

**Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**August 14, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM, by Ann Marie Visconti, Chair. Curt Robie, and Tamarin Laurel-Paine, members, were also present. Sean Curran, Town Administrator and Mark Doane, Town Administrative Assistant were also present. Due to the Town Hall Floor Project, the meeting was held in the Senior Center.

Town residents present: Adair Laurel-Cafarella, Donald Trask, Karri Trask, Maureen Sullivan, Larry Pease, Susan Schneller, Maureen Longobardi, Ron Radwich, Diane Radwich, Suzanne Lemieux, and Louise Harlow.

The warrants were signed, the mail reviewed, and outstanding minutes of Selectboard meetings were signed.

Maureen Sullivan, Zoning Board of Appeals Chair, requested from the Selectboard, permission to contact Town Counsel regarding a zoning variance on a piece of property that previously had a structure on it, taken down by previous owner, and the new owners would like to put a structure back up. A motion was made, seconded, and carried by the Selectboard to have Maureen contact KP Law. Mark Doane will get the contact information and send it to Maureen.

Curt reported that:

1. He has redrafted the proposed by-law drafts for the Work Off program for Veteran's and Senior's, so each has its own proposed by-law.
2. The Town Office floors for the three classrooms are almost complete, the walls of the 2 classrooms have been painted by volunteers. The library was not repainted as the color was acceptable to the librarian. Ceiling tiles needing attention were also replaced. The moving company is not available to move the offices and library back into their respective rooms until August 23.
3. The transfer station attendant will be on vacation for 2 weeks. Dump attendant coverage has been found for the Wednesdays; however, none is available for the Sunday of September 1. A motion was made, seconded, and carried by the Selectboard to close the dump due to the Labor Day Holiday. The Administrative Assistant will post on the website.
4. Curt brought up the nation's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026 and was wondering if the Town wanted to do anything to commemorate this anniversary. No definite decision was made, and more discussion will follow.

Ann Marie reported that:

1. She had visited the Ashfield transfer station for ideas on how to have the Middlefield transfer station reconfigured.
2. The Town has not received a bill from Huntley Associates for the survey of the transfer station, nor the final issuing permit for the Skyline Trail dump.
3. That before the floors are laid in the Town Hall hallway, the walls will be painted.
4. Loren, from Hampshire Regional Public Health had inspected the food vendors for the Fair and found no issues.

It was brought up that Howard Knickerbocker had concerns that the Town was paying for police coverage at the Middlefield Fair, which is a not a Town sanctioned event. Officers of the Fair were present and reported they have never asked the Police Department to patrol the Fair. In the past, the police were off grounds for directing traffic, as the Fair had many school buses of camp kids coming.

The Playground Committee reported that it raised \$436.00 at the Middlefield Fair. A discussion took place as to what account the money is to be deposited in. The money is currently in a non-town account, and some members of the playground committee are adamant about it staying there, as it will be used before an account can be set up. Those members also state that any further money raised would be put in a Town Account, once established. The Town Administrator reported that as it was raised for a Town Project, it needs to be in a Town Account. He strongly recommended that a Town Playground/gift account be established, and the money raised be placed in that account. He further stated that placing that money in a private account is not allowed legally, per Massachusetts General Law. When made aware that the fundraising volunteers had not been formally voted, but might be more similar to a "Friends of the Playground" independent group, he promised to get back to fundraisers about the legal particulars of asking townspeople for money as an official town-formed committee, and as an informal "Friends of.." entity.

Further discussion then occurred about the playground itself, and the grant application. Maureen Longobardi questioned Ann Marie Visconti about the status of the grant. After much back-and-forth discussion, and multiple concerns on the Playground Grant being raised, it was reported that the grant is available for review. It was also reported that Melissa Cryan, Director of PARC grants for the State, reports the Town needs a Park Commission. It was questioned whether the Open Space Committee or the Town Park and Recreation Committee would fulfill this requirement. It was stated that the Park Commission has specific regulations to follow, and that the Town would need to investigate further what those regulations are. As a Park Commission needs to be established by vote of the town at the Annual Town Meeting, the Selectboard voted to establish an Interim Park Commission. The Administrative Assistant will post the formation of, and solicitation of members for, the Park Commission.

The Selectboard, with full board approval, appointed Karri Trask to the Finance Committee to finish out the vacated term, and Tonya Santanello was appointed as Library Trustee to finish out the vacated term.

Sean Curran, Town Administrator, reported that:

1. The MIIA Insurance bill has been paid. Discussion surrounding this bill took place as well. It was brought up by those present from the Volunteer Fire Department that they felt the VFIS would be a better option. Further discussion to take place.
2. VADAR is now the Town Accounting hardware, and the Accountant is receiving training on the use of the software.
3. The Town will be able to do ZOOM meetings, once the Town Hall floor project is complete.

The Finance Committee reported September 1st is the scheduled date in the Town's financial calendar for knowing Free Cash, but it appears like we will be late again this year. This is due to the delays of accounting transition and moving offices for the floor project. The Finance Committee also reported that no audit can be done until Schedule A is completed.

The One-Stop grant submitted on the Senior Center should be decided on by the State in October.

Capital Planning was brought up concerning the Police Chief and the Highway Superintendent being part of the Capital Planning Committee. It was felt that it would be a conflict-of-interest situation for them to vote concerning projects for their own departments. Sean will get advice from the PVPC on how best to approach this concern, as we are such a small town.

Maureen Longobardi then discussed the lack of updated by-law availability. The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the office of the Town Clerk is working on them and has been in contact with the state about receiving all by-laws the town voted affirmative on that the State has approved. The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the process for By-Law revision is that the Town must vote for the by-law, or amendment, the Town Clerk's Office must certify that vote and amendment. After that is done, it is then sent to the State for their approval or denial. The Town Clerks Office has received from the State those by-laws approved since 1987 and will be going thru all the legalese that the State sent with them.

Maureen Longobardi also requested a refund for her FOIA request. She reported she was just looking for information to be better informed. The FOIA charge was \$90.00. She also reported that her husband, Alphoso Longobardi is due another \$200.00, as he is a 100% disabled veteran. Maureen then presented a handwritten list of concerns and questions to the Selectboard. That list will be attached to the hard copy of these minutes.

There being no further business to come before the Selectboard meeting, it was declared closed at 8:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark W. Doane,  
Middlefield Administrative Assistant

Ann Marie Visconti, Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Curt Robie, Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Tamarin Laurel-Paine, Member: \_\_\_\_\_