

Selectboard Minutes

April 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Ann Marie Visconti, Chair, with Curt Robie and Tamarin Laurel-Paine, members also in attendance. Evan Kenney, Town Administrator was present by Zoom, and Mark W. Doane, Administrative Assistant was present.

Town residents present were Jenny Dion, Police Chief, Ken Murray, Susan Schneller, Raymond Schneller. Lois Leonardo-Bell, Donald Trask, Karri Trask, Louise Harlow, Suzanne Lemieux, Skip Savery, Daniel Bergeron, Sharon Daldoss-Bergeron, Maureen Longobardi, Alfonso Longobardi, and Adair Laurel-Cafarella.

The Highway Superintendent, Skip Savery was present to discuss town resident concerns about the financing of the 2012 International truck and the 2021 Western Star. The Highway Superintendent gave a detailed report of the money used and for what. The Highway Superintendent also stated that the Western Star truck is still in use despite drone pictures not identifying where it is/was. The Superintendent also reported that his only concern is the snow removal budget for the Town of Middlefield, and not for area towns. He also stated that he didn't see Chapter 90 funds as his "wish list". Following this discussion, Evan stated his support of what the Highway Superintendent presented to the Selectboard.

A discussion of a new phone system for the Town Hall and other Town buildings was held with the Librarian reporting she has to use her personal phone for Library use. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to utilize Gamut phone system with using the plan for rental phones.

The Open Meeting Law responses from Town Counsel regarding complaints of November 19, 2024 and March 13 were reviewed. A lengthy discussion then occurred about using Town Counsel to address the Open Meeting Law complaints we are getting, without the entire Selectboard being aware. There were concerns raised, since the Selectboard Chair is the one submitting the complaints to KP Law, that the responses coming from KP Law are biased, and don't provide a sense of clarity. Evan responded that he has been involved with KP Law for a number of years, and they only report from a legal perspective, and are not political in nature. A motion was then made, seconded, with a majority (2 yea; 1 abstain) vote to have KP Law send the responses to the Open Meeting Law complaints to the Attorney General.

Evan gave a presentation on the VFIS firefighter insurance versus MIIA insurance. Evan reported that VFIS offers medical coverage for those volunteer firefighters who are 65 years old. The coverage is at a reduced rate. It does also have a death benefit for survivors of those firefighters who pass away while on the job. Evan did report that he has been trying to get information from MIIA without success. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to have the Town utilize VFIS for insurance coverage for the fire department and police depart, striking out the part of insurance that covers auxiliary police.

A discussion was held about land that is for sale in the center of the town. The owner is currently asking \$35,000.00. Discussion was centered around: would it perc, is it a buildable piece of land, would the

water be usable. The piece of land is approx.. 5 acres and has a lot of ledge. Further discussion will be required, at a later Selectboard meeting, as there are many components to consider.

The Annual Town Meeting warrant was then reviewed page by page. Discussion occurred about the funding for a new police cruiser. After much discussion as to where the funding would come from, it was decided to add an article to appropriate \$70,000.00 from free cash for the purposes of purchasing a new police cruiser. It was also recommended to ask the Town to place \$40,000.00 dollars in a Highway Stabilization account and \$50,000.00 in a Fire Department Stabilization account. It will also be recommended to establish a Police Stabilization account. All these accounts are the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Capital Planning Committee.

Other announcements: A pre-construction meeting was held with the contractor for the Senior Center repairs. Due to wetness under the building, beginning of repairs will be put off. The contractors will also be applying for the building permit. Curt reported he didn't request anything on the One Stop Grant as the focus of that grant is for low-income housing and economic development. The Strap Grant request for \$1,000,000.00 for additional Senior Center repairs will be resubmitted. This is according to Abby McGovern who is in the office of Richard Neal.

Cone Road is being used as a training site for culvert work and an education session will be held on May 1, 2025 at the Middlefield Town Hall for area Highway Superintendents.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to hold early voting for the Annual Town Meeting. Early voting will occur on April 28, 2025 from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

No Further business to come before the Selectboard, it was closed at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark W. Doane,
Administrative Assistant

Ann Marie Visconti, Chair: _____

Curt Robie, Member: _____

Tamarin Laurel-Paine, Member: _____