
 - VNA & Hospice - \$1500 – same as ly

- Child First Advocacy - \$400 – same as ly
- Poultney Mettowee NRCD - \$500 – same as ly
- Regional Ambulance Service Inc - \$400 - .50 per person 2020 census
- Habitat for Humanity - \$350 – same as ly - .50 per reg voter
- Vermont Farmers Food Center - \$500 – same as ly
- VT Rural Fire Protection - \$100 – same as ly
- SW VT Council on Aging - \$750 – same as ly
- Proposal from Haven House Farm Equipment Rental for Roadside mowing – if contracted before 1/1/2024 - \$3000 for two weeks AFTER 1/1/2024 - \$5000 for two weeks.
 - Patty moved to secure the rental for two weeks in the summer of 2024, Robin 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Terry & Bill will pick out the weeks we'd like to rent it and get that to Joe & Bree and Patty will email Joe & Bree and ask to reserve the time and request a contract.
- RRPC – Grant Agreement for Planning Services - \$4000 – using MERP mini grant – The RRPC presented a proposal to complete the town's energy section for the new town plan. The proposal is for \$4000 to complete and publish that work. The town would use the \$4000 grant received from the MERP program.

Peter reviewed the plan that RRPC put together recently for the town of Brandon. He would like other board members to review that plan as well before we make a final determination. Peter will send the board his digital copy of that plan for review.

- Request for Donations from Mentor Connector and Northern Chapter of the Great Dane Rescue organization– (not in the form of an appropriation request) - no action taken.
- Proposal for Town Public Wifi from UARIT - Justin McCoart – Patty explained that this proposal is for replacing old equipment that provides/provided public access wifi to the center of town – one unit located at MSHS & a non-working unit at the store - which would be moved to town office bldg – \$4038.68. Patty will reach out to Larry at ComputerEZ to price out a public wifi unit for the town office to compare options and coverage.
- Proposal from Dupont Storage – additional LR Book shelving units \$3675.00 includes shipping. Patty would like the board to consider this expenditure once we have final numbers of the town office build and can determine if we have money we can use from ARPA funds or if we need to purchase this out of the Preservation Reserve.

FINANCIAL APPROVALS

a) Board Orders

Terry moved to approved board orders as presented with the addition of a special board order for electrical work at the salt shed and the Firehouse, Herb 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

LEGAL: Nothing tonight.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Executive Session to discuss Highway personnel – Herb moved to enter Executive Session at 8:34pm inviting Bill to join us, Robin 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Herb moved to exit Executive Session at 9:40pm, Peter 2nd. All in favor, motion carried.

Action Taken: Selectboard created a memo to the Highway Foreman & Road Crew setting in writing the board's expectations for purchasing, chain of command, and general duties.

ADJOURN: Herb moved to adjourn at 9:40pm, Terry 2nd. The meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Patty Kenyon, Clerk

Next Meeting – Budget – 7PM Thursday, December 21, 2023

Next Regular Meeting – 7PM Thursday, December 28, 2023