



## **TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY**

*Board of Finance  
1212 Whittemore Road  
Middlebury, CT 06762*

### **Regular Meeting Minutes Wednesday October 14, 2020 Shepardson Auditorium & ZOOM**

Present: William Stowell, Chairman  
Rita H Smith, Board Member  
Dawn Albizu-Calabrese, Board Member  
Joseph Drauss, Board Member  
Vincent Cipriano, Board Member  
Stephen Ruccio, Board Member  
John Jenusaitis, Alternate  
Natrajan Kuppuraj, Alternate

Absent:

Also Present: Ed St John, First Selectman  
Robin Stanziale, CFO  
Ralph Barra, Selectman  
Elaine Strobel, Selectman  
Rachel Primus, Recording Clerk

William Stowell opened the meeting at 7:00 PM with the pledge of allegiance. He welcomed the newest alternate members, John and Nat. Bill said he had given members an updated contact list.

#### **Approval of September 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Joseph Drauss and seconded by Rita Smith to **APPROVE** September 9, 2020 meeting minutes.

#### **Reports**

- **Chief Financial Reports**

Robin Stanziale said they have finished the first quarter of the year. She said there have been a lot of Covid 19 changes that are affecting the budget. Robin said the town will be receiving three different grants related to this year's voting. One was for the primary election, the next is for the November presidential election, and the third is coming from a non-profit organization. They will be receiving \$5,000.00 from this agency to help with the election expenses. Robin said she has not received a detailed budget from the Town Clerk and Registrars, so she is not sure what the actual budget detail would be.

FEMA said they would reimburse the town for the Covid 19 expenses, but only for the Police and Fire Department, this differs from what they originally said. Robin said that the town had a

lot of items donated at the beginning of the outbreak and they did not reach the threshold to submit the expenses to FEMA. She said they should receive \$9,000 from the State but had a total of \$19,000 spent at the end of June. Robin reviewed the federal government process of reimbursement. She noted they are not reimbursing for revenues. Robin said that the investment income is low because interest rates are down, and they will need to look for other ways to make up for the lost revenue. She said that property tax fees are down, and are a little behind on payments, but the real estate market is doing amazing.

Robin told the board the town received \$6,800 because of a class action suit from Verizon.

She reported that police department revenue is up since fingerprinting has restarted, and they are starting to charge for false alarms. Robin noted that under insurance liability the general town and fire cost have now been separated showing the fire department now in the negative. They will be reallocating the money, so they are not truly over budget. The money is under a different line item. Bill asked where the library rental stood. Robin said they have extended the lease through May 2021. Bill asked about scrap metal revenue and Ed St John said it is starting to come back. Ed said they have received the final payment of \$92,000 from FEMA for the 2018 tornado. They have been waiting for this money since May 2018. CT was declared a disaster area from the recent storm in August, and there is nowhere on the State side to apply for FEMA reimbursement. The storm put a good dent in the Public Works overtime budget. They will only receive reimbursement for DPW expenses. Ed also noted that the tax collections for this year are better than what they had thought they would be. He said the registrar did an excellent job with the primaries and he feels that everything will go well with the presidential election. Ed wanted to give a heartfelt thank you to all the employees, he feels they have all done a great job.

Vinnie Cipriano asked about the contractual maintenance budget line. Robin said it was higher because of the additional cleaning being done. She said the cleaning supplies are going to a different line so that the town will be reimbursed for it. Bill Stowell noted that under park and recreation revenue the park maintenance and repairs is 80% over the budgeted amount. Robin said she is going over this with Betsy and that where the money was budgeted is not the line item, they want it to come from. They will be moving things around for the next budget year. Bill Stowell asked about the capital budget for police car reserve and what the small expenditure of \$2,000 was for. Ed St John said it was for equipment for the new cars they purchased last year. Bill asked for detail about the upgrades to town facilities. Ed said he did not have a list with him, but he will have Dan create a list and have it for next month's meeting.

- **Tax Collectors Reports**

Included in packets. Brenda said that people have been taking advantage of the 3% interest program and they did well with it. She said there was not a huge difference in delinquent bills from last year, but there are a few that will be going to the Marshall for collection. They have been allowed to go back to the normal collections procedure. They are about \$176,000 behind compared to last year, which she did not feel was bad. Brenda felt they did well for the first half of the year.

- **Special Duty**

Bill Stowell said they are in great shape and the two biggest accounts were storm related. He thanked Amy for doing a great job.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

- **Fenn Farm Update**

Bill Stowell said last month they asked not to have any more expenditures until the sewer situation was under control. He said he had spoken with the town engineer and they will be moving forward with the connection. He said the Wetlands commission has agreed it is an emergency repair, so there is no need to go before them before the repair is done. The estimated cost for the project is 40 - \$50,000. Robin said the unassigned fund balance had \$19,000 set aside and there is \$35,000 in the special fund. She said that the regular budget for Fenn Farm is over budget already and spent for the year. Bill felt they should use the \$19,000 that was set aside for the cupola and worry about that at another time.

A discussion ensued regarding a bill that was received for \$1,700 for landscaping for last fiscal year.

- **WPCA Straits Turnpike Sewer Extension**

Bill Stowell said last month the board received a briefing on this project. Mike Angeri gave a brief description to the board. He said that the last 6-8 months they have been discussing sewers on Route 63. The current lines end 300ft short of the intersection. Last year they received proposals for commercial development at the intersection. Part of the approval is a 500ft extension. The WPCA commission wanted to brief all the town agencies on the proposed extension. This extension will be paid for by the private developers.

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Vincent Cipriano and seconded by Rita Smith that the BOF has reviewed the plan for the WPCA Straits Turnpike Sewer Extension and the board has no objections or concerns with the project.

Bill Stowell said he received an update from the Region 15 Board of Education on the average daily membership percentage of students as of October 1, 2020. There was a reduction of 177 students from last year. The reduction was 86 less students from Middlebury and 91 less students for Southbury. This will be a result in a shift of 0.72% less for Middlebury which is approximately a ½ million dollars less for the town in next year's education budget costs.

**Public Comment**

None

**Adjournment**

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by Joseph Drauss and seconded by Rita Smith to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Primus, Recording Clerk

Cc: Board of Selectmen  
Board of Finance and Alternates  
Robin Stanziale, Town Treasurer  
Email Notification for Website  
File