Select Board Members
X Liz, Scharf, Chair
_Randy Drury, Vice Chair
X Vic Dwire
X_Peter O. Hood
X Zara Vincent

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, October 15, 2024
Middlesex Town Hall and via Zoom*
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Liz Scharf. Select Board members Vic Dwire, Peter Hood*, and Zara Vincent (Chair of the Town Roads Subcommittee). Road Commissioner/Foreman/MVFD Chief Eric Metivier. CVRPC planners Brian Voight and Lincoln Frasca, EWP Engineer Michel LaPoint. Listers Shelly Desjardin, Samantha Beaudoin and Annette Halasz. MVFD President Jeff Koonz. Treasurer Cheryl Grandfield. Former Road Foreman Paul Cerminara*, Planning Commission Chair and member of the Town Hall Committee Sandy Levine, Ron Sweet of the Middlesex Bandstand Committee and engineer Dexter Lefavour*. Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman took the minutes, and the meeting was recorded by ORCA. (*indicates attended via Zoom)

Call to Order

Vic called the meeting to order at 5:11 PM noting the delay due to technical difficulties. Since Liz was enroute to the meeting and Randy wasn't present, the Board decided Vic should chair the meeting.
MOTION: Zara moved, and Vic seconded approving the minutes for the October 1, 2024, Middlesex Select Board meeting. The motion passed and the minutes were signed by those present.
MOTION: Zara moved to approve the amended agenda for the October 1, 2024 meeting; Vic seconded. The motion passed.

Approving J. Merrill Construction as Contractor on 2023 EWP Projects

Brian reminded the Board that the CVRPC received a single bid from J. Merrill for the six Emergency Watershed Projects. However, the bid of $662,766 exceeded the $418,007 the Natural Resource Conservation Service has allotted for the program. At its previous meeting, the Board decided to hold off authorizing the chair to sign the Notice of Award until it was clear there would be enough funding to cover this cost. This was further complicated by the federal fiscal year coming to a close on September 30th. Since then, Michel and Brian confirmed they have been assured the funds will be available.
The Board discussed whether to hold off signing the notice, prioritizing projects to stay within the original amount allotted or to go ahead and sign the award on the assurance. Liz suggested proceeding with the contract on the good-faith knowledge the money will come. Brian said the contractor will need a location for a disposal site and asked if the Town gravel pit could be used. Eric said this would be to monitor invasive plants and cultural resources in the debris. Eric said he'd be willing to work with Jason Merrill and Brian to consider the Town gravel quit.
Paul asked about the difference between the bid and the budget and questioned how much advertising had been done. Brian said four bidders attended the pre-bid meeting. He said the damage wrought by the July 2024 flood increased the cost of the job scope.
MOTION: Zara moved to authorize Liz to sign the Notice of Award and Contract with J. Merrill Construction at a cost of $662,766 for the 2023 Emergency Watershed Projects; Vic seconded. The motion passed.
Liz asked about the status of the 2024 EWP projects. Brian said 16 sites are in the chute to be reviewed, but there's no way to predict if they'll qualify.

Paying the CVRPC $1,500 to Update/Correct the Town's Parcel Map

After the Listers met with Brian last week, Shelly said it's clear no changes have been made to the Town parcel map since 2020. She asked about what happened to the money allocated in 2021 to updating the parcel map; Brian said that agreement was before his tenure at the CVRPC, but it was likely spent on some work done. Shelley asked about moving forward. Based on a PTTR spreadsheet, Brian estimated that 50 parcels would need to be updated. Some are lot-line adjustments; some are subdivisions. He pegged the cost to update the map at $1,500, including hours included with annual dues paid by the Town to the CVRPC. He said the map could be updated by the end of 2024. Considering the Town is embarking on a townwide reappraisal, it might be helpful to have the map corrected and updated by the end of the year instead of spreading the cost of updating over two years. Sheryl agreed, noting that townspeople are complaining about the errors, and said map updates should be included in the Town's annual budget. Brian said it's unlikely the Town will have to deal with 60 adjustments in a single year. He said CVRPC cannot bank map money.
MOTION: Zara moved to authorize the Treasurer to pay the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission $1,500 from the discretionary fund to update the Town's parcel map; Vic seconded. The motion passed.

Listers Errors and Omissions

Shelly explained that when the Town purchased 28 Rich Road as part of a FEMA buyout in June 2023, the parcel was never shifted from taxable to non-taxable on the 2024 Grand List. This needs to be corrected.
MOTION: Zara moved to approve the Listers' request to reclassify 28 Rich Road as non-taxable parcel under "errors and omissions"; Peter seconded. The motion passed.

MVFD

Jeff submitted a monthly report on Fire Department activities. (Please see report, below.)

Highway Report

Eric submitted his weekly highway report. (Please see report, below.)
Paul asked about Dirt Tech's schedule which doesn't seem to match what was posted on the Town's website earlier this summer. Eric said the contractors are behind because of the 2024 storm. He said they're backfilling a box culvert on Portal Road and will start resurfacing and making other repairs safe for winter travel. They will not be able to finish their contract for the 2023 work. Paul might be good to update the Town website.
MOTION: Zara moved to apply for an REI grant which would pay for road-erosion inventory; Vic seconded. The motion passed.
MOTION: Zara moved to approve and sign an annual VTRANS grant agreement - BR1230 of $6,064 - for townwide road-erosion inventory; Vic seconded. The motion passed and Liz signed the agreement.

