

1 **2019 TOWN MEETING | Minutes**

2 **MARCH 4, 2019 | 7:00PM | MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH SCHOOL, 73 CHARLES**  
3 **AVENUE**

4 Citing the warning to the legal voters of Middlebury, Moderator Gov. James Douglas called the meeting to  
5 order at 7:10pm. The Moderator introduced the members of the Selectboard: Lindsey Fuentes-George,  
6 Farhad Khan, Laura Asermily, Victor Nuovo, Nick Artim, Brian Carpenter and Heather Seeley, along with  
7 Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay.

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9 The Moderator requested permission for the following non-resident members of the Town Administration to  
10 speak when needed, throughout the meeting: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay, Assistant Town Manager  
11 Chris English, Library Director Dana Hart and Fire Chief David Shaw; he also asked permission for the  
12 President of Friends of Middlebury Hockey, Michael McAuliffe, to speak regarding Article 7.

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14 **There was NO OBJECTION.**

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16 **Article 1: To act upon the reports of the Town Officers.**

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18 **Catherine Nichols moved to accept the reports of the town officers; Jim Swift seconded.**

19  
20 In response to feedback from Town Meeting two years ago, the Moderator brought to the audience's  
21 attention that, besides the two floor mics, there are two handheld microphones that Justices of the Peace will  
22 make available during the meeting.

23  
24 Brian Carpenter, Chairman of the Board, mentioned that, responding to feedback from the last Town  
25 Meeting, the meeting has been moved back to MUHS, a more comfortable venue. Also the Board has  
26 streamlined the non-business portion of the agenda, to make more time for discussing business items  
27 including:

- 28 • Cross Street Bridge Fund Reserve
- 29 • Equipment Fund
- 30 • Budget

31  
32 Carpenter presented highlights from the past year:

- 33 • The Main Street and Merchant's Row Railroad Bridge replacement project is underway.
- 34 • The community participated in the development of designs for Triangle Park, Lazarus Park, the  
35 corner of Main Street and Printer's Alley and to make Merchant's Row a more pedestrian friendly  
36 and one-way street.
- 37 • The community was surveyed about options for a platform for Amtrak passenger service to start in  
38 2021-2022. The Board endorsed the location on Seymour Street, across from the former railroad  
39 station.
- 40 • In late 2018, the town received results from a study of its hydraulic water system that identified  
41 needed repairs.
- 42 • In 2019 the board will focus on developing long-term, sustainable funding strategies for the more  
43 than \$20 million in water projects identified in the study and other infrastructure improvements.

44  
45 Nick Artim presented the dedication of the 2019 Town Report to Jim Douglas for his 33 years as Moderator.  
46 A brief history of Jim's noteworthy accomplishments, experiences, and humble service to Middlebury and  
47 the State was given. The voters acknowledged and thanked Jim with a long standing ovation and plaque.

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49 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
50 **ARTICLE 1 ADOPTED**

53 Article 2: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote, pursuant to 24 VSA § 2804 (a), to  
54 authorize the Select Board to apply \$400,000 from the Cross Street Bridge Reserve Fund to offset  
55 increased spending for Capital Improvements in the FY20 General Fund Budget and stabilize the  
56 FY20 tax rate?

57  
58 Carpenter moved the adoption of Article 2; Seeley seconded.  
59

60 Carpenter gave an overview of the financing of the Cross Street Bridge and explained how this project was  
61 initially to be funded by an annual contribution from Middlebury College of \$600,000 and an estimated  
62 \$650,000 per year from the Local Option Tax (LOT). The first year the LOT was in effect receipts were on  
63 target at just over \$650,000, but they have increased to over \$1 million per year since. Carpenter noted  
64 multiple factors for the current surplus of \$2 million in the fund and highlighted:

- 65 • LOT receipts average \$929,345 per year, over the estimated \$650,000.
- 66 • Middlebury College continues its contribution of \$600,000 per year.
- 67 • Bond payments are decreasing.
- 68 • Initial projected bridge maintenance expenses are relatively minor.
- 69 • FY20 estimated revenues are \$1.6 million, compared to estimated expenses of \$1.2 million.

70  
71 Carpenter noted that the Select Board accepted the Infrastructure Committee's recommendation to formulate  
72 a long-term plan for infrastructure improvements and intends to recommend use of the Cross Street Bridge  
73 Reserve Fund surplus to implement the projects with less burden on the property tax.  
74

75 Seeley gave an overview of upcoming capital improvement projects planned for the coming year and those  
76 that can be planned for with the increased funding provided in FY20:

- 77 • Shard Villa Road river bank stabilization and paving.
- 78 • Seymour Street/Pulp Mill Bridge Road Sidewalk project in cooperation with VT Agency of  
79 Transportation, Town of Weybridge and Addison County Regional Planning Commission.
- 80 • Harold Curtis Park basketball court reconstructions in partnership with East Middlebury Fire  
81 District.
- 82 • Storm sewer improvements and rail platform building on Seymour Street.
- 83 • Cady Road reconstruction and culvert replacements.
- 84 • Intersection improvements for Court Street, Charles Avenue and Monroe Street.
- 85 • Rehabilitation of buildings at the old Wastewater Treatment Facility for much needed storage.
- 86 • Second phase of Exchange Street bike/pedestrian path.

