

SELECTBOARD MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2018
MINUTES

Meeting opened at 6:05pm

Present: Judith Hoag; Albert Sirard; Chair, David DiNicola running late
Duane Pease, Town Administrator

Warrants reviewed and signed; Payroll: \$10,956.74; Expenses:
\$180,979.71

Minutes of 2/26/18 approved on motion by Judy, Al 2nd; vote 2-0.

Police Chief, Tom Austin, met with Board to discuss future of the public safety in town. He will be retiring in about 1.5 years and EMS director, Ed Vivier, just passed away, feels the Town should appoint Public Safety Committee to look at all aspects of public safety and make recommendations. Would suggest make up include selectboard, police, fire, EMS, EMD and residents

Judy questioned if this should be an article on the ATM warrant. Joe Kearns, Finance Chair, said it could be placed on warrant and would open dialect with the residents. Tom just wants to make sure all are on the same page if this goes forward.

Andy Myers met with the Board to discuss recent developments at the Gateway budget discussions. There have been numerous meetings involving the school committee and members of the 6 towns, these meetings have been facilitated by the MARS report. A budget change proposal has been submitted to DESE allowing Gateway to charge from a per student cost to a across the board percentage increase to each town. So if the Gateway budget went up 2% all town's costs would increase 2%. This proposal would be voted on by each town yearly and would make budgeting for the towns much easier. Historically, Middlefield's student population has been up and down over the last 15 years according to the information supplied by Gateway. Gateway is considering offering a full-day Pre-School program in order to retain students.

Dave arrived at 6:41pm.

There was continued discussion about how the state determines reimbursements, above minimum costs to towns, higher costs for transportation for rural regional schools and the fact the rural regional school enrollments are declining. Gateway is looking to provide more vocational training as a way to stem students choosing to go the one of the vocational schools.

Any changes to the funding of Gateway would be left up to the voters at the Annual Town meetings.

Jeanne LeClair met with the Board next, she is the Economic Development Director for the Hilltowns. She was hired as a result of a grant given to the towns.

Jeanne has been active in the towns as well as at Gateway. She started an enterprise club and currently has 16 members. She visits the local selectboards and COA's.

Jeanne want each town to maintain their rural characteristics but to show growth, this is a regional effort but wants to have the towns keep their individuality. She has obtained a \$42,000 grant to promote the towns. She would like this grant provide "branding" to the towns. She also has been working with realtors to let them know of the advantages of rural living and affordable housing. The web site has been active with people searching it. Jeanne works with PVPC and has been in contact with Erica Johnson in hopes of obtaining a grant for the town center once the buildings have come down.

Highway Superintendent, Skip Savery, met next. His snow budget has been expended and would like authorization for an additional \$25,000. This is the only budget that the state allows deficit spending in. after discussion, Dave motioned to allow the \$25,000, Judy 2nd; vote 3-0. Skip said he plans on using his Chapter money to pave about 1,700' of River Road and 1,000' of Cone Road. He was given the okay to have the grader taken to Joh Deere for the repairs.

Broadband Committee Issues was next on the agenda.

Judy addressed Tamarin Laurel-Paine regarding a letter she had published in the Country Journal. Judy referenced the 2/20/18 minutes which included Dave's discussion with Marin about committee parameters. Judy had previously address Marin directly regarding the duties of the committee. The objectives were clear and this letter soliciting input from nonmembers was a clear disregard of what the objectives of the committee were to be. It was disrespectful of the other committee members. Dave said he was pretty much shocked when he saw the letter. He also stated that any letters should be reviewed by all members and they all should agree as to the content, make sure it is accurate and does no harm to any individuals. Marin said the committee had not met yet and she felt this was the only time she could send the letter. Al agreed with Judy and Dave that she should not have sent the letter. Note that all appointed BBC members received a copy of responsibilities expected by the BOS.

Judy stated she had called the Attorney General's office with questions about this but was referred to town counsel, she did not follow with KP Law. Dave said he doesn't see how the committee can move forward and that Marin should resign. Judy asked what options were available and Dave said the only option is her resignation. Marin said she had a different perspective as the committee had not yet met and she felt she did no wrong. Marin stated she wanted to stay on the committee. After further discussion, Judy motioned to unappoint Marin from the committee, Dave 2nd; vote was 2-1 with Al dissenting from removing Marin. Al stated the info was in the minutes and public records.

Assessors to be on the agenda for the next meeting regarding request for funding for legal issue.

Dave motioned to adjourn, Judy 2nd; vote 3-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Town Administrator

Minutes accepted with/without changes by:

David DiNicola, Chair

Judith Hoag

Albert Sirard