Approving a New Access Permit for 217 Brook Road

Eric explained that to accommodate a new bridge over the Great Brook for Charles Cook and Elle O'Casey, the current driveway would need to be moved 100 yards up.
MOTION: Peter moved, and Zara seconded a new access permit for 217 Brook Road. The motion passed and Liz signed the application.

Culvert Policy

The Board reviewed policies from various Vermont towns concerning how to handle culverts at the ends of private driveways in towns' rights-of-way. Zara said the Town Roads Subcommittee approved of shifting the responsibility for these culverts from the private homeowners to the Town. Eric noted that many towns are revisiting their policies after the past two floods. The Board tabled this issue until the next meeting of the Select Board on November 12th.

Treasurer Report

Cheryl reported that the costs for flood repairs have hit hard. With $1,481, 758 in the checking account, after tonight's orders of $898,190, that will leave about $583,568 in the Town's checking account. After the change orders, outstanding Dirt Tech invoices add up to $2,362,063. Therefore, the town is going to have to pursue another line of credit. The Vermont Bond Bank is offering a 12-month loan at 0.5% interest on $100,000 to $1,000,000. Still, the Town should accept Community Bank's offer of a $3.5 million line of credit as a bridge. Despite turning in all the spreadsheets for 2023 construction by October 22nd, Zara said the Town will be lucky if FEMA reimburses by the end of the calendar year. The Board discussed that while the "B" – or emergency - work is 100% covered, the Town will be on the hook for $7.5% of the C work – at least $400,000.
MOTION: Zara moved, and Liz seconded authorizing the Treasurer to pursue a $3.5 million line of credit from Community Bank. The motion passed.

Approving RFP for IT Services

MOTION: Zara moved, and Vic seconded the request for proposals for IT services. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Washington Electric Power Line on Center Road

MOTION: Liz approved the extension of a 7200-volt electric distribution line permit for Washington Electric near the residence of John Keith Pepin at 776 Center Road. Zara seconded the motion, which passed. The Board signed the permit.

No Mass-Mailed Postcards for Bond Vote

Sandy said that as part of the Town Hall committee that's been working on proposed renovations, the members developed an outreach plan that involved mailing postcards. She said she "doesn't have a dog in this fight," but thought the Board had an obligation to inform voters and let them know of the October 22nd Town Hall tour and public hearing. The Board decided there was not enough time to get postcards out before a substantial number of voters cast their mail-in ballots.

Ron Sweet, a member of the Middlesex Bandstand Committee, asked the Board if the bandstand could be perennially funded instead of making an annual request. Liz explained that every department and agency must submit an annual budget request. Ron was advised to submit a request by September or seek funding via a special article voted on at Town Meeting.

Dexter asked for the Notice to Proceed with J. Merrill to be signed and emailed to him. It was.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM

THE ABOVE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS A WARNED AGENDA ITEM AT A SPECIALLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD ON NOVEMBER 12, 2024.

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LIZ SCHARF, CHAIR

_____N/A_____
RANDY DRURY, VICE CHAIR

_____
VIC DWIRE

_____ _____
PETER HOOD

_____
ZARA VINCENT

15 Oct MVFD Meeting Notes

Total calls this year: 87
Calls during this period: 8
Mutual Aid out: 1
Mutual Aid in: 2
Max members respond: 7
Min members respond: 3
Avg members respond: 4.75

E-1 out 5 times
E-6 out 1 time
T-1 out 1 time
R-1 out 2 time
Tk-14 out 0 times
POV out 0 times

17 Sep, I-89 SB mm 58.6, Car accident, E-1, R-1 3 responders
17 Sep, Rt 12/Shady Rill, Dump truck roll over, E-1, 5 responders
23 Sep, Bolduc Rd, Car fire, E-1, E-6, 4 responders
MA in MFD, dispatch called because location wasn't clear and close to the line
28 Sep, Center Rd, Fire alarm, false alarm, E-1, T-1, 5 responders
03 Oct, Weston Trailer Park, Structure fire, Cnx'd before trucks rolled, 4 responders
MA out Berlin
05 Oct, I-89 SB mm 55, Fire along road, Cnx'd by K-1, 5 responders
11 Oct, I-89 SB just south of Exit 9, Vehicle crossed from NB to SB, E-1, R-1, 5 responders
12 Oct, Rt 12/Shady Rill, Tree on road, R-1, 7 responders

FAST Sq:
16 total for the reporting period
12 medical only calls

Training: Hazmat review

Repairs:

Purchases: One pair of boots

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Bimonthly Road Report

10/01/2024-10/15/2024

Equipment

Kenworth- Running and no issues

International- Running and no issues

Freightliner- Running and no issues

Grader- Running no issues

Excavator- Running and no issues

Road Work/Issues

Finished repairs on East Bear Swamp Rd. Replaced two cross culverts on the flats at the top and filled in wash outs.

Finished up repairs on the class four section of South Bear Swamp Rd. Ditched and stone lined

Went through the trucks and made sure they were ready for winter. Installed plow fronts, installed wing on the freightliner, shortened and adjusted up the bed chains on the Kenworth and the International.

Ordered new winter tiers for the two tandems and replaced the bold ones.

Will be moving the excavator to McCullough Hill Rd this week to start making it safe for winter travel.

DRAFT