87  
88 Seeley mentioned that the FY20 budget presented for voter approval is \$11,155,400. She explained that, if  
89 Article 2 is not passed, the amount to be raised by taxes is \$7,836,854, whereas, if Article 2 is passed, that  
90 amount will be lowered by \$400,000 and the tax rate will be reduced by \$0.0453. All numbers are  
91 dependent on the final grand list value after the re-appraisal is complete in April of this year.  
92

93 Dave Silberman asked the total cost for all the infrastructure projects to be completed in FY20 and if the  
94 proposed \$400,000 to be taken from the Cross Street Bridge Reserve Fund covers that expense. Seeley  
95 answered that the total expense for all the infrastructure projects would be much higher, but the \$400,000  
96 would cover the \$325,000 over and above the amount normally budgeted for infrastructure work. The  
97 additional \$75,000 would stabilize the tax rate.  
98

99 Silberman questioned using the Local Option Tax revenues, intended for funding the Cross Street Bridge  
100 project, for tax stabilization. Carpenter answered that Middlebury is fortunate to have the Local Option Tax  
101 as a source of funds, as it is paid by all shoppers, rather than just property tax payers, but, unlike other  
102 towns, we have designated those funds for a specific project. Other towns use their Local Option Tax funds  
103 to stabilize their tax rates. He indicated that we have an increase in expenses every year due to employee  
104 contracts, health insurance and inflation.  
105  
106

107 Elizabeth Oettinger asked if there is any concern with our aging water/sewer system. Carpenter  
108 answered that the Board has identified areas of concern and plans to bring a bond forward in the coming  
109 year for repairs to the system. The Board is determining the cost and how much of that will be user  
110 responsibility and how much will be deemed part of the Town's infrastructure maintenance costs.

111  
112 Seeley added the Infrastructure Committee, with Director of Planning Dan Werner, is working on a  
113 schedule of infrastructure needs and projected costs in order to keep on top of the Town's infrastructure  
114 maintenance.

115  
116 Annette Jack asked if there will be a surplus in the Cross Street Bridge Fund every year going forward.  
117 Carpenter answered that his hope is that we will continue to realize a surplus. Jack asked if the Board  
118 had considered other ways to use the surplus funds instead of tax stabilization if the savings to each  
119 property owner would be minimal. Carpenter indicated that, after much research, it was considered the  
120 most beneficial to the Town to use some of the surplus to stabilize property taxes. There are issues with  
121 Exchange Street's water system and dependability and other infrastructure improvements that we need  
122 to complete in order to bring new business to that area. The costs for those repairs cannot come from  
123 either the surplus cash or the annual budget; therefore the Board will come forward with a bond  
124 proposal. The intent would be to use surplus funds to cover the costs of the bond payments.

125  
126 Jack wondered if the Downtown Businesses have been considered for use of the surplus funds. She  
127 feels that they have been suffering greatly during the Railroad Bridge Project, and asked if the \$400,000  
128 surplus could be used to benefit them. Carpenter replied that a lot of money is being spent on  
129 Downtown, and those businesses will benefit when the Bridge Project is completed.

130  
131 Susan McGarry asked where she can find more complete and detailed information on current and  
132 planned projects. Seeley answered that all the information can be found on the Town's website in the  
133 Infrastructure Committee's tab. Seeley also mentioned that paper copies of the information listed on the  
134 Town's website from the Infrastructure Committee's packets are available upon request.

135  
136 RJ Adler asked what a Local Option Tax is, how the Town ended up with a surplus and how using a  
137 surplus from one tax is going to lower other taxes. Carpenter answered the LOT is a 1% sales tax,  
138 approved by the voters of the Town and administered by the State, which is applied to purchases that are  
139 already taxable. LOT is collected from everyone shopping in Middlebury, including tourists and others  
140 who live outside of Town, not only property owners. The Town has been successful in keeping the  
141 property tax rate level for a number of years due to approval by the voters to use surpluses from the  
142 General Fund and some of the Cross Street Bridge Fund surplus last year. This year the Board would  
143 like to aggressively tackle some of the Town's infrastructure needs, such as the Sidewalk Project on  
144 Exchange Street. The funds for this cannot come from a grant at this time, but if the Town puts some of  
145 its own money into the design process for a project, then Middlebury would be a strong competitor for a  
146 grant. To receive grant funds the design and plans for a project have to be ready.

