

Selectboard Meeting  
October 11, 2011

Present: Noreen Suriner, Chair; Alan Vint; Mitch Feldmesser  
Duane Pease, Administrative Assistant

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm

**Alan** questioned the deficit spending for Hurricane Irene. Town has already spent \$16,000+ and another warrant for \$9,980.31 is pending.

**Joe Kearns**, Finance Committee Chair, explained funds would be taken from Free Cash (available funds). There is approximately \$100,000 in that account.

**Noreen and Alan** both asked that the accountant be questioned regarding the certifying of the Free Cash.

**Steve Harris** of Communication Committee was present to answer question presented last week regarding the speed of new network and the upcoming fiber optic network that will be in the area in a few years. According to information provided by Steve, the system that will be installed in the Town Hall will be able to handle the fiber optic that will be run to the router. There will be no need to update or do any rewiring. The cable being installed is a 6 wire data cable

**Noreen** still questioned the additional \$1,200 that was approved at last week's Selectboard meeting for the additional ports.

**Mitch, Noreen and Steve** had discussion on the installation and Mitch felt it was cost effective to install them now and have them available for future use.

**Noreen** was weighing the additional expense versus the benefits.

**Alan** said each time the Comm/Comm comes to a meeting, the costs seem to go up.

**Steve** stated the first proposal the Comm/Comm received was for \$13,000 and they have been constantly working to keep costs to minimum and did not present anything to the Board until the committee felt they had the best proposal for the town. Also, the wiring is going to start on Friday, October 14.

**Mitch** motioned to approve the additional \$1,200; **Noreen** 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote 3-0 in favor.

**Noreen** said **Blair Sutherland** from Northampton Dispatch was supposed to be present and she had not heard any reason why he has not shown.

Next, **Noreen** said she has received several complaints regarding private cars parking at the intersection of Alderman and Chester Roads. It is her belief that these cars all belong to the family that lives across Chester Road from the intersection.

**Mitch** asked if the Town By-Laws addressed the situation.

**Alan** asked **Tom Austin**, Police Chief, about the parking.

**Tom** said he had sent a letter to the residents, but it has had no effect on the parking and the Town does not have a by-law. The State Police have also stopped and spoke with the residents.

Resident, **Wally Smith**, who lives on Alderman Road, was present and he has voiced his concerns several times over the parking. Even when the cars are parked off the road it makes seeing traffic coming on Chester Road difficult. Also, during a late winter snow storm, the highway plow could not push the snow off the road.

**Chief Austin** said since the town has no by-law or parking authority he could not issue tickets but if the cars present a safety hazard they can be towed.

**Alan** made a motion to send the residents a letter warning them of the parking. **Noreen** 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 3-0 in favor.

**Alan** asked **Tom** to give it 7-14 days and see what happens with the parking and to find out from **Skip Savery**, Highway Superintendent, what the right-of-way was.

The Selectboard does not have a clerk and **Noreen** could find no provisions in the by-laws for one. The clerk is needed to sign the deficit spending request that is being sent to the Department of Revenue.

**Joe Kearns**, also a former Selectman, stated the Board could elect a clerk and most towns have done that on a regular basis.

**Noreen** made a motion to elect Alan as the clerk, **Mitch** 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 2-0 in favor with **Alan** abstaining.

**Alan** then asked Joe about the parking situation in the Town and was told the Selectboard can draw up an ordinance and the means to enforce it.

**Mitch** thought there was a Middlefield law not allowing parking on Town roads.

Request made to Administrative Assistant to compile parking enforcement by-laws from other communities and draw one up for Middlefield.

**Alan** also provided a pole hearing update; the Conservation Commission had sent an enforcement letter to WMECO and finally made contact with a representative. They are going to set up a meeting to discuss the poles that were installed on Chester Road.

Also, **Alan** has had no response from the Building Commissioner regarding the trailers he had looked at a couple weeks ago. Alan said he was willing to send an e-mail to the owner of the property to see if they were aware the trailers were there.

**Mitch** has been disappointed in the way the HCOG inspection program has been going but sometimes it takes time for things to work out since the hiring of the new person.

**Alan** said he is a proponent of regionalization but it may be time to look for an independent building commissioner for the Town as HCOG has not

solved the problems facing Middlefield. He feels the Town has been upgrading itself in its new hires.

Next item discussed was possible position of an Assistant Town Clerk, **Noreen** has concerns since the Clerk has been out for a number of weeks following surgery.

**Marge Batorski**, Town Clerk, had come to the prior Selectboard and requested help in the past according to **Mitch**.

**Noreen** said it is too much to ask of one person and she had spoken with some townspeople who are interested in being the assistant clerk.

**Alan** also said the Town could be set back if something happened to the clerk and that person were unable to perform the duties.

**Joe Kearns** suggested a check with other towns to see how they handle the assistant position.

**Mitch** questioned if an interim assistant clerk could be appointed.

**Administrative Assistant** to check with Secretary of State regarding position.

**Skip Savery**, Highway Superintendent, was present and said the extra cost of Hurricane Irene was about \$60,000 and he hopes to be reimbursed a large portion from FEMA.

**Alan** then asked Skip about the cars parking at the intersection of Chester and Alderman Road.

**Skip** said they were a definite hazard when he is plowing snow and also they block the driver's view of traffic when pulling out from Alderman onto Chester in all cases. The Town right-of-way varies by road and he was not sure what is right-of-ways were for these roads. He will also check with Gary Herman a Mass State Trooper regarding anything that can be done to these vehicles.

Also, they will be setting some big stones along the riverbank on River Rd. and he has hired an excavator as the Town has no equipment that can handle the job. He has the John Deere loader on demo for the week and has been pleased with its capabilities.

**Noreen** asked about obtaining some wood for the Halloween bonfire and Skip will help with that.

**Tom Austin**, Police Chief, came in to speak to the Board regarding the portable radios they received as members of the Board of Health. He will help them set the radios up, show them how to operate them and when the frequencies change all the town radios will have to be re-set. He will advise when that will be necessary.

Also, there will be **EMT training** conducted in Becket for anyone interested in becoming an EMT. The bulletin is posted on the bulletin Board.

Noreen motioned to adjourn, Mitch 2<sup>nd</sup>, vote was 3-0 to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 9pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Duane Pease  
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes:

Noreen Suriner, Chair

Alan Vint, Clerk

Mitch Feldmesser