Select Board Members
__X_ Liz Scharf, Chair
_X__ Zara Vincent, Vice Chair
___ Stacey Skadberg
_X__ Larry Rooney
_X__Paul Cerminara

Middlesex Select Board Meeting
Tuesday, October 21, 2025
Middlesex Town Hall and via Zoom*
Meeting Minutes

5:00 Call to order and welcome guests

- Approve minutes of the October 14, 2025 special meeting
  - No action needed as minutes have not been finalized – deferred to next meeting
- Approve agenda for October 21, 2025 select board meeting
  - Zara moved to approve, Larry seconded, motion approved

5:05 Budget Committee – Wage bands for town employees

- Agenda includes: wage bands for inflation, how to adjust any salaries due to the new ranges, and where to store the document going forward
  - Budget committee members Matt Rkiouak and Mark Harris were present
  - Mark spoke for the committee – They sent out a June 9th memo with research about wage bands with grid that could be updated; committee was asked to look at specific positions including town/municipal manager; they estimated mid-point for full time manager position at about $150,000
  - Committee made assumptions about annual updates and proposed using Social Security COLAs and do so on Jan. 1 each year
  - Numbers are based on VLCT 2024 data and they upgraded 10% from the 2024 numbers – 2025 numbers came out today and they'll reconfigure the data based on those actual numbers
  - Discussion took place about differences between manager and administrator positions; may need more information from people who know
  - MDX town clerk does a hybrid job because the town lacks an administrator or manager
  - Liz explained that she is spending a lot of time doing town work that is not sustainable – a manager or administrator would help; Liz also shared that with work on the town's plate going forward more help will be needed
  - Mark offered to update the ranges with 2025 data
  - Mark also offered that the form needs to be stored in a secure location and be accessible to the budget committee
  - Zara expressed a concern about how people perceive the wage bands; Jay X asked about what the band is about and came to the meeting to find out more
  - Mark added that one of the factors that was considered is when a new person is hired you need a range that is based on factors including experience and skills
  - Liz added that the project to create this wage guidance came out of a concern about historic ways positions have been filled; it also provides an objective and transparent way to pay people who are doing more than one job and keeps the town competitive with other towns
  - Larry said it also gives a clear starting place when hiring new people; can use when recruiting
  - Shelley Desjardins offered that it helps reduce concerns that town employees are getting compensated adequately
  - Mark added that the committee looked at towns that are in the same population range as MDX; looked at those positions and what those towns are paying
  - Liz asked if road crew positions in other towns are broken down into different levels so there are opportunities for advancement
  - Liz reminded the group that salary is just one part of the compensation package – vacation, retirement, health insurance, time off, and other benefits are also how the town attracts and retains staff
  - Dorinda Crowell will forward to Mark a spreadsheet that details the entire compensation package for employees
  - Ben X explained that a neighboring town offered his daughter a position at $4 more per hour with a great benefit package
  - Committee will forward updated document when 2025 data is fully analyzed

Draft

- The selectboard thanked Mark and the committee for their work

5:25 Highway report and FEMA roadwork update from Eric Metevier and Zara Vincent

- Eric reported that paving will be done Friday on Shady Rill and McCullough; Old Brook Rd permits have been filed; heaters in town garage going in tomorrow

- Update on FEMA payments
  - Federal government is closed; 2024 – town is obligated on everything except Brook and that's 1.4M; 2023 – East Hill, Lower Sunnybrook and East Hill; need to file extensions for 2023 and 2024 – about $2.3M
- Update on signs on Center Road
  - Zara spoke with VTRANS and she said town could do what they want regarding that intersection; Eric put up stop sign at Center Rd.
  - End of Molly Supple currently has yield sign – that will be changed to stop sign
  - All state work is done
- Update on October 14th walk-through of culverts
  - Six box culverts that were installed post-flood have been identified as being deficient
  - One of the big problems is type of stone that was used – not correct size
  - Each culvert has its own set of problems
  - Moving forward there will be another meeting with Dirt Tech to discuss where they need to make corrections, and which fixes are the town's responsibility and which are Dirt Tech's
  - This work is necessary as it effects future funding and potentially FEMA funding
  - Zara mentioned that FEMA will not recoup money because they were not specific about the size of the stone (which could have meant a claw back of $1.5M)
  - Paul offered to put a list together with Zara's help and bring that to a public informational meeting; that meeting will be scheduled soon

