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**Special Selectboard Meeting**  
**Large Conference Room – Town Offices**  
**Tuesday, November 29, 2016**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Brian Carpenter, Victor Nuovo, Donna Donahue, Laura Asermily and Heather Seeley. (Absent: Susan Shashok and Nick Artim).

Staff Present: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay, Ilsley Library Director Kevin Unrath and Director of Parks and Recreation Terri Arnold. Also present were representatives of several Non-Profit Agencies and members of the community. The meeting was televised on MCTV by Dick Thodal.

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Brian Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes of November 15, 2016 Special Selectboard Meeting**

Asermily moved to approve the minutes of November 15, 2016 with the following corrections, and Nuovo seconded the motion.

Line 298 – change to delete “from ICE” and add “from a resident”.

The motion carried with 5 in favor, 2 absent. **MOTION PASSED.**

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Donahue moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Nuovo. The motion carried with 5 in favor, 2 absent. **MOTION PASSED.**

**4. Citizens Comments**

Dean Rheaume, a resident of Blake Roy Road, spoke on the status of Creek Road, which has been closed for over a year, and how he feels the condition has been blown out of proportion. He read a statement signed by others in the neighborhood, citing 19 VSA 971, Defective Roads and Bridges, giving the Town 72 hours to repair the road or to give notice why not.

Ross Conrad asked the Board to consider placing an item on the Warning for Town Meeting to increase the annual Selectboard stipend. The last stipend increase was established 22 years ago, and he feels it is outdated and doesn't keep up with the costs associated with volunteering to be on the Board. He suggested raising the stipend to \$2,500 for Board members and \$3,200 for the Chair.

**5. Nomination to Fill Vacancy on Energy Committee**

51 Asermily moved to nominate Hannah Hurlburt to serve on the Energy Committee,  
52 seconded by Heather Seeley.

53  
54 Hurlburt was not present at the meeting to discuss her qualifications or to answer  
55 questions, so Nuovo requested she attend the next meeting or provide a more thorough  
56 resume, prior to the Board voting to appointing her.

57  
58 The motion carried with 5 in favor, 2 absent. **MOTION PASSED.**

59  
60 **6. Brief Overview of FY18 Budget**

61  
62 Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay gave a brief overview of the FY18 Budget as  
63 presented to the Board. She said as always, wages and benefits are one of the major  
64 drivers, as is an increase in Capital Improvement spending proposed by the  
65 Infrastructure Committee. One uncertainty at this point, pending the audit results, is  
66 what the fund balance will be that can be used to help the overall increase in the tax  
67 rate. She said that as it stands now, we are looking at a tax rate increase of just over 4  
68 cents. Department Heads will present their budgets to the Board over the course of  
69 this meeting and the next, and the Health and Human Service agencies were present at  
70 this meeting to address their requests.

71  
72 **7. Non-Profit Agencies Requesting Funding**

73  
74 Homeward Bound

75  
76 Jessica Danyow, Executive Director, said they are the only registered animal shelter in  
77 Addison County, serving an average of 700 animals a year. She said the \$5,000 the  
78 Shelter receives from the Town of Middlebury goes entirely towards animal care related  
79 services, although the Shelter does offer many other community outreach services and  
80 programs.

81  
82 Nuovo asked if they received funds from other towns as well, and Danyow replied they  
83 had received \$13,827 in 2015 from almost every other town in Addison County, but  
84 none at the level that Middlebury contributes.

85  
86 Sherry Greifzu, from Addison County Home Health & Hospice, stated that their  
87 organization works with the Humane Society throughout the year with help for clients  
88 with animals.

89  
90 Elderly Services, Inc.

91  
92 Paul Vachon, Facilities/Transportation Manager for Elderly Services, joined the Board  
93 and said that Elderly Services had been receiving Town funds for over 20 years at  
94 about the same annual level of \$5,993. They receive a total of \$22,000 each year  
95 (including Middlebury's contribution) from Addison County towns, and while a small  
96 portion of their \$2.3 million annual budget, it helps to fill in the gaps from what they  
97 receive from other funding sources. He said this money allows them to provide  
98 scholarships for some elders who are unable to afford the fee and also helps to offset

99 transportation costs. He said 27% of their total participants are from Middlebury and  
100 that 2016 saw a huge growth in participants and he felt the numbers would only  
101 increase each year due to the needs of the community.

102  
103 Addison County Home Health and Hospice

104  
105 Executive Director, Sherry Greifzu, joined the Board. She said their agency served 24  
106 Addison County Towns, and cared for 1,420 patients, of which 397 were from  
107 Middlebury. They receive a total of \$31,786 annually for towns. She said that  
108 reimbursements from insurance/Medicare is decreasing each year, so the Town funds  
109 help to supplement their costs. Carpenter asked if the changes going on at Porter  
110 Hospital would impact them, and Greifzu said they have a great relationship with the  
111 hospital, and she anticipated the changes would only enhance this relationship and  
112 allow them to offer more services.

