

Selectboard Meeting  
August 1, 2011

Present: Noreen Suriner, Chair; Mitch Feldmesser; Alan Vint  
Duane Pease, Admin. Asst.

Meeting called to order at **7pm** by chair.

**Cathy Roth of Middlefield Days** requested use of Town property Sept 30- Oct 2. Middlefield Days is sponsored by 5 Town Commissions. There will be more celebrations than prior events. Will have a bonfire, hikes, children's activities, talent show, pie contest and new event, the Cow Flop Contest. The event will wrap up Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> with a pancake breakfast.

Noreen said it would have to be passed by Tom Austin, police chief, he would go over it with the Committee.

Tom was in attendance and stated it was not a problem with his dept, the police are paid using the dept. funds.

Noreen made a motion to accept, Alan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote was 3-0 in favor.

**Cathy Roth representing Middlefield Heritage Society** told the board they will be updating the Middlefield Town Map. They would like to put the map up in the hallway of the Town Hall with a desk. This way residents could make corrections to the map before the final printing.

Noreen made a motion to allow, Alan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote was 3-0 in favor.

**Cathy Roth** then said the Heritage Society would like to put a bench in Starbuck Park. She will have to research to see if there are any restrictions/limitations to what may be placed in the park.

**Request was made to lower the American Flag outside the Town Hall to half mast in honor of "Moe" Pease who passed away on Sunday. Moe served the Town in various capacities for a number of years. It was agreed that it would be lowered in his honor. Vote was 3-0.**

**Eric Weiss, Sustainability Director for the Hampshire Council of Governments and Marcos Marrero, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission were present to discuss the Green Community grant that was awarded to Middlefield.**

**Eric** stated that the \$138,000 awarded was significant for the town and that there were 2 main issues:

- 1) Spending plan has to be submitted to the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) by 8/22
- 2) What to do with the funds.
  - A. Solar could be fitted for the Town Hall
  - B. Use funds for the townspeople.

**Marcos** said it was important for this public forum to discuss the issues. The Town could make energy efficient investments. \$70,000 could be used to make the highway garage more efficient.

**Noreen** would like to get one building done, the Town Hall, with more insulation and more efficient ceiling tiles.

**Eric** said it could be used for solar installation, either on the roof or in the back field and that would give the Town a direct payback.

**Noreen** also questioned if insulation in the Senior Center would be appropriate.

**Alan** wanted to know if there was some way to get a drop ceiling in the Town Hall.

**Mitch** questioned Marcos on additional ways to use the money. If loans to citizen for building “green” would be considered.

**Marcos** said there has to be a justification of each cost and that the administrative cost of running such a program may be a hindrance. That we have to get as much “bang for our buck” and that the residents would have to put the money to good use.

**Marcos** said that if the money were to be used on Town Buildings it would cost \$13,000 to insulate the Senior Center and install a new hot water heater; another \$30,000 to make the Fire Station more efficient and \$70,000 for the highway garage.

**Eric** said the money could be split in half with half for solar for the Town as it is the way to go, would be a great model, gives visible income to the Town and would be attractive to others. Then take the top 5 projects and use the balance of the grant for them.

**Noreen** stated we will be able to get additional information to the townspeople at our upcoming Special Town meeting, we can also get feedback.

**Eric** said we have to be mindful of the timeline.

**Mitch** stated there was not much time for the people to think about what they would like to see done with this grant.

**Alan** said we have to move quickly on this.

**Jay Waag-Swift** said it would be unwise for individual homes as there would be too much overhead involved. He felt the best payback for the town would be a solar installation, take care of the Senior Center and do “bare bones” on the Town Garage. Insulation is always a payback.

**Noreen** stated the process had started on the Senior Center, an engineering firm and architectural firm are doing cost estimates for the work needed.

**Mitch** felt the timing on the spending was important.

**Eric** said the proposals that will be sent to DOER can be changed later as long as the money is spent in a timely fashion.

**Mitch** want to know if money can be set aside for the roof and roof insulation, not the walls and then specify for walls. He was told the wall insulation is a separate item.

**Eric** and **Marcos** will get together and come up with a list for next week. This will be a priority list.

**Alan** said he wanted more understanding on our “bang for the buck” , how it will save the Town money over time and solar installation vs. Town Garage. We are relying on Eric and Marcos and their expertise to advise us.

**Marcos** said if all the insulation and upgrades were done, it would cost \$106,000. That would leave a balance of \$32,000.

**Alan** still questions the cost versus savings versus payback.

**Marcos** said Town could rent or lease out the solar

**Mitch** questioned Marcos as to how the solar would be handled by the Town. Marcos said he was just giving examples.

**Eric** said we should keep it all local.

**Marcos** said the grant money would be paid 50% up front, another 25% when the project is started and the last 25% when the project is finished.

**Jay** suggested Eric prioritize the list and give the costs of each.

**Susan Baker-Donnelly** wanted to know when the money starts, how soon does the project have to be done. Is it a use it or lose it situation?

