



## **Selectboard Minutes**

### **April 17, 2024**

The meeting was declared open at 6:30 PM by Curt Robie, Member and Tamarin Laurel-Paine, Member. Ann Marie Visconti, Chair, was home ill, but called in on phone. Sean Curran, Town Administrator and Mark W. Doane, Administrative Assistant were also present. Town residents present were Adair Laurel-Cafarella, Doreen Black, Maureen Longobardi, Alfonso Longobardi and Skip Savery.

Town Warrants were signed, mail reviewed, and minutes of the April 3, 2024 Select Board meeting were signed.

Sean Curran reported that Westfield Wild and Scenic came up to the Town to assist with a culvert grant. He commended Carol Waag who did a lot of the leg work. He has also put in for an earmark on the federal level, thru Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey, for \$900,000.00 for the Senior Center. Curt stated he put in for \$2,000,000.00 thru the Senate. Sean stated he contacted VFIS two weeks ago for a quote for insurance on the fire department personnel, but has not heard back. MIIA covers fire fighters up to the age of 72. The Town Hall floor project was approved at the Special Town Meeting on April 13, 2024. Sean to work on getting the invitation for bids out by May.

Each individual Selectboard member then reported what they have been working on:

Tamarin brought that she feels we need clear procedures and to inform others of them, as recent visits to two Town Board meeting it was shared, they did not know the new system of posting of meetings in advance and uploading of minutes after. It was explained that approved minutes, and upcoming agendas need to be supplied to the Administrative Assistant who will post on the website. Also, after all invoices have been processed, they are to go to the administrative assist for logging on a flow sheet, and then handed off to the accountant. Feels the Town Administrator needs to have his hours for being in the Town Hall posted on the website. The DLS Local Officials Directory needs to be updated. The Green Community Request for Information has not received any responds to requests, except one individual from the list. Also, the US Fish and Wildlife is looking to take more land off the tax rolls for a Silvio O Conte preserve. She also feels if a selectboard member or town board member is emailing on official stances/decisions, then it should be sent to all members of that board.

Curt reported that one more form needed to be signed for the official taking of the Skyline Trail dump. This will be sent off to KP Law. States Lauren Surniner needs to know specifics for using the Town Hall. All the necessary paperwork will be typed up and sent to her. This brought up more discussion on a policy for use of Town buildings by the public. Tamarin felt that the one we have on the website just needs to be updated. The administrative assistant was tasked with developing a Town Building Use policy to present for discussion at the next selectboard meeting. For this particular event, the person reserving the Town Hall will need to get a one-day insurance policy if she is serving alcohol (mimosa's). The Police Chief does not feel an onsite presence of police is necessary, however, one Officer will be on duty if need arise. Curt also reported that the solar light on the Town Center flagpole is not working, and a new battery will be obtained. Curt continues to pursue a One-Stop grant for the Senior Center, and Angela Panaccione, in conjunction with Curt, is working on an MVP grant.

Ann Marie reported she is working on getting a Public Health grant. She also reported that as of July 1, 2024, the Town will be using the Hampshire County Public Health services, and she reported that Lauren from that office stated services will be specialized for Middlefield. Ann Marie will also talk to Lauren about the transferring of the records from our current health agent, Ed Fahey. She has also asked John Les to meet with the accountant to set up her new e-mail account.

Following individual reports, finalizing of the FY 2025 budget was discussed. It was recommended by the Finance Committee and the Selectboard, on Ron Radwich recommendation, that under Article 7 of the Annual Town Warrant that a line item be added for \$500.00 for Cemetery Caretaker Laborer. The money will come from the line item that currently has \$2,500.00 in it. Article 26 is in the amount of \$160,000.00. This is for the new highway truck. Extensive discussion was held on the Town Counsel line item, which is currently at \$15,000.00. 2/3 of the selectboard agreed to keep Town Counsel at \$15,000.00, versus increasing to \$18-20,000.00. The Tax Title Attorney was increased from \$6,000.00 to \$8,000.00.

Discussion continued on Fire Fighter Insurance with MIIA. Concerns were raised about the \$750,000.00 death benefit, that we do not have insurance for. Ann Marie is concerned about the 30 volunteer firefighters on the books. Ron Radwich had supplied a list of firefighters to MIIA last year, according to Curt. Sean will talk with Ron about this area.