113  
114 Counseling Service of Addison County

115  
116 Bill Claessens, CFO for the Counseling Service, stated the CSAC was founded in 1959  
117 and served all the towns in Addison County, serving 2,100 clients in the last fiscal year.  
118 They are requesting level funding at \$4,500. He said the funding received from towns  
119 helps to pay for the wide range of mental health services for their underinsured or  
120 uninsured clients. Asermily asked him if they were seeing any trends. Claessens said  
121 there is an increase in opiate addiction, which is a huge demand of services, as well as  
122 services for children in schools. He said the trend in funding is the need for higher  
123 quality and increased documentation, but less money from Medicaid, which is their  
124 largest funder.

125  
126 Addison County Restorative Justice

127  
128 Dottie Neuberger, filling in for Executive Director Miche Modiba, addressed the Board  
129 regarding their request for \$2,500. This is the first year they have requested funds from  
130 Middlebury. Neuberger said they have served over 1,000 offenders this past year  
131 throughout Addison County, and 132 of them from Middlebury. The majority of these  
132 were through the Court Diversion Program and the Youth Substance Abuse Safety  
133 Program. Also offered are programs to help drivers get their drivers licenses back after  
134 being suspended, probationary programs and a re-entry program to get people back  
135 into the community. They also offer programs to help and counsel victims as well as  
136 offenders.

137  
138 **8. Kevin Unrath, Library Director, FY18 Budget Request**

139  
140 Unrath began with Revenues, and said that the only change was in Fines, which has  
141 been reduced by \$5,000 to reflect the lower fines they are receiving now that they are  
142 sending e-mails to patrons as a reminder of the return date for items.

143  
144 In Expenditures he said there is an overall increase of 2.9% and the majority of that was  
145 an increase in the salaries of the Adult and Youth Services librarians. These increases  
146 are based on VLCT salary study that showed they were underpaid compared to other

147 similar positions in libraries within the State. There is also an increase in the part-time  
148 salaries, since that has been under budgeted the last couple of years. Other salary  
149 increases are based on the COL and minimum wage increase. Carpenter asked about  
150 the benefits increase, and Ramsay said she'd added the health insurance increase and  
151 had calculated the payroll taxes and retirement on the higher salaries. These are  
152 included in the benefits.

153

154 Asermily asked about Maintenance costs. Unrath said it was pretty much level funded  
155 based on a decrease in the request for fuel oil and an increase in electricity, due to  
156 warmer winters and hotter summers.

157

158 Asermily mentioned how amazed she was by the number of people that pass through  
159 the library each year, and Carpenter complimented Unrath and the Building Committee  
160 on their presentations on the expansion plans.

161

### 162 **9. Terri Arnold, Parks & Recreation Director, FY 18 Budget Request**

163

164 Terri Arnold said that the Parks and Recreation Department had worked with almost all  
165 the agencies that had presented earlier in the meeting, and provided countless free  
166 hours of space at the Recreation Center to human service agencies, and now are  
167 providing services and programs for all stages of life, from toddlers to senior citizens.  
168 She said they also work very closely with Ilsley Library on the summer lunch and story  
169 program.

170

171 Arnold said that their Revenues showed only a 1.7% increase, but she expected they  
172 would exceed that as they had every year in the past 3 years. Arnold said she would  
173 like to work on increasing the pool revenues with some creative marketing.

174

175 Arnold said there was a 14% increase in wages and benefits, and part of this is for a  
176 new 20 hour a week Assistant Program Coordinator position. This new position will  
177 allow them to deliver additional programs more successfully. Life Guard wages also  
178 increase with each year they return.

179

180 Arnold said mowing and rubbish removal had been overlooked in the past budget year,  
181 so the increases there were reflective of what it costs for the subcontractors. There was  
182 a discussion of the electric costs at the pool, which is currently billed through Memorial  
183 Sports Center. Arnold said they are in the process of separating electric service from  
184 the Sports Center and improving efficiency.

185

186 Ramsay said that Efficiency Vermont has been working with the Recreation Department  
187 on the new pumps for the pool and they are going from a 3 phase to a single phase  
188 pump. Arnold said they are also going to be using an auto inject system for the pool  
189 chemicals, which will be safer for staff and a real cost savings.