147  
148 Ross Conrad asked the Board to share any potential downsides from using the Cross Street Bridge  
149 Reserve Fund for tax stabilization and infrastructure improvements. Carpenter answered that he  
150 struggles to find a real downside to using these funds for the proposed purposes. Middlebury is a Shire  
151 town and has expenses related to serving the entire area, such as paying for a Recreation Center that  
152 residents from the outlying towns use, and hosting several non-profit tax exempt properties for the  
153 benefit of county residents.

154  
155 Victoria Dewind suggested using \$400,000 from a \$2 million surplus leaves a generous cushion of \$1.6  
156 million. Dewind supports the use of more these funds instead of issuing bonds which will cost  
157 Middlebury more from the interest accrued.

158  
159 Alison Nihart asked if the Board expects to come back to the voters each year with a similar request;  
160 alternatively, couldn't the voters choose to have the tax revenues go directly into the general fund?

161 Adam Franco asked if, going forward, there's an advantage to keeping the LOT funds separate or if it  
162 would be simpler to place them in the general fund. Carpenter responded that the Board's focus is to  
163 come up with a comprehensive plan before bringing any option to the voters.  
164

165 Tim Bird asked what the Town's confidence level is that the revenues from the LOT will continue to  
166 cover the expenses for the Cross Street Bridge bond and future maintenance. Carpenter answered that,  
167 through the 2007-2009 recession, the revenue from the LOT continued to grow. It is tough to predict,  
168 but Carpenter is confident that, as more businesses are brought to town and downtown gets back to full  
169 operation, it would take a major recession to make the revenue drop.  
170

171 Roger Desautels remembered when the 1% LOT was proposed in order to fund the Cross Street Bridge  
172 construction, pay for the bond and be eliminated on completion of the bond. Can the surplus pay the  
173 bond early and then we can eliminate the tax? Desautels believes that the tax has a negative effect on  
174 businesses in town and knows of many people who do not shop in Middlebury any longer because of it.  
175 Carpenter answered that he is not a proponent of eliminating the tax because the income generated is not  
176 reliant on just property owners in Middlebury. Ramsay responded that there is no option to pay off the  
177 bond early.  
178

179 John Freidin commented that only \$75,000 of the \$400,000 requested was going to be used to stabilize  
180 the tax rate, which was approximately \$10 per year for a residence assessed at \$200,000. As this was not  
181 noticeable to the average taxpayer, Freidin thought the money should be saved for larger future projects.  
182

183 **Freidin moved to amend Article 2 to approve the use of \$325,000, instead of \$400,000; Silberman**  
184 **seconded.**

185  
186 Carpenter reiterated that the budget for capital improvements is \$1,072,000, of which \$325,000 is  
187 proposed just to offset the increase in the budget. The town will have other increased expenses, one of  
188 which is the new staff position at Ilsley Library.  
189

190 Dan Brown said that, as a business owner in Middlebury, he is always in favor of reducing property  
191 taxes. Brown owns the Swift House Inn and over the last fourteen years has seen his taxes rise from  
192 \$38,000 to over \$50,000 a year. Spiking taxes could put him out of business and he thinks that the Town  
193 should do whatever is possible to keep property taxes from going up.  
194

195 **Marilyn Barbato moved to close debate on the amendment to Article 2; Swift seconded.**  
196 **Amendment to Article 2 failed by voice vote.**

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198 **Linda Horn moved to close debate on Article 2; Neil Gruber seconded the motion.**  
199 **Motion passed by voice vote.**

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201 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
202 **ARTICLE 2 ADOPTED**  
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204 **Article 3: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury authorize the Selectboard, pursuant to 24**  
205 **V.S.A. §1786a(b), to replace Town Vehicles and Equipment in accordance with the schedule**  
206 **hereinafter set forth and to finance the purchase of same by borrowing funds in a total amount not**  
207 **to exceed \$133,470 over a term not to exceed five (5) years?**  
208

209 **Ann Webster moved the adoption of Article 3; Carpenter seconded.**  
210

211 Seeley explained that the funds requested are to purchase one police cruiser, one dump truck/snow plow  
212 and related equipment, and one pick-up truck for use by the Recreation Department. She gave an  
213 overview of the replacement schedule for vehicles and equipment for the town, along with figures  
214 indicating the initial costs, replacement values and ten-year averages of the Rolling Stock Equipment  
215 Fund of vehicles and equipment broken down by department. Some monies needed will be offset from

216 using Water and Wastewater Reserves of \$48,714 and the Public Works Equipment Replacement Fund  
217 of \$127,816.