5:35 Planning Commission

- Resolution to support Middlesex 2026 Municipal Planning Grant Application
  - Town resident Tom Jackman provided an outline of the grant application in amount of $X
  - Funds will help town update zoning and natural resources section of town plan; grant has a 10% match requirement; will ask CV planning commission to help with the work; grant is a way to pay CVPC for this assistance
  - Town must approve submitting the grant application and sign resolution; also must sign Act 154 Good Standing Certification; Liz filled out a form with ANR guidance that says MDX cannot state is it in good standing and the town is working on remediating areas where there are problems
  - Selectboard needs to approve submitting the 2026 Resolution for the municipal planning grant and the required Act 154 Good Standing Certification form. The form will be submitted with the box checked that indicates the town is not able to certify that it's in good standing, and accompany the form with the supporting documents that describes why it's currently not in good standing and what it's doing to rectify that
  - Larry moved action described above, Zara seconded, motion approved

- Appoint Tom Jackman to serve as Acting Zoning Administrator when current Zoning Administrator is not available, as nominated by the Planning Commission
  - Motion to accept planning commission's nomination for Tom Jackman to serve as acting zoning administration when current administrator is not available
  - Paul moved, Larry seconded; motion approved
  - Tom was thanked for his service

5:43 Fire Department Update – Jeff Koonz reported

- 57 calls, 4 during last period
- Engine 1 out all 4 times
- I-89 VSP cruiser vs. bear

Draft

- Responded to town's first EV fire
- Responded to grass fire on Brook Rd. – occurred while there was a no-burn order by state

6:00 Welch Park Association dissolution update

- Follow-up of meeting on 10/13/25 with Cheryl, Liz, Eric Metivier, Carl Bailin and Matt Oates of Benderson
  - The Park includes up to 8 lots – 2 of those lots were owned by the association
  - As association is dissolved, Carl is taking lot 2 and Benderson is taking lot 7
  - When dissolution happens the lots will need a tax assessment
  - Welch Park Association never received a tax bill over about 30 years even though the association owned two of the lots as common areas
  - Liz suggests a board of abatement meeting is needed
  - Dissolution means the town will own and maintain the road; the town will continue to own the lots it currently has and town will still have easements on lot 7 as the fire pond and pump are on that lot
  - Town lawyer is working with association lawyer and others to review legal documents (i.e., quit claim deed for lot 7, transfer of current road to a town road, maintenance and easement agreement, and dissolution document)
  - Discussion took place about history of purchase of the property 30 +/- years ago; efforts have been made to dissolve the association for many years
  - Time line for finalizing documents by Nov. 25th and sign by town by Dec. 5th

6:15 Other business

- Mitch Osiecki sent email that $22,751 grant received related to improving water access at Welch Park
- Email request received from a resident asking who has completed their ethics training and how the town deals with ethics complaints
  - Selectboard members need to attend the training and documentation of completion still needed for Larry; he will send in to Liz
  - Selectboard chair is point ethics person for the town
  - Complaints about dogs and roads are not ethics issues; ethics complaints include things like conflicts of interest, or special treatment for selectboard members where a favor or quid pro quo is expected or implied
- Resident Evelyn Prim sent request for permission to put up a fence on her road
  - The town has a legal 3-rod right of way – about 49' – regardless of which class or width the road is
  - Liz proposed letting Evelyn know that a wire or see-through fence that doesn't block sight would be ok; if fence is within the 49' limit she may be asked to move it for sight or safety concerns, or it may be knocked over by plow trucks
  - Selectboard generally acknowledged that future road problems like this be resolved by road crew
- Liquor license application received from Bent Nails – 3rd class restaurant/bar license for Bent Nails Bistro LLC
  - Zara moved to approve the license and allow Cheryl to complete the on-line application, Paul seconded, motion approved

6:30 Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting: Monday, Nov. 3rd – changed due to election on Nov. 4th

Submitted by: Carol Maloney

Draft