



Town of Middlefield Finance Committee

06/18/24 Meeting

In attendance:

Adair Laurel-Cafarella Gita Jozsef Ken Murray
Stephen Harris, Secretary Jonathan Freiermuth

Also attending:

Doreen Black Tamarin Laurel-Paine
Donald Trask Karri Trask
Deb Schnappauf

Quorum, call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm.

Review minutes from previous meeting:

Minutes from previous meeting on 06/04/24 were approved as written.

Climate Compensation petition:

Distributed e-mail to Sen. Mark re petition to compensate Middlefield for its positive financial climate benefits, with the suggestion to the senator to invite other towns in his district to join in our efforts.

Town Hall floor replacement:

Ken reported that he had distributed flooring bid documents to 13 potential flooring contractors, explaining that the town's schedule is flexible.

Questions were raised as to why the town took the unorthodox step of specifying estimated costs in the bid documents of \$90K for asbestos removal and \$80K for the installation of new flooring, which seemed to be precluding more affordable bids.

Capital Planning:

Discussed the Selectboard's efforts to form a capital planning committee, which had not been put to a vote at our annual town meeting, as required by Mass General Law. Even though the Selectboard's efforts would duplicate the Financial Committee's planning responsibilities established in our town bylaws, it was agreed to appoint Ken Murray as our representative at their deliberations.

Highway Department equipment replacement schedule:

It was decided to invite the Highway Superintendent to our next meeting to clarify the replacement schedule for Highway Department equipment and update us on the work on Clark Wright, Chipman, and other roads.

Accounting issues & VADAR transition:

VADAR transition appears to be on schedule for July 1 turnover.

The illegal \$90K transfer from the Stabilization Fund has yet to be accounted for.

Approved a Reserve Fund transfer by a 4 to 1 vote to cover the \$943.29 overdraft of the Tax Title Treasurer account.

Any other business:

The three townspeople attended out of concern that current taxes are a financial burden. They are also concerned about plans for River, Clark Wright, and Chipman roads.

Discussed Owl camera system setup including having meetings accessible via stored media as well as live streamed.

The Finance Committee's capital plan should be accessible via the town website.

The Town Administrator has yet to provide further clarification re VFIS vs. MAIA insurance quotes.

There are questions re the children's playground, including whether it should be relocated from next to the senior center to behind the town hall.

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be on July 2nd at 5 pm.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

