



Town of Middlefield Finance Committee

1/14/25 Meeting

In attendance:

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

Also attending:

Judy Hoag Skip Savery
Donald Trask Diane Thome Tamarin Laurel-Paine

Quorum, call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

Review minutes from previous meeting:

Minutes from previous meeting on 01/07/24 were approved as amended.

Reviewed budget requests & capital needs:

Met with Judy Hoag, Chair of the Council of Aging:

- Although Council on Aging has not yet discussed their FY26 budget request, it was voted to recommend level funding from FY25 for now.
- It was noted that as the Senior Center is not an especially historic building, it might be easier to secure a state grant to construct a new building, rather than repair and upgrade the existing one.
- When it comes to repairs, shoring up and insulating the foundation should be the primary concern.
- Other priorities, such as replacing drafty windows, can be set in consultation with the Council on Aging.
- The building's capacity is 30 according to one architect.
- In general, attendance is over 20 but under 30. Larger meetings can be held at the town hall, if necessary.
- An architect is working on a new plan for the building.
- Museum on the 2nd floor has limited accessibility. Cost of elevator and other measures to bring into compliance would be exorbitant.

Voted to approve the assessors' FY26 budget request.

Met with Highway Superintendent Skip Savery:

- Recommended reducing fuel budget request from \$41K to \$31K owing to past underutilization, although a bout of severe weather could erode any surplus.
- Discussed the need to add a tree account owing to the increasing number of ash and other trees that must be removed from the sides of roads opposite utility lines.
- Discussed the need to put any new buildings away from wetlands.
- The wetland study appears unnecessarily restrictive.
- Need to establish stabilization accounts so we can purchase used equipment as soon as it becomes available.
- Conducted an extensive review of future capital plans, making a number of edits.
- Discussed miscellaneous items such as painting lines on roads and lack of a major item asset list.

Any other business:

Voted to send letter to Selectboard re disposition of funds remaining in asbestos removal and floor replacement accounts.

Voted to recommend a forensic audit owing to accounting discrepancies, the passage of time, and changes in financial staff.

Next meeting:

The next Finance Committee meeting will be at the Town Hall on January 30th at 5 pm.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

