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

Middlesex Selectboard Meeting

5:00 PM
Tuesday July 21, 2026
Middlesex Town Hall and via Zoom*
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

Meeting Minutes

Attending: Carol Maloney, Dorinda Crowell, Brendan Lareau, Ben Abair

5:00PM

- **Call to order and welcome guests**
  - Liz Scharf thanked Zara Vincent for serving as chair for select board meetings in her absence

- **Approve agenda for July 21, 2026, and consider any amendments to the agenda**
  - Amended to include Sheriff contract discussion
  - Under correspondence, an addition from Elliott Burg about tennis courts

Motion: Zara Vincent moved to approve amended agenda for July 21, 2026 select board meeting, Stacey Skadberg seconded, motion approved

- **Approve the minutes of July 7, 2026, regular Selectboard meeting July 13, 2026, special Selectboard meeting**
  - Minutes amended to reflect accurate select board attendees: Zara Vincent, Stacey Skadberg, and Larry Rooney

Motion: Larry Rooney moved to approve amended minutes of July 7, 2026 regular select board meeting, Zara Vincent seconded, motion approved; Paul Cerminara and Liz Scharf abstained as they were absent

5:03

- **Highway report – Ben Abair presented**
  - Mowing continuing
  - Cleaning out ditches of trees and debris

- **Updates on FEMA payments from Zara Vincent**
  - Portal Rd repayment should arrive any day; over $300K from federal government to state and then to town
  - Brook Rd. – Cheryl Grandfield to do draw down of $1M of the $1.3 million owed to town
  - 4720 closed out; state to send remaining funding they were holding for that – 10% of their 7.5%
  - "Missing" bills from S. Bear/ Norton $75,415; Center Road – $149,748 added in by FEMA; town proved it did the work
  - Notch Road – $171,815 was actually added to 4810/2024 billing so has been accounted for
  - FEMA – PDMG is working on paperwork to recuperate our interest on bank and bond loans
  - Work remaining to complete

- McCullough Rd. work to repair 2023 and 2024 flood damage was completed before the July 14 deadline by the crew; town is repaid for time, equipment, as well as materials
- Norton Rd. 2023 damage to be fixed with a new squash culvert starting after August 7 (likely the 10th) and will be closed to through traffic
- Lower Sunny Brook damage from 2023 will be repaired / replaced/ fixed starting soon after Norton Rd. is completed
- Old Brook Rd. and Daniel's Farm Rd. Bridge to be completed this fall before winter
- French Rd. and Bolduc Rd. 2024 damages to be completed next spring/summer
- Concrete culverts are being manufactured now
- BRIC grant application closed out; indications look good for winning that. 5% goes to admin (about $9,500); FEMA made the state redo this; state has $2M in hand for BRIC grants; About $150,000 from state for Brook Rd work

- **Update on Hazard Mitigation Program grant 5-year plan to improve failing culverts; other project developments or needs**
  - HMP grant five year culvert replacement planned
  - Johnson Hardware priced out
  - Just under 30 culverts per yr of closed, critical, urgent and poor culverts replace to correct size and HDPE or concrete

- **Town garage update – Zara Vincent provided update from FIT committee work**
  - Structural engineer came to look at town garage – structure is sound
  - Best use is for cold storage
  - Sheathing, doors and jams need to be fixed to keep bones safe
  - May need to RFP for that work
  - $50k put aside in budget for that work
  - Agreement that it's a good storage building
  - For now need to repair existing building so not wasting so much for heat
  - Zara Vincent asked for help from Paul Cerminara to put that out to bid

- **Paul Cerminara reported update re: ANR**
  - Fitzgerald still is committing to working on remediation for wetlands on S Bear Swamp
  - Need to revisit with ANR re: items that have self-mitigated; worth getting an updated list before asking DT for an action plan
  - Could be an informal site visit to determine what's needed
  - Liz Scharf said that even culverts that needed stone removal would need to be done
  - Paul confirmed that that work definitely needs to be done
    - Fitzgerald will do that work – requires additional permitting
  - Deadline is Oct. 1st – need to communicate with ANR if town will not meet the deadline
  - Paul Cerminara said as long as town is actively working with restoration, they understand the time lines of contractors
    - Paul will reach out to Rachel at ANR
  - Zara Vincent stated that EWP is doing work on Brook Road
    - Cheryl Grandfield set up two separate accounts for EWP work
  - Stacey Skadberg asked if the garage is an asset town should keep; an RFP would be beneficial to bid out the work needed to improve the structure as cold storage and not as improvements; who would draft the RFP?
    - Zara said she would work with Paul Cerminara
    - Paul said it's not his specialty

