

MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
405 Main Street
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

Revised Minutes of the July 17, 2018 Regular Meeting

Call to Order

Ed Bailey called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Dave Burgess, Bob Yamartino and Ed Bailey were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Ed Bailey asked to add Fire Department/Emergency Communications Tower as item 4a.

Ed Bailey made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to amend and approve the agenda, as above. Motion carried unanimously.

Later in the meeting, while discussing item 8, the following motion was made.

Mr. Bailey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Burgess, to amend agenda item 8 to advise the Board of Selectmen of First Selectman entering into an agreement with A and E Services Group for administration of the Middlefield Housing Rehabilitation Program. This is Professional Services. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Troy Donahue, 20 Lake Road, reviewed that he had spoken with Ed Bailey back in April about the end of his driveway. The area has been repaved several times. He had pictures of the condition of his driveway and stated that the Public Works foreman told him he would pave it again. He felt that this is a liability issue for him and now for the Town.

Fire Department/Emergency Communications Tower

Chief Peter Tyc and Bill Konefal were present on behalf of the Fire Department. He explained that the communications tower located behind the Town Hall has recently been revised and a

provider was brought up to the top of the tower. Chief Tyc heard that they would also be taking over the shelter and he is concerned. He spoke with a gentleman today and was told that, as far as they are concerned, the shelter is considered empty and theirs to use completely. There is no formal agreement at this point.

Chief Tyc has been calling the representative and cannot get an answer. Valley Shore recently received a grant from the State of Connecticut to finish their simulcast paging system and they would like to use this site as one of their main hubs. This is a paging system that will interconnect every antenna that Valley Shore has and will enhance Middlefield's capabilities. Middlefield would need approximately 8 feet of the shelter which is approximately 24 feet long.

Chief Tyc also hoped that they still have the ability to put antennas at the top of the tower and a microwave link. Ed Bailey reviewed that originally there was going to be a microwave to a tower in Durham, but that is no longer the case. The one proposed now does not necessarily have to be at the top of the tower to reach the Fire House. Chief Tyc explained that everything they have is based on the tower and their portable radios will not work if they lose that location. There are some dead spots in town as it is.

Ed Bailey reviewed that terms could not be reached with the tower company with an amendment to the lease and they will have redouble their efforts on that. The current lease expires in either 2022 or 2024. Bob Yamartino asked if there would be town-wide communications if these changes were made and Chief Tyc explained that more would still need to be done, but the opportunity would be there to do it.

Ed Bailey did not want to go on record about what is going on, but offered to update Chief Tyc some time this week. Chief Tyc explained that this is a great opportunity to save the town some money if they can get the Valley Shore equipment here in town. He also explained that Valley Shore would like to start this first phase by the Fall, to be finished some time next Spring. Mr. Bailey reported that he had a meeting last week which may open up some opportunities.

Strickland Farm Lease - Attorney John Corona

Attorney John Corona was present on behalf of the Durham Agricultural Fair Association and reviewed that he has made the modifications that were requested last month. He added a provision regarding subletting to a farmer, but noted that the list of uses would need to be modified. He also added a reference to the property itself and a copy of the assessor's map, showing the area of the property that the Durham Fair would have no problem with the town removing. The map also identifies an area of the property that has not been mowed in the past.

Ed Bailey also explained that there may be some opportunities for the part of the property near the Industrial Park and he has also been approached by a landowner that is interested in cultivating a section of the property as well.

Mr. Yamartino thought that the lease would give the Durham Fair the right to sublet for agricultural purposes, but Attorney Corona explained that the Durham Fair would not have the right to sublet. Attorney Corona felt it would be difficult to specify all of the conditions that could come up and this section was meant to be a placeholder. Mr. Yamartino also asked about the section that allows the public to continue to use the land as open space and Attorney Corona pointed out the sections regarding that.

Ed Bailey reported that the Town Attorney has not yet been available to review the lease though he did send it to him last week. Attorney Corona pointed out that the Town Attorney has seen the lease other than the changes that were just made.

The lease is a 10-year lease, with a 10-year extension. The rent would be \$138,000 over the first 10 years, with \$144,000 for the second 10 years. Dave Burgess felt that it has been a good long-term partnership and is good income for the town. Ed Bailey felt that it was mutually beneficial.

Bob Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve the “Strickland Property” lease to the Durham Agricultural Fair Association, Inc. for the terms of the agreement presented. Approval of the lease is subject to review and approval of the Town Attorney. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval for the First Selectman to enter into an agreement with Middletown Area Transit for Dial-A-Ride services

Mr. Bailey reviewed that the Town has a Dial-A-Ride agreement with the Middletown Area Transit that has been in place for many, many years. This is a program specifically for disabled residents and residents over the age of 60. The Town will pay \$16,280 for this service which he believes is the same as last year. This program takes people anywhere in the county and provides two-way transportation. There is a small fee charged to the residents for the service and a reservation must be made. The Administrator of Middletown Area Transit believes there is an opportunity to reduce the age down to 55.