The agenda for the All-Boards Meeting will include the Town Hall floors, and the moving of offices. Ann Marie also wants to hand out job descriptions, and have individuals review and revise as necessary. Discussion was held on the date for the All-Boards Meeting. Sean reported that individuals do not want to do it on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. Discussion between Ann and Sean took place, with Ann reporting that the meetings used to be all day, and we have not had one since September. Sean stated he was only relaying input. Ann Marie stated that if he could find another day for the meeting, she would agree. Curt reported that Selectboard meetings were scheduled for May 1, 15, and 29. May 22 is open, Sean said that would be good, but Ann Marie states people have to show up. Final decision was that the All-Boards Meeting will be Wednesday, May 22, 2024 at 6:30 PM. Mark wants the agenda items one week before (May 15).

The Open Meeting Law was discussed. Ann Marie said two or more Select Board members cannot be in the same room, or sit at the same table if at a conference, as that could be construed as a violation of the Open Meeting Law. Sean recommended posting any kind of meeting, and that way, Select Board members can attend those meetings if they want to. Also wording of announcements was discussed. "Informal" is a better option than "pre-ATM Meeting" as an example. Curt stated that the open meeting law says you have to be deliberating.

The email policy was discussed, and the Administrative Assistant found samples of an E-mail policy on line. Ann Marie also said a lot of towns put stuff in the papers but we do not. Curt said those towns have reporters. Ann Marie also said media was the same thing, and stated Sean was to keep it up to date.

Doreen Black reported that the Planning Board is having a public meeting on April 27, 2024 at 10:00 AM, and is requesting the Select Board to have a Special Town Meeting on June 8, 2024. Ann Marie stated the Select Board cannot attend on the 27<sup>th</sup> due to another obligation, and that June 8<sup>th</sup> is Laura LaFreniere's mother's funeral. Questions were raised of putting off the dates. Doreen said the Public Meeting has already been posted in the newspaper, and the 8<sup>th</sup> of June is the only day the Moderator and full planning board can be together. Tamarin Laurel-Paine then made a motion to hold a Special Town Meeting on June 8<sup>th</sup>, with the Select Board voting 2-1 in the affirmative to hold the meeting.

Under Old Business, the Administrative Assistant reported that nine months after the close of a fiscal year, we are asking for town reports. This year, right up to the time of print, reports were still coming in. He is requesting that since the Fiscal Year closes on June 30<sup>th</sup>, he would like annual reports by the beginning of August, with the exception of those reports that rely on information from the Department of Revenue. The Administrative Assistant would like to have the Town Report ready to go to the printer by February.

The Cemetery Perpetual care account has an amount of \$21,000.00 base, with accrued interest that can be used for cemetery maintenance, per Adair Laurel-Cafarella. Curt thinks the principal can be used for expansion of a cemetery, though.

In New Business, Ann Marie stated the MMA is holding a certification program with a registration deadline of April 30<sup>th</sup>. She was wondering if Sean was interested in attending, and he respectfully declined due to time constraints.

Under Public Input, Al Longobardi listened to a lot of talk recently about the Town Hall floors. He does not have a problem with them being done, however, he feels it is way to costly. He stated that the owner of the company where he works, Modern Mold and Tool, is willing to donate 80 boxes of 2-foot by 2-foot floor tiles, that would need to be applied with troweled adhesive. Each box contains 20 tiles, and are PVC Vinyl. He said Select Tech makes the tiles, and he would ask the town people to volunteer to move furniture around, as needed. He stated these are not cheap tiles, you do not need to wax, just damp mop them. He stated they also have electrostatic discharge protection as well. Maureen Longobardi asked that if we went this way, could the savings be used to lower the taxes. Al also

questioned letting the individual who asked to use the building for a bridal shower, if the floors are considered so dangerous.

No further business to come before the Board, it was closed at 8:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark W. Doane,  
Administrative Assistant

Ann Marie Visconti, Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Curt Robie, Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Tamarin Laurel-Paine, Member: \_\_\_\_\_