190

191 Asermily asked about the other improvements that Arnold had mentioned to improve the  
192 Park, such as a climbing wall and pavilions. Arnold said that once they were past the  
193 pool improvements, they can start looking to use Capital Improvement funds to increase  
194 the amenities at the Park. Heather Seeley said she would like to see more attendance

195 at the pool and thought it was valuable resource that was being underutilized. Arnold  
196 said that they would be working on offering more programs for active senior citizens.  
197

## 198 **10. FY Budget Requests for Administration & Health & Human Services** 199

200 Town Manager Ramsay presented the Administration and Health & Human Services  
201 Budgets. She said the increase of \$13,572 in the just over \$1 million dollar  
202 Administration Budget, was mainly for salaries and wages. The one notable reduction  
203 of \$6,000 in elections reflects that there is not an annual election this coming year. She  
204 said it was pretty straight forward, but she will be taking a look at Legal Services which  
205 had been increased about \$6,000 each year to bring it to its current \$42,000 level. The  
206 spending trend for legal has been going down, so she will be looking at this.  
207

208 Asermily asked about the internet and website fees. Ramsay said the increase in the  
209 internet had to do with the move in services with the new building and going with Voice  
210 Over IP. The Website fees reflect the upgrade to a new web hosting site. Ramsay  
211 would check with Jackie Sullivan on the internet and Voice Over IP costs. Asermily  
212 also asked about diverting funds to the new website, and Ramsay said the new site  
213 would be on-line in January.  
214

215 Carpenter asked about the budget timeline. Ramsay said they need to have a final  
216 budget for the Warning which needs to be approved on January 24<sup>th</sup>. A budget public  
217 hearing is needed by January 17<sup>th</sup>. She said the public meeting could be later, but if  
218 there were changes she would need time to make them to the budget to be ready for  
219 the Warning on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The public hearing needs 7 days notice.  
220

221 There was discussion on the meeting schedule. Carpenter said he'd like to set a goal of  
222 what they hoped to arrive at, since currently they are looking at a 4 cent increase to the  
223 tax rate.  
224

225 He then read an e-mail sent by Nick Artim, who was absent and had been unable to call  
226 in due to a flight change. Artim suggested a change in the way they budget for facilities  
227 maintenance, by removing this line from individual budgets and create one maintenance  
228 budget for all facilities to take advantage of competitive bidding for services. He also  
229 was not in favor of a 4 cent increase in the tax rate, because with his recent work on the  
230 MBDF evaluation he had heard repeatedly how the high taxes impacts growth.  
231

232 Ramsay said the Infrastructure Committee is working on an inventory of town facilities  
233 for a Capital budget for maintenance, but she said it would be a huge undertaking to  
234 have this prepared in the next month. She said that with the two new buildings, we are  
235 sharing the same HVAC contractor, the mowing is done by one contractor, so there is  
236 some consolidation happening already.  
237

238 Donahue wanted to hold off on setting a goal until she had more information, so it was  
239 delayed until after the next Board meeting, but Carpenter urged them all to start thinking  
240 about it. There was more discussion on the second December meeting, and it was  
241 agreed to keep the December 27<sup>th</sup> meeting on the schedule. There was some concern  
242 that having this budget public meeting so close to the holidays would limit the number of

243 public who could attend, but it will be in the meeting notice that comments and concerns  
244 can be submitted in writing and presented at the meeting.

245  
246

## 247 **11. Downtown Bridge Replacement Project Update**

248

249 Community Liaison, Jim Gish, joined the Board to give the latest update on the project.  
250 He said the November 17<sup>th</sup> public meeting was well attended and well received and that  
251 VTrans had given a clear and professional presentation. A video tape of the event is  
252 now available on MCTV. The presentation is available on the VTrans website for the  
253 project which can be found at <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/projects/Middlebury>.

254

255 He said he met with some downtown merchants the day before Thanksgiving, and  
256 generally he found a feeling of acceptance of the need for the project and growing  
257 confidence in the VTrans plan and timeline, but also a continuing concern over the  
258 impact to their business, especially during that 10 week period in 2019. He said he'd  
259 met with Selectboard liaison, Susan Shashok, and Karen Dugay of Better Middlebury  
260 Partnership, and they want to hold a meeting of merchants sometime in December to  
261 bring them together and begin the process of the support they need.

262

263 Seeley said she had to leave the meeting, but before she left she wanted to say that  
264 she felt it was up to the community to support these businesses during this time. Gish  
265 said he felt that was a widely shared feeling in town and the merchants need to hear  
266 that. (Seeley left the meeting at this point.)

267

268 Gish said that he'd be getting plans and meeting with Artim and Donahue to begin  
269 review on Contract #1 for the work on the access road and drainage, which will begin in  
270 2017. Also, he said the Water Street residents are concerned about the access road  
271 and Mary Johnson Children's Center has offered to host a meeting, so VTrans will come  
272 and speak to the neighborhood about the access road plans so they'll feel informed and  
273 have their questions answered.