Mr. Bailey explained that this money is already in the budget. Mr. Yamartino asked if this has been reviewed by the Town Attorney, but Mr. Bailey explained that this is the same agreement that has been used year and after. Mr. Burgess cautioned that there may be state or federal regulations that prevent the program from going down to age 55. Mr. Bailey explained that they are still vetting that, but the Administrator had said that the DOT presented that as an option to them. Bob Yamartino wondered whether this should be signed off on by the Town Attorney. Dave Burgess felt that that would not be necessary in this case.

Bob Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve the First Selectman to enter into an agreement with Middletown Area Transit for Dial-A-Ride, the amount of which is not to exceed \$16,280, as per the terms of the agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

Ed Bailey also mentioned that they are still moving towards joining the Middletown Transit District, aka Middletown Area Transit. The towns involved are Durham, Middlefield, Portland, East Hampton and Middletown and East Hampton has graciously extended their legal counsel to present initial documents. The towns would want to be held harmless on any debts that Middletown Area Transit currently has. Each of the neighboring towns would have one person on the Middletown Area Transit board and Middletown would have two.

Mr. Bailey also stated that the DOT reports that bus ridership is down because Uber has been taking a lot of the business away. DOT is getting some funding from the Federal Transportation Authority and will be looking into a micro bus service. This bus service would have a limited route during a limited time. There may be several bus stops here in town and this service would be open to anyone.

Advise the Board of Selectmen of the First Selectman entering into an agreement with A and E Services Group to provide administration of the Middlefield Housing Rehabilitation Program. This is a Professional Service.

Ed Bailey explained that an RFP had been put out for the Middlefield Housing Rehabilitation Program which would allow homeowners to borrow money for renovations which can be paid back in various ways with very low interest. There is currently \$150,000 available for loans. Mr. Bailey felt that the income guidelines were around \$45,000 or under for a single person.

Wagner Associates had administered the program in the past, but Mr. Wagner retired. Only one company responded to the RFP. The Town will pay A and E Services Group an hourly fee for their services and there could be a fee when a loan is executed. This will be much more economical than the prior agreement.

Mr. Yamartino asked if they should see the agreement before they give the First Selectman the approval, but Mr. Bailey explained that the First Selectman has always entered into the agreement as Professional Services and he did not bring a copy of the agreement with him. Mr. Bailey believes that he has already signed the agreement.

The Board agreed that this is Professional Services and agreed to amend the agenda at this point.

Resolution to participate in the Sustainable CT program

Dave Burgess asked what the objective of this program was and Ed Bailey reviewed that there were nine items that focus the Town's attention on sustainability, including environmental impacts, greenhouse gas reductions, health and wellness, cost savings, economic well-being, climate, resilience, community-building and equity.

This program was facilitated by the Connecticut Council of Municipalities and was rolled out last November. Mr. Bailey reviewed several examples of what would be included in this program and explained that interns are working on the program this summer. He also explained that they will go through the list and point out things that Middlefield has already done. The program is run by Eastern Connecticut State University and in order to register for the program, the town needs to pass a resolution. Mr. Bailey read the resolution for the Selectmen and explained that he does not yet have a roster for the sustainability team.

Ed Bailey made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve the Resolution Supporting Participation in the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Program. Motion carried unanimously.

Health District Progress Report and Process

Ed Bailey reported that he has a meeting next week with the Town Managers of Plainville and Southington as well as the Health Director about the process involved in transitioning over to a health district. He expects to have a motion for approval to join the Health District at the next meeting.

Mr. Yamartino asked if the buy-in has definitively been determined yet and Mr. Bailey explained that the Health District doesn't set their rate until later in the year, but it is currently at \$6.75 per person and could range from \$6.25 to \$6.75. Middlefield currently has 4,400 residents and that will be offset by monies from the State of Connecticut. The buy-in is currently being revised and they hoped for some state money to become available. Mr. Bailey received a letter yesterday from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health offering \$15,000 if Middlefield were to join a health district. Mr. Bailey stated that the annual cost will be somewhere around \$29,000 and the buy-in will be in the \$25,000 range, with \$50,000 being budgeted. Ed Bailey needs to get the Department of Public Health a letter of intent which he will do right away and then another letter letting them know the agreement has been executed.

Ed Bailey reported he is preparing a one-page information sheet on the Health District, but reviewed that the Health District will provide Middlefield with services that are normally provided in-house such as septic system permits, well permits, health inspections of restaurants, etc. Middlefield is classified as having a part-time health department and the State requires 10

essential services that the town should be providing, but it is very difficult for a small town to provide all of them. The Health District will also provide educational and outreach programs.

Mr. Bailey explained that Dr. Matthew Huddleston, the town's current Health Director, has to step down as of December 31, 2018 and it is very difficult to find a replacement as it is required that they have a master's degree in public health. The Health District will provide a Health Director and all of the services that the Health Department and the Sanitarian provide. Middlefield will also have a person on the board of the Health District, namely the First Selectman.

Bob Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to table agenda items 5, 11, 12 and 13. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Dave Burgess made a motion, seconded by Ed Bailey, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz
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