

Selectboard Meeting
January 3, 2012

Meeting opened at 7:03pm

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

First item was a correction of the 12/5/11 minutes; Attorney Lynch represents Steve Harris, not the Harris' and the correction was made.

Minutes were approved with corrections, 3-0. Noreen noted the Selectboard would like to honor Cyndi Oligny at the Annual Town Meeting.

Warrants were approved and signed in the amounts of \$5,435.54 and \$6,967.86. Administrative Assistant was asked to contact Joe Boudreau, DOR, for information regarding the Ice Storm Account and how that money can be spent.

Gerald Garner, Pittsfield Building Commissioner, was present to interview for the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Office for the Town. He currently works full-time in Pittsfield (35 hour week) and is part-time in Plainfield, Peru and as of 1/1/12, Cheshire. He stated he is able to allocate his time so it would not be a problem work for Middlefield. He had reviewed the on-line records prior to his interview. In Pittsfield he oversees all aspects of building (gas, electric and fire suppression). There are separate inspectors but all are under him.

Alan stated there was a backlog of zoning issues and they need even enforcement and brought into compliance.

Garner said zoning is a black and white interpretation and owners can appeal to the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals. It is best not just to file a complaint against one person but to do a number at one time, that way it does not look bad or that a person is being singled out. He will appear in Housing Court and can represent himself until the issue may go to Criminal Court.

Noreen said the buildings in Town have to be appropriate and safe for people.

Mitch questioned him on the Stretch Code, he said he is familiar with it and it is used in Pittsfield, however, it only affects 1 and 2 family dwellings in Pittsfield.

It was also noted that many issues have a common interest with the Zoning Board and Health Agent. He is willing to work with various departments when this occurs.

He was told there were some existing buildings that were never issued a building permit, he said the building may be “grandfathered” in but other issues may make it illegal to use the home.

When questioned about what time he could spend in Middlefield, he stated he would be available, in Town, on Mondays from 4-6pm and would do inspections as needed. He would like to review the budget and draw up a plan for the Board. In the event he is unavailable, he would have an alternate available.

When questioned on how soon he could start, Garner said he would contact Don Terico who is on the Building Certification Board to let him know he was also going to work in Middlefield, but he could start soon. Terico approves the appointments of Building Commissioners.

When asked about his fee structure, he did not have one in mind but would most likely be \$30/hr. He will need a computer and the Permatec program so he can keep all the records. Also, HCOG will have to return all the records they have back over to the Town.

The Board thanked him for coming in to be interviewed and he left.

Linda Grenier came before the Board to renew her Class II license. It was explained to her the Board was in the process of reviewing all licenses and creating an application. She was aware of the \$25,000 bond requirement and she does have one for her used car business.

Skip Savery, Highway Superintendant, told the Board the new loader had arrived last week and he registered it today. The old loader was taken away.

Also, Cone and Clark Wright Roads have been blocked off for the winter. The Board questioned him regarding the service contract for the generator, he said he could change the oil, etc but did not have the tools or expertise for doing the preventative servicing.

Marge Batorski, Town clerk and Eleanor Doyle, Assistant Clerk, were there to discuss the condition of the older Town records and the fragile condition they were in.

Sherri Venditti explained she had heard Mr. Smith comment on the fragile condition and felt it was important to preserve the documents and came to the Board looking for guidance. She spoke with a woman at UMASS in Special Collections who maintains old records and she is willing to come to town and help. She did advise not to wear gloves when handling the documents.

Marge thought it was a good idea and they will meet to discuss the process. A couple of residents, John Richardson and Michael Feldberg, have expressed interest in photographing the records at no charge.

In the Open Forum Marge questioned how Eleanor was going to be paid, there will have to be an article on a Special Town Meeting Warrant to appropriate the money.

Wally Smith felt the Building Commissioner that was interviewed tonight would not be a good fit for Middlefield. Also, there is a Town pick-up that is parked in the lot at the old general store.

There was a general discussion among the Board regarding the appointment of a Building Commissioner. Garner seemed very professional and knew what he was talking about. The choice was between Garner and Rich Haupt who was interviewed on 12/19/11. Both would be good but it was felt Garner was the stronger of the two and he has seemed to make this his career. The appointment would be for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Sherri Venditti noted they were 2 different types of people and the Board my want to check with other towns before hiring either. Alan said they had checked both out.

Alan motioned to hire Garner, Noreen 2nd. Vote was 3-0 in favor of offering Garner the position.

At 9:35 Noreen motioned, Alan 2nd to go into Executive Session to discuss the Harry Pease Road situation and a recent telephone call received in the Town Hall. The board will not reconvene Open Session. Vote was: Noreen, Aye; Alan, Aye; Mitch, Aye. Vote 3-0 and Board went into Executive Session at 9:36pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes

Noreen Suriner, Chair

Alan Vint, Clerk

Mitch Feldmesser