274

275 Gish said Nick Artim had asked for a meeting to begin talking about siting the railroad  
276 station and he'd also be working with Adam Lougee of ACRPC on getting public input  
277 on the design of Printer's Alley and Triangle Park. Nuovo said this is a wonderful  
278 opportunity to improve this area for pedestrians and merchants, and would like to see it  
279 planned as one area and not separate spaces. It will be an improvement to the north end  
280 of Main Street, much like the south end has been improved.

281

282 Terri Arnold asked for the Parks and Recreation Department be included in the design  
283 of Triangle Park.

284

285 Carpenter said that he and Artim had met and agreed that preserving the downtown  
286 merchants was the #1 concern, and we need to work with the merchants on marketing  
287 and making people want to go there during the construction. He also wanted to look at  
288 this as an opportunity to do other improvements to the downtown that are appropriate to  
289 the project, such as granite curbing. He said we also need to be looking at ACTR and  
290 not just the 10 weeks of construction, but also long term location of the buses as well as

291 future passenger rail, where will that terminal be and can we get VTrans to put in some  
292 of that infrastructure during the construction of the new rail bed. He said the  
293 Selectboard may need to take a position at some point with the new administration in  
294 Montpelier, so the Board should be thinking ahead. The discussion continued on all  
295 the possibilities that could happen in the downtown as a result of this project. Gish said  
296 he thought there was a willingness on the part of the VTrans team to do what was in  
297 Middlebury's best interest.

298

## 299 **12. Personnel Committee Recommendation on Highway Department Personnel** 300 **Structure**

301

302 Brian Carpenter said the Personnel Committee had met to review the proposal by  
303 Director of Public Works Operations, Bill Kernan, to realign the managerial positions at  
304 Public Works. The current Highway Chief position is vacant, and Crew Leader Matt  
305 Cram has been doing the work, and doing a great job. It is hoped that Cram would  
306 apply for the position of Highway Chief, and the position of Crew Leader would be  
307 eliminated.

308

309 Victor Laberge, Chapter Chair of the Town Union, asked what would happen if there  
310 were no applicants from within the Town for this position, what happens to the Crew  
311 Leader position. Carpenter said it would go away, since it has not been budgeted for in  
312 the next fiscal year. Ramsay said she'd like to be able to move on this as is proposed  
313 and see what happens. Carpenter said they could always do a non-selection and there  
314 may be other options, but we were not going to fund for two positions. Laberge pointed  
315 out that by moving this person from the crew to work at a desk, you're making your work  
316 crew smaller and they have the same amount of work to be done. Carpenter said it was  
317 intended that some of the former duties of the Highway Chief would be divided up with  
318 the new Director of Operations, so there would be less desk work for the Chief.

319

320 Asermily moved to approve the change in the structure of the Highway Department to  
321 re-classify the Highway Division Chief as a union, working supervisor position, as  
322 recommended by the Personnel Committee. Nuovo seconded the motion. The motion  
323 carried with 4 in favor, 3 absent. **MOTION PASSED.**

324

## 325 **13. Approval of Check Warrants**

326

327 Asermily said she had reviewed the checks and all was in order, so she made the  
328 motion to approve total expenditures in the amount of \$4,446,561.53, consisting of  
329 \$4,355,183.16 for accounts payable, and \$91,378.37 for payroll, for the period  
330 November 15, 2016 through November 29, 2016. Asermily said that the amount was  
331 so high because the school portion of taxes were paid in this round of checks, as was  
332 the winter salt. Donahue seconded the motion. The motion carried with 4 in favor, 3  
333 absent. **MOTION PASSED.**

334

## 335 **14. Manager's Report**

336

337 Town Manager Ramsay reported that the American Legion had approved the request  
338 for funds for the annual New Year's Eve Fireworks, and is contributing \$2,750 which will

339 fully cover the costs. The American Legion has been supporting this event for many  
340 years.

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### 15. Board Members Concerns

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Asermily said that she would really like to see the water meter installation project accelerated to help out the staff. Ramsay said that they had shortened the projected installation time from 2 years to 6 months.

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Asermily also mentioned that Very Merry Middlebury would be kicking off this coming weekend and on December 3<sup>rd</sup> there would be a community gathering of love and hope, sponsored by the Middlebury area clergy. Also, on December 1<sup>st</sup>, there would be a public meeting at the Addison County Regional Planning Commission office on VTrans statewide On-road Bicycle Plan.

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Donahue said that everyone needs to make an effort to support the downtown merchants now, not just during construction, and urged everyone to get out to the Midnight Stroll on December 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 8:00. Ramsay said that for a small fee families can drop small children off at the Recreation Center for this event.

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### 16. Adjournment

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The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m. upon motion by Nuovo, seconded by Donahue, and approved with 4 in favor, 3 absent.

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The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, December 13, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Town Offices at 77 Main Street.

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Respectfully submitted,

Beth Dow

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