



## Town of Middlefield Finance Committee

10/01/24 Meeting

### **In attendance:**

Adair Laurel-Cafarella      Gita Jozsef      Ken Murray  
Karri Trask      Stephen Harris, Secretary

### **Also attending:**

Tamarin Laurel-Paine      Donald Trask  
Maureen Longobardi      Doreen Black  
Lopsy Harlow

### **Quorum, call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm.

### **Review minutes from previous meeting:**

Minutes from previous meeting on 09/17/24 were approved as written.

### **Accounting Issues & VADAR transition:**

Beverly Cooper is leaving her town accountant position on October 15.

Lynne Lemanski, the Washington town accountant, is entering Middlefield's ledger entries for the current fiscal year into the VADAR system. A partial ledger history as of September 23 was distributed to members.

Lynne is paid \$50 per hour. \$3,500 has been set as a cap to compensate 70 hours of her work.

### **Any other business:**

In an online class on capital planning, the MMA (Massachusetts Municipal Association) recommended that 5 percent of the town's budget should be allocated to a "stabilization" account and the town should identify its capital assets.

Adair distributed lists of the fleet breakdown as of 3/6/24 and a list of other insured special properties.

As he already has extensive experience on these matters, Ken will make up a list of potential energy saving enhancements to various town buildings for which grants may be available.

The Finance Committee needs clarification as to when 800 band communications devices will be mandated, for what departments, what they will cost, and whether grants can be obtained for their purchase.

Adair will send out FY25 budget request forms to various departments in preparation for their meetings with the Finance Committee.

Discussed using Chapter 90 monies to partially fund the purchase of the new plow truck, as per the treasurer's recommendation, rather than a costly bank loan.

Concern was expressed regarding the legal costs required to remove the two remaining illegal campers in town – an estimated \$3,000 to \$6,000 per filing – vs. the perceived benefits.

As scarce transfer station funds were largely utilized for the wetlands survey – a copy of which the FC has yet to receive – the Selectboard is apparently looking for grant monies to finance a cost-saving paper compactor, a more accessible recycling bin, and other improvements.

In light of the town administrator's resignation as of Oct. 31 and his failure to secure much in the way of town grants, committee members voted to recommend that an article be placed before the next town meeting to expend the remainder of his salary on alternate means to secure such grants – prioritizing having a grant writer rather than refilling the TA position. We reviewed a grant writing company, Capital Strategic Solutions, that appears to be promising.

**Next meeting:**

The next meeting will be at the Town Hall on October 15th at 5 pm.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:26 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen B. Harris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.