

## SELECTBOARD MINUTES

May 1, 2024

The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Ann Marie Visconti, Chair, with Curt Robie and Tamarin Laurel-Paine, members, present as well. Sean Curran, Town Administrator, and Mark W. Doane, Town Administrative Assistant were present as well. Town residents present were: Judith Hoag, Kenneth Murray, Doreen Black, Alfonso Longobardi, Maureen Longobardi, Adair Laurel-Cafarella, Skip Savery, and Karen Willbrant

Town Administrator Report: Sean reported he had a zoom call with Ann Gobi. A letter of Intention for a One-Stop grant will be sent specifically focusing on the Senior Center and the accessibility to the COA as well as the museum on the second floor. Ann felt these aspects should be stressed as it would improve the weight of the grant request. Sean will also put in for an Engineering Study grant for Reservoir Road, with hopes of in the future, of paving that road. He also reported that he and Curt Robie are 25% done with coming up with a bidding invitation for the Town Hall Floors, and Ken Murray sent him an email on helpful ways to get bids. Sean has begun a media policy, which is in a draft stage, with it being modeled after one that is used in Nantucket; VADAR is getting up to speed, Tasers have arrived in the Police Department, with training needing to take place, as well as a policy for use. Sean will also meet with Skip to come up with a plan for roadside mowing.

Ann Marie Visconti: Went to the Massachusetts Municipal Association meeting along with Tamarin. She gave Ann Gobi a copy of our annual Town Report, as well as inviting her to our Town Meeting. Ann Marie reported that Huntley is ready to begin at the transfer station, and reported that Michael Schafer from Huntley also has designs, if needed, for playgrounds. Carol Waag reports she is proceeding with the Town Park, and Skip will be in touch with her, as she needs more dirt for the park. Ann Marie is also trying to have Ed Fahey coordinate with Loren Davine about switch over for health agent from Berkshire County to Hampshire County.

Curt Robie: Curt reported that there were about 12 people at the Planning Board hearing on April 27, 2024. A cordial discussion was had. The biggest area of concern is who assesses fines: Planning Board or Zoning Board. It was recommended to leave the Zoning Board as the ones who issue a Special Permit granting, and that violations get reported to the Selectboard or Building Inspector, and they impose the fines, with a letter thru Town Counsel. Current fines are \$20.00 per day, but the Planning Board is not interested in the fine amount; they are concerned with wording for conforming uses and alterations, and definitions. Doreen Black would like Town Counsel to review before a Special Town Meeting is called. It was motioned by Tamarin Laurel-Paine to hold a Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 PM. Mark Doane reported he will need the STM Warrant by May 21 for posting. Curt also reported that the New Bridge Inspector for District One is Mike McCabe, and will be looking at getting the bridges in town on the list of those needing repairs. Curt also reported on the floor tiles Mr. Longobardi had graciously offered to the Town for use, however, after calling Modern Mold and Tool in Pittsfield, no information could be obtained, as it is all proprietary information. Curt told Rick of Modern Mold and Tool that probably the Town wouldn't be able to accept the gift of floor tiles. Modern Mold and Tool was the place donating the tiles. Curt thanked Mr. Longobardi for all the research he had done. Curt also apologized to Mr. Longobardi, a veteran, about the condition of the flag at the Town Hall, and reported

the trees would be trimmed and a new flag installed. Curt also reported that parts for the flagpole light in the center of town can't be obtained. He researched another company, and found a light for \$398.05, which includes a new unit, and double solar panels. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to purchase. Curt reported that Abby McCabe, from the office of Representative Richard Neal, reported that the earmark request for two new roofs (Fire Department and Town Garage) and Senior Center repairs are still in the pipeline. Rep. Neal is going to submit it to the Agricultural Department, however, that would require the Town to come up with matching funds of 25%. Curt has asked Ms McCabe to try for a different department. Senator Markey was also sent the same \$2,000,000.00 request.

The meeting then proceeded to Annual Town Meeting topics, which did not allow Tamarin to give any updates. Ken Murray questioned Article 21 of the Town Warrant concerning the Middlefield Congregational Church. Curt reported that after much research by Town Counsel, it was determined that the land the Church sits on is Town land. The Church only owns the structure. Mark Doane, treasurer of the Church, reported that the Church Committee is working with the U.C.C. for release of funds so repairs can be made. Adair questioned that if Article 21 passed, it would be brought to the Town for discussions. The Selectboard assured him that would definitely occur. Ken asked about long-range plans for the Church, and it was reported that at this time no formal discussions have occurred.

The Town Hall Policy was brought before the board with changes made, which were in bold print to reflect those changes. After much discussion, and because a Middlefield resident wishes to use the Town Hall at the end of May, a vote was held as to accept current draft as is, and continue to work on the policy. Curt and Ann voted yes, Tamarin voted no. Mark Doane was instructed to continue to work on the Town Hall Policy. He will have another draft available at the next Selectboard meeting.

Skip Savery reported that the grader will be back in town next week. He also reported that he used WRAP money of \$110,000.00 last year. He also reported he had a new flag for the Town Hall flagpole, and would be trimming the trees by the flagpole. Skip was told a new light will be purchased for the flagpole in the center of town. Skip stated that the new trailer will be ordered thru Orchard Hill in Belchertown, but before any monies are released, the Town Accountant needs a copy of the Special Town Meeting minutes of April 13, 2024, that shows the Town approved the use of those funds. He also reported that the paving plants will be opening soon, and he intends to do patching on River Road and Clark Wright Road. Karen Willbrant brought up the condition of the section of West Hill Road she has a home on, reporting it is in terrible shape. Skip reported that millings would not hold, and be scraped up with snow plowing. He will continue to patching as necessary. Karen feels the value of her property is decreasing. She reports she will be discouraged if it stays the same way it is. Sean reported he and Skip will talk about it this summer.

There was no old business, new business, or public input. The minutes from the Selectboard meeting of April 17, 2024 were read and approved, the warrants were signed, and mail reviewed.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mark W. Doane, Administrative Assistant.