- Stacey asked if members of energy committee could help
- Paul said the repairs should incorporate some things considered weatherization; if there was a report of needed repairs it would help the select board
- Zara responded that an employee of DeWolf gave drawings and details
- Liz Scharf said that if town hired a structural engineer to do the assessment they could help with the RFP
- Stacey said maybe it's time to hire someone to give formal opinion and to help put the RFP together; no one person on committee or on select board is perfect; is there money to retain an engineer to provide assessment and prepare RFP for work that is needed?
- Zara met with Sam Lash from CVRPC re: grant funds; some discussion on FIT committee about what to do first
    - Wetland delineation has been done – building would be best placed at old firehouse
- Paul asked what the future life expectancy of the building is
    - Zara responded they said it was sturdy; said same thing in 2019
- Larry Rooney shared that the FIT committee said the idea is to save the building for cold storage and then the new building won't need as much space for storing equipment
- Stacey suggested the FIT committee could ask select board for funds to hire structural engineer to do assessment and guide the writing of RFP
    - Procurement process requires RFP only if project exceeds $10k
    - Liz said there is no need to go out to bid for a structural engineer
    - Paul would like to see a formal description of work that's needed
    - Stacey suggested retaining someone to update findings in 2019 assessment
    - Larry said there is no FIT meeting in August
    - Stacey suggested FIT committee ask an engineer what their fee would be and come to select board for permission to hire
        - Stacey also said once a formal report is received, it can go to energy committee to see what they can do, or what's only doable by contractor
        - Liz reminded the board there is an energy report for all town buildings

5:27

- **Fire Department update from Brendan Lareau**
    - Total calls this year: 56
    - Calls during this period: 8
        - Mutual aid out: 0
        - Mutual aid in: 0
        - Max members responding: 7
        - Min. members responding: 2
        - E-1: out 5 times
        - E-6: out 0 times
        - T-1: out 2 times
        - R-1: out 4 times
        - Tk-14: out 0 times
        - POV: out 9 times
    - Fire calls
        - 6/17 – MV accident on I89
        - 6/27 – unattended fire in a field of I89
        - 6/28 – MV accident on I89 south vehicle in median

        - 7/1 – Tree on power lines on Notch Rd.
        - 7/3 – Multi-car MV accident on I89 south
        - 7/5 – Broken down car with blown tire on I89 north
        - 7/8 – Excavator fully on fire
        - 7/15 – Smoke seen from woods on Colby Road
    - Fast Squad
        - 11 total for the reporting period
        - 10 medical only calls
    - Training: MV extraction and EMT live practice session
    - Repairs: none
    - Purchases: none

5:29

- **Town Clerk's report/update provided by Brigid Browning**
    - In good place for election
    - On second revision of BCA meeting
    - Call out for volunteers to help during 7 am to 7 pm polling hours
    - Focused on absentee ballots getting out; they are available until Aug. 6th
    - Select board and Brigid met re: work load and hours of working; looking forward to increased communication
        - Liz Scharf asked if there's an agenda finalized for BCA agenda
            - Brigid Browning will send out 2nd draft tonight
            - BCA meeting is Aug. 4th
            - Agenda needs to go out by 31st
            - Office hours are now 8-6 T, W, TH, Monday and Friday by appt; Brigid will work remotely on weekends; she doesn't report or need permission from select board
        - Liz Scharf said the select board is not the boss of the clerk; it's an elected position with responsibilities defined in statute; the expectation is that elected officials are honest on their time sheets
            - Zara Vincent said employees of the town and Cheryl Grandfield, who is elected, write up what they are doing with their time; their hourly time sheets include details about what they're working on
            - Larry Rooney asked for clarification from Brigid about when she's working from home
                - Brigid said when she's doing projects it's extra work but emails and little tasks are just one-offs and not counted as time
            - Liz Scharf asked if Brigid is communicating with other office staff about her times not in the office; as a voter she would like the clerk in the office when the office is open; would hope that open hours have clerk present in the office

