



# Town of Middlefield Finance Committee

**08/20/24 Meeting**

**In attendance:**

Adair Laurel-Cafarella      Gita Jozsef      Ken Murray  
Karri Trask      Stephen Harris, Secretary

**Also attending:**

Tamarin Laurel-Paine      Donald Trask  
Maureen Longobardi      Doreen Black

**Quorum, call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

**Review minutes from previous meeting:**

Minutes from previous meeting on 08/06/24 were approved as written.

**Accounting Issues & VADAR transition:**

The Town Administrator continues to hamper the Finance Committee's ability to carry out its mandate as the town's official fiscal watchdog by not fulfilling our repeated requests for a read-only password to the VADAR accounts.

The town accountant can no longer log into the Springbrook computer to access FY 2024 balances and produce the reports we need.

While \$250K of the town's funds were recently moved from an account with a 1% rate of return to one yielding 5.1%, the town is still losing \$49K per annum by failing to move the remaining funds in low yielding accounts.

The committee has yet to receive a reply to its request as to why the town renewed its insurance coverage with MIIA rather than accept the lower-cost VFIS offer.

Investigation of the unauthorized \$90K transfer from the Stabilization account to the General Fund is slated for inclusion in the upcoming town audit.

**Highway Department:**

The Highway Department has finished installing culverts. Millings will be put down next week on Chipman Road.

The town missed out on a \$1 Million opportunity by failing to apply for a DOT grant for Chipman Road which it most likely would have received.

The town expects to receive its \$600K share of the PVPC multi county grant in September, which will be applied to work on Clark Wright Road.

**Town Hall floor replacement:**

Owing to the dated construction standards when the town hall was built, the contractors had to apply two coats of vapor barrier to the floor.

It was questioned whether delaying work on the corridor will delay the overall project.

Movers are tied up in September school projects until August 23.

**Any other business:**

Draft warrant articles for the senior property tax work-off and the veteran property tax work-off were reviewed.

Since requests to the Selectboard are routinely ignored, the suggestion was made to submit them on a more formal basis.

It was agreed to change the three-year plan to a five-year one.

It was questioned why the town is paying for police coverage at the Middlefield Fair that nobody requested.

The Finance Committee affirmed that the ad-hoc "Playground Committee," which collected \$436 at the Middlefield Fair, should be free to decide how to spend its monies, rather than cede to the Selectboard's apparent demand for control.

It was noted that the committee's submission to the town's FY 2024 annual report is due.

A letter from Deb Schnappauf requesting Zoom access to SB meeting & issues of tax relief were discussed. Tamarin reported that she has tried to make zoom available but found only the assistant has the access to host a meeting.

**Next meeting:**

The next meeting will be at the Senior Center on September 6<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

