Select Board Members
_x_ Liz Scharf, Chair
_x_ Zara Vincent, Vice Chair
_x_ Stacey Skadberg
_x_ Larry Rooney
_x_ Paul Cerminara

Middlesex Select Board Special Meeting

9:00 a.m.
Saturday May 9, 2026
Middlesex Town Hall and via Zoom*
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

Meeting Minutes

Attending: Travis Skadberg, Sarah Lund, Dan X, and Michael Levine

9:00 a.m.

- **Call to order and welcome guests**

- **Approve Agenda for May 9, 2026 special select board meeting and consider any amendments to the agenda**

Motion: Larry Rooney moved to approve agenda for special select board meeting on May 9, 2026, Paul Cerminara seconded, motion approved

9:02

- **Per 19 V.S.A. §708, board consideration on its own motion to warn a public hearing to consider upgrading and reclassifying to a class 3 road, the 0.3 class 4 section of South Bear Swamp Road from the town turn around at the top of South Bear to the last houses in the 0.3 section of the road**
    - Stacey Skadberg commented that she does not agree with the meeting
        - She thinks its does a disservice to the recommendations rec from planning and conservation commissions
        - At the public hearing that no further action until policy is updated
        - Stacey Skadberg drafted a document to update the discussion on last Tuesday and that discussion didn't happen
        - For folks who want to know how we got here there will be some confusion
        - Stacey Skadberg takes the position to taking the time to update the policy before we take further action, either on our own or otherwise
        - If this was a petition SB is statutorily obligated to take it up but on its own the select board is not obligated to act

    - Paul Cerminara commented that he asked for the vote the other night
        - Between time and concerns discussing this as part of the amended agenda didn't sit favorable with everyone
        - Thinks board should move forward with discussion; thinks it's a discussion to consider, not to upgrade
        - Feels confident by the time select board would get to that point it would have an updated policy

    - Zara Vincent is concerned about the email received from the attorney last night
        - Agrees with Stacey Skadberg that the board needs time to do things
        - Concerned with email communication
        - Has had promises about payments, if there's no petition of 75 we cannot count on what's said
        - Doesn't want to be pushed to move forward before the board and she is ready

    - Larry Rooney is fence sitting
        - Doesn't like the position the select board is in and doesn't like how the board got here
        - Stated, "I feel like I'm being bullied"
        - I support the upgrading of the road and this is not the appropriate way to do it – by threats of lawsuits to the town
        - Understands there are other residents on the road and don't want to harm them because of one person
        - Is not opposed to another hearing but am questioning the whole process
        - Would like to see the commitment in writing before voting

- Liz Scharf thinks that it makes sense to move forward with another public hearing where the select board can hear again from the residents; didn't hear from a couple of them that live on that section of road
    - Thinks given the fact there is an opportunity to have this paid for and town may not have that opportunity in the future
    - Doesn't think there's a scenario where town can afford to do this on its own
    - At hearing as part of town's finding, or report of what we present, if there's a contingency that's managed and paid for by residents of that section, it will be overseen by Eric Metivier to make sure it meets the standards of a class 3 road
    - In sincerity it is in the best interest of this town and the members of the board

- Larry Rooney wondered why we're pushing forward

- Liz Scharf said, "We are not changing the class 4 road"
    - What is being considered is legal and is an option
    - The process would take too long to get through this particular road by the end of the season so it could be another year before the road could be maintained by the town

- Sarah Lund spoke
    - She lives at S. Bear Swamp and responded to the comments
    - Appreciates all the time and effort and apologized for not attending previous
    - Supports putting it forward faster
    - This has been ongoing for years; she attended a meeting four years ago on Zoom about this situation
    - She felt bullied then and since then town has had two floods so have waited for this
    - This has been going on for a number of years
    - If we could pass and move on, knowing it will not happen tomorrow, it would be appreciated

- Dan asked for an explanation of the finances
- Paul Cerminara responded that for the 0.3 mile stretch being considered, Mike Hill has suggested in writing that he would fund the first 0.2 portion by hiring a contractor on his own and town would work collaboratively with him
    - The town would ultimately do the 0.1 mile and that would be town's in-kind contribution
    - Mike Hill has said this openly in writing and in public meetings
- Michael Levine asked what prompted the sudden move to do this today?
- Liz responded that she and Paul Cerminara met with Mike Hill on Thursday for a couple of hours
    - He reiterated that he would still consider paying for the section
    - He asked that town consider before Liz leaves
    - The public hearing would take place while Liz is gone – needs to be no less than 30 days from the approval
    - It was more about the length of time of construction season

- Michael Levine asked if there is no cost estimate or idea about; Is maintenance on town's dime?

- Liz said the section would be maintained by town as with the rest of the roads in town
- Paul did preliminary estimate in February
    - Town has been advised by attorney that we are able to make our vote contingent on payment from Mike Hill
    - In his opinion, urgency is about concern about Mike Hill's willingness to fund 0.2 portion, town delays over the years, and is concerned Mike Hill will no longer share his willingness; it would be a shame to not give the forward momentum to keep Mike Hill's trust
    - Town is the beneficiary of this commitment
    - If town prolongs, it may not be able to fund on its own

- Stacey Skadberg stated that the town does not possess any physical estimates of the work; it's reasonable to say there's a huge question mark about the cost of this work
    - Thinks the town is really blind on that issue
    - Doesn't know if anyone has solicited bids
    - Responded to Sarah Lund's comments – validated and apologized for past board actions
    - The law clearly states that a petition received by 5% of voters requires the select board to hold a hearing

        - The residents have not utilized the petition channel to get what they want; she understands it's a lot of work; having now seen two petitions this year she knows it's feasible
        - Improving the roads, after the site visit, she believes the current policy allows residents to improve the roads; there's nothing stopping the residents from improving the road without having to reclassify
        - If town updates its policy it can incorporate collaborative language to allow transparency throughout the process

    - Liz Scharf stated if the board votes to do this today, asked Paul if he could get a better estimate of cost?
    - Paul Cerminara could have design-build and work with Mike Hill to get bids; suggested that Mike Hill reach out to contractors
    - Zara Vincent Asked if there's an opportunity that if this is warned, can it be put off until Liz Scharf returns in July
    - Stacey Skadberg said it needs to be as soon as possible, the clock starts ticking
    - Zara Vincent expressed concern about time it takes to get the numbers needed, to get all the information needed
    - Paul Cerminara responded: "Is it aggressive, yes"; Contractors are going to be hungry so participation in bid process could be hefty
        - Is it doable? Town can get the board and public with factual context about costs in time for this to be done this season
    - Travis Skadberg asked if the town attorney supports the timeline
    - Liz responded that Rob Halpert supports this plan
    - Paul Cerminara called the vote on the issue

Motion: Paul Cerminara moved to warn a public hearing to consider upgrading and reclassifying to a class 3 road, the 0.3 section of South Bear Swamp Road from the town turn around at the top of South Bear to the last houses in the 0.3 section of the road, Liz Scharf seconded, Liz, Paul, Zara voted in favor, Stacey and Larry opposed

Public hearing for Tuesday, June 23rd

9:45

- **Adjourn**

Motion: Larry Rooney moved to adjourn, Paul Cerminara seconded, motion approved

THE ABOVE MINUTES OF MAY 9 2026 SPECIAL MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD MEETING WERE APPROVED BY THE SELECT BOARD ON MAY 19, 2026.

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LIZ SCHARF, CHAIR

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ZARA VINCENT, VICE CHAIR

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LAWRENCE ROONEY

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PAUL CERMINARA

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STACEY SKADBERG

Submitted by: Carol Maloney