Middlesex Budget Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 21, 2026
4:00 PM
Location

Present: Sam Beaudoin, Elias Gardner, Mark Harris, and Matt Rkiouak
Guests: Bill Preis, Travis Skadberg

4:05 Call to Order - Amendments - none offered
4:05 Other Business:

- Approve Agenda - Matt motioned, and Elias seconded. The motion passed, 4-0-1.
- Review and approve February minutes and March meeting minutes
    - Elias moved to approve the February meeting minutes. Matt seconded. The motion passed, 3-0-2.
    - Elias moved to approve the March meeting minutes. Sam seconded,and asked that a spelling error be addressed. Mark complied. The motion passed, 4-0-1
- Review Action Items -
    - AI 78 - Mark reached out to Eric and Paul, and their response was that Shady Rill Section 1 should be repaved per the schedule. The patches being done are temporary fixes only.
    - AI 79 - Matt worked with the Tax Dept. and distributed his findings.
- Capital Planning - revisiting annual allocations to funds
    - After much discussion, consensus was reached on the following:
        - Set a target % of the total anticipated replacement costs to save for future down payments
        - Update replacement values in the Asset Inventory where appropriate
        - Collaborate with the FIT team to get a holistic picture of future town debt commitments
- Sales LOT Research Findings -
    - Matt reported the following:
        - Potential $50K revenue to Middlesex, based on state projections
        - LOTs are regressive taxes (not based on income levels) and generally hit lower-income households hardest
    - The consensus was not to move forward with the LOT approach, due to the regressive tax concern.
- Special Budget Meeting musings -
    - Mark opened the discussion with his observations over the past few weeks:
        - He had conversations (email/phone) with Matt, Dorinda, and Liz on this topic
        - He had email conversations with Brigid and Cheryl as well
        - Liz had a meeting with the Town Office folks (Brigid, Cheryl, and Brenda) last Friday, and asked Mark to attend. Mark said it was very informative.
        - What he got from that meeting:
            - There's a backlog in the town office. Not clear to anyone how long it's been there.
            - There are inefficiencies in the town office that inhibit productivity and should be addressed

                - These are the main reasons the staff believes they need more than 8 hours a week from the Assistant Clerk position
            - Mark was clear in the questions he asked the staff, to talk only about duties they were mandated to perform, not anything related to the new Town Administrator position.
            - Mark felt a budget could be arrived at that addressed both concerns - hiring a TA, and upping the Town office staff allocation
            - One option would be to have 4 positions in the Town office, all @ 32 hrs/week. This would add $23K to the current approved budget, and another penny (5 cents to 6 cents) to the municipal tax increase.
        - Matt expressed concern about cutting the TA position from 40 to 32 hours. At the 4/7 Select Board meeting, the position was made exempt, at 40 hours. He felt that should be preserved.
        - Matt also cautioned about going into the Special Budget Meeting with a pre-conceived budget alternative. Mark concurred, saying it was one plausible option that folks might find palatable.
        - Comments from the guests included:
            - Bill Preis mentioned that when he was in the Town Hall helping with the insulation, he heard first-hand about how the staff is short-handed. He also mentioned that several towns are looking for Town Administrators, so hiring one by July 1st may be a challenge.
            - Travis Skadberg mentioned that he was open to upping the Town office staffing, at a cost of a penny addition to the tax rate. He expressed concern about the following contradictory statements that have been made re: Town office staffing:
                - They need more hours due to the backlog, etc.
                - They can take on some of the TA work, saving the town some $$
            - Mark agreed that he had the same concerns about this contradiction, and hoped to address it at Thursday's special meeting.
        - Mark asked Sam, in the first part of the Special Meeting, if getting phrases on the flip chart quickly about petitioner concerns, and then delving into each in further depth, would be an effective approach. Sam agreed, as did Elias.
- Other Business - none discussed
- Next meeting - it will be Tuesday, May 19th, at 4 PM.
- Motion to end meeting - Elias moved, and Same seconded. The motion passed, 4-0-1.

The meeting ended at 4:59 PM.

Action Item #	Assignee	Action Item	Due Date	Date Closed
78	Mark	Reach out to Eric re: 2028 date for repaving of Shady Rill Section 1, and whether there's an estimate for maintaining gravel roads	4/21/26	4/21/26
79	Matt	Get a finer breakdown of what the $5.5M retail sales figure for Middlesex entails	4/21/26	4/21/26
80				