**Eric** said this grant is not as tight as other project grants, just have to have a plan and keep moving forward with it.

**Maureen Sullivan** wanted to know if money would be available for home loans for “green” betterments. The Town and select board would not have to be involved as there already is a process in place that the Tax Collector can administer.

**Eric** said this money would be for new square footage only under the grant.

**Maureen** wanted to know how soon plans would be needed to apply for this grant money.

**Mitch** wanted to know how soon we needed our answer.

**Eric** said once it was decided he would be able to relay information.

**Sherry Verdetti** wanted to know if the deadline could be extended and if he has the numbers.

**Eric** said the estimates were done on a square footage basis.

**Maureen** questioned if they considered upgrading the lighting in the Town Hall.

**Eric** said that has the longest payback as the Town hall is not occupied enough.

**Jay** asked if a big solar array if the Town would need seed money.

**Marcos** said it was not necessary but could be used.

**Eric** said the Town get the most out of it if it does much of these things itself. It would get the electricity, Energy Credits and tax breaks.

**Jay** said the value would increase as time goes on.

**Steve Harris** asked if it were large scale, could some of the money be used for a feasibility study.

**Eric** said there is no payback on a feasibility study.

**Jay** stated we don't want to spend grant on speculative studies.

**Noreen** thanked both for their input.

**Eric** said that **Joe Kearns** should get a lot of credit for his knowledge and help in putting the numbers together.

**Eric Weiss** then spoke to the board as administrator of the Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative. He has a new handout that is being compiled. He has not received the final payment from DOER on the windows.

He also brought some additional blue household recycling bins with him.

**Nancy** would like to see a long range plan for the transfer station.

**Kathy O'Brien** came in with a list of residents who did not purchase transfer station permits last year. Unfortunately a couple of the people on last years list did purchase permits this year without paying for last years.

**Alan** suggested a really big sign at the transfer station.

After discussion it was agreed that letters will be sent to the scofflaws.

**Kathy** turns in her receipts to the treasurer, she has not been giving receipts, the dump sticker is their receipt.

The **minutes** from last weeks meeting were **approved** with a cross out on page 6 being the only correction.

**Karl Barcome** came in with concerns about the Arches work site and parking.

**Noreen** told him the Town would not allow any parking that would create a danger. That there would be no parking that would disrupt culverts or septic systems.

**Mitch** said the Town would protect its citizens' property during this construction project. He also would like a copy of the right-of-way proposal that Craig McDonnell is preparing for Loren Johnson.

**Noreen** and **Alan** will check to see if the Town can pay for a review of the proposal.

**Leanne Every** stated she has concerns about the Municipal Light Plant that is necessary for the Wired West initiative. It is due on 8/5 and the Special Town Meeting is on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Noreen** wanted to know what is on the certificate and that the town did hold votes prior but did not have a paper ballot vote. That is the purpose of the STM.

**Leanne** has concerns about her roll, **Alan** and **Mitch** have no concerns with **Noreen** dealing with Leanne on the Wired West.

**Mitch** made a motion to elect **Leanne** as the manager of the MLP and delegate to the Wired West. Seconded by Alan. Voted 3-0 in favor.

It was also suggested that Leanne try to get others interested in the project.

Sherri Vendetti said she has seen some Mass Broadband people in town looking at the telephone poles.

Letters to Peter Oligny were reviewed and okayed. Noreen thought the letters were accurate and appropriate. Vote 3-0 to send them out. Alan signed the letters as he had been the one in contact with Peter.

**Alan's** e-mail to Kopelman & Paige was reviewed, we are waiting for a response from the law firm.

Further appointments for positions are needed. Discussion centered around having any interested citizens come in, this would be a way to get more people involved. This may lead to better functioning committees/commissions. Perhaps a letter to existing appointees with a box for them to check and return if they are interested in keeping their position.

**Alan** said there was some confusion on events with the Recreation Committee and there events sometimes clashed with private events in town and that it basically sucked.

**Noreen** thought the Rec Committee should come in and provide a plan for the year.

**Alan** had concerns about its operation.

**Joe Kearns** said sending letters to each member and have them come in for a meeting.

Concerns beside the Rec Committee were the Board of Health Agent, Homeland Security and the Wiring inspector.

Also mentioned was Middlefield is one of a few towns in Massachusetts that does not have a Town Flag. There are some designs in planning. It was also suggested that a contest could be held among townspeople for a possible design.

**Noreen** advised a letter had been received from **Valerie Nickerson** regarding a Title V test she had witnessed.

Also, an e-mail from **Marjorie Hines** regarding her wanting a perc test but not able to have the Town's BOH agent available. Although he had not been re-appointed, he is still in the position.

**Noreen** responded to her e-mail.

**9:20pm Alan made Motion to Adjourn, Noreen 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote 3-0 in favor**

Respectively submitted,

Duane C. Pease  
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without corrections,

Noreen Suriner, Chair

Mitch Feldmesser

Alan Vint