- **Discussion about new web site – Brigid Browning reported**
    - Timeline keeps shifting; anticipate live in late Aug or early Sept;
    - Looking for feedback; Cindy is on vacation
    - Having issues with current website – some pages aren't uploading; Brigid Browning is working with others to clear it up
    - All SB meeting minutes are on the web site

5:42

- **Treasurer's update / Budget to actuals – Cheryl Grandfield reported**
  - Waiting on entries from auditor to close 2025
  - Tax bills have gone out
  - 2025 seemed to have a lot more people struggling with tax bills than in 2024
  - Only one or two people for 2024 with minimal debt
  - RB Tech – working with them to finish their upgrade process; need to figure out what's needed for town administrator; one computer that's already there could be used for administrator or public
    - Discussion about how many monitors are needed
  - FEMA Brook Rd is still work that's needed; payroll reports also needed
  - Budget to actual report does not have any payments since July 1 that will be applied to previous year
  - Liz asked about road budget items

5:51

- **Sheriff contract**
  - Last year decided not to sign contract for speed control
  - Sheriff's office could only do winter time so decided against it
  - Raised their rates starting July 1
  - Town did not budget for the contract
  - Liz asked Brigid Browning to call the Sheriff's office and let them know the town will not be signing the contract because the town didn't budget for that service

- **Correspondence**
  - Elliott Burg expressed dismay over condition of tennis courts; would like pickleball opportunities on the courts
  - There is $10k in the budget
  - Town owns the courts
  - They are also the school's basketball courts; concern about tripping on the holes and cracks
  - Liz Scharf thinks it's good to have funds toward repair; if the town is interested it could do some fundraising to help show buy-in
    - She will reach out to Elliott Burg and say it's not a priority and it's a bigger project than the town has funding for
    - Liz suggested that the town road crew look at the surface to see if anything easily can be done
- **Update on Town administrator from Zara Vincent**
  - 7 or 8 candidates; committee is doing interviews
  - They will send top two candidates to select board
  - Jessica Beaudoin is the chair of the committee
    - Stacey Skadberg asked for an update form Jessica at next meeting
  - Liz Scharf said she thinks it's unusual to not have the hiring entity – the select board – represented on the hiring committee
  - Zara responded that it's the job of committee to narrow down the field to the best two candidates that will then be interviewed by the select board
    - Stacey Skadberg said the committee's work is a screening process
    - She wants to talk with Jessica Beaudoin about their process and the next step
    - Wants to make sure there is communication
  - Larry Rooney agrees that no one on the committee really knows the work of the town

- Liz Scharf expressed concern about the committee not including anyone who knows the business of the town; at some point the candidates will want to talk with people who work for and are involved in daily operations of the community
- Cheryl Grandfield shared her thoughts about the process, including the candidates coming in to meet town employees and people who know what the town's operations are
- Once they narrow the pool they will come to the select board and then to the town offices
- Liz will put Jessica coming to select board on future agenda
- Paul Cerminara said if one of the select board was on the committee they would be perceived as speaking for the full board; more comfortable not being in that position
- Stacey Skadberg asked if someone could come to next meeting to talk about process and sketch out how many interviews they're doing; how they're going to respond to questions they may not have answers to
    - She said it's neat the committee is running with it; will be good to connect and see how they're doing
- Paul said the job description is only document the group has come up with; not one of the select board could answer questions about the job outside of the job description; this is a new job so no one really knows what the job entails fully

6:05

- **Adjourn**

Motion: Zara Vincent moved to adjourn the meeting, Paul Cerminara seconded, motion approved

THE ABOVE MINUTES OF JULY 21ST, 2026 MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD MEETING WERE APPROVED BY THE SELECT BOARD ON AUGUST 4, 2026.

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LIZ SCHARF, CHAIR

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ZARA VINCENT, VICE CHAIR

_____
LAWRENCE ROONEY

_____
PAUL CERMINARA

_____
STACEY SKADBERG

Submitted by: Carol Maloney