



Town of Middlefield

Finance Committee

4/08/25 Meeting

In attendance:

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

Also attending:

Evan Kenny Donald Trask Louise Harlow
Tamarin Laurel-Paine Maureen Longobardi

Quorum, call to order:

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

Met with Town Administrator:

Conducted mutual introductions with Evan Kenny, our new Town Administrator, during which we learned about his background and experience and we laid out our concerns, including our difficult road conditions, costly upgrades to the senior center, the paucity of available grants, and the onerous tax burden on our aging population.

Review minutes from previous meeting:

Minutes from previous meeting on 03/25/25 were approved as written.

Report on Windsor PILOT meeting:

Ken and Steve reported on their attendance at the Windsor presentation by state auditor Diana DiZoglio of their extensive study on "[Pursuing Equitable State-Owned Land Reimbursements for Municipalities](#)," intended to address the gross reimbursement inequities across the commonwealth:

- For example, the town of Plymouth is reimbursed at \$102 per acre, while Savoy, with comparable acreage, receives only \$11 per acre. (Edgartown in Dukes County received \$904 in PILOT reimbursements for each of its 2,848 acres.)
- In Middlefield's case, we received \$78,830 in FY2024 for our 4,890 acres of state-owned land, or \$16 per acre.
- Under current level appropriations, Middlefield's reimbursements would fall \$6,826 or 9.0% from FY 2023-2024, one of the steepest declines in the state.
- To partially address these gross inequities, the study recommends a \$50, \$75, \$100 or \$125 floor in per-acre funding for municipalities with reimbursements below the statewide median of \$127 per acre. For Middlefield, this would raise our reimbursement to between \$244,500 and \$611,250.

We should lobby our state reps to bring us closer to the statewide median – preferably by implementing the \$125 floor.

At the close of the meeting, Steve presented Ms. DiZoglio with signed copies of Middlefield's Climate Compensation Petition which strengthens our case for increased reimbursements by noting that ALL of our forested lands, whether privately owned, set aside under federal and state ownership, or preserved under various conservation restrictions, contribute to the state's climate mitigation goals, for which towns like Middlefield, Hawley and Savoy receive ZERO compensation.

Preparations for the May 3 Annual Town Meeting:

Voted to recommend:

- Treasurer's salary request of \$16,000, up from \$15,375.
- The transfer from free cash the sum of \$1,504.20 to pay a prior year bill for the post office rent broker.
- Establish Police, Fire, and Highway stabilization accounts.

Any other business:

Discussed the need to keep account transfers within departments, as opposed to between departments, for budgeting purposes.

Next meeting:

The next Finance Committee meetings will be at the Town Hall on April 22nd & April 29th at 5 pm.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