218  
219 Steve Maier asked if electric or hybrid vehicles had been considered for the purchase of either the pick-  
220 up truck or the cruiser. Seeley answered that Chief Hanley conducted an analysis of what was available  
221 at the time recommendations were being put together. With the cruiser use being 24/7 the Town is not  
222 able to rely on electric/hybrid, as there is no down time to charge the vehicle. There is not sufficient  
223 information available to understand how an electric or hybrid vehicle would handle all the equipment  
224 Middlebury police need in their cars. Seeley mentioned that the request is just for the money for  
225 replacement of vehicles. All are welcome to come to the meeting for discussion on specifics if Article 3  
226 is adopted.

227  
228 Conrad asked why the Town is going to a 7-year replacement cycle for the dump truck when the current  
229 vehicle has served the Town for 14 years. Seeley replied that we invested a large amount of money this  
230 year in repairs and maintenance on the older fleet of vehicles because they have been overextended in  
231 their use. We used to be on a 7-year replacement schedule and the Town would like to get back to that.

232  
233 Dewind observed that when all the equipment fund line items in the General Fund budget are added up,  
234 it's over \$500,000, well over the \$133,470 to be borrowed requested in Article 2. Ramsay explained  
235 there are two different components of the Equipment Fund budget, maintenance and replacement of  
236 equipment, and that the Town is only borrowing what it needs after paying debt service and maintenance  
237 expenses.

238  
239 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
240 **ARTICLE 3 ADOPTED**

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242 **Article 4: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote to adopt the proposed budget for the**  
243 **Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) in the amount of \$11,155,400 with a portion thereof**  
244 **in the amount of \$7,836,854 to be raised by taxes?**

245  
246 **Carpenter moved Article 4 with the following language, based on the approval of Article 2: “in the**  
247 **amount of \$7,436,854 to be raised by taxes”;** Seeley seconded.

248  
249 Ramsay explained that, with the approval of Article 2 the Board's FY20 Budget proposes a 2.2%  
250 increase in property tax revenue. She noted that the Police and Public Works make up over 50% of the  
251 budget. Ramsay showed that 67% of General Fund revenue comes from property taxes. Major expense  
252 drivers are increased wages, health care, insurance and two new staff positions. Other factors include  
253 capital improvements, equipment repair, and vehicle replacement. Ramsay reported on non-profit  
254 agencies and the funds included in the Town budget. If approved, the budget will increase the tax rate by  
255 \$.0215 to \$1.0051.

256  
257 Silberman asked if there was any research to see if the budget allocated to the Police Department is  
258 comparable for a community our size. Chief Hanley responded that our number of officers and  
259 administrative staff is smaller than towns of comparable size, which makes it most difficult when we  
260 have officers out with injuries.

261  
262 Barbato asked what's included in the overtime budget at over \$160,000. Chief Hanley answered that  
263 there are currently three officers out due to injuries, whose shifts must be covered by other officers  
264 because the department is open and on call 24/7. In the event of a vacancy it takes about one year to fill  
265 the position.

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267 Desautels asked how much health insurance premium is paid for with tax dollars. Ramsay replied that it  
268 is \$604,000.

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Dewind suggested we should research installing solar panels and investigating ways to be more energy efficient. She inquired why interest income has been over \$100,000 for the last two years. Ramsay indicated the report includes interest on several funds, which has not been allocated yet, such as for water and sewer.

Bobbi Loney mentioned that she was glad to see another Librarian being hired, but asked why not another Police Officer when there is short staffing. Chief Hanley answered that we are conservative. He indicated Police need more clerical help. They cannot use body cameras because they need someone to manage the data. Police staff are doing the best with what they have.

Tim Wright asked about the pie graph and debt servicing and if there are any plans to reduce that amount. Ramsay answered that those numbers indicated the projected life of payments of the bonds purchased for the Cross Street Bridge and that we cannot pre-pay those.

Kathy Wheatly asked if debt service will continue to go up. Kathleen Ramsay answered that the number should go down, unless the Town issues more bonds, which is likely.

Oettinger asked the rate we pay for bonds. Ramsay replied all towns pay the same rate, which is currently about 3%.

**MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
**ARTICLE 4 ADOPTED AS PRESENTED**

**Article 5: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote to collect taxes on real property for fiscal year 2019/2020 in TWO equal installments due in the Treasurer’s Office on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October 2019 and the 15<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020?**

**Seeley moved the adoption of Article 5; Asermily seconded.**

Alice Eckles asked why we want this change to the tax payment schedule, concerned that it will be more difficult for tax payers. Ramsay answered that it is connected to the reappraisal being conducted. This schedule will give more time for grievances. The values will be published in June and the grand list finalized in August. Ramsay mentioned that the normal tax bill schedule with the reappraisal is not doable this year. If there is difficulty paying the two installments, a payment plan can be set up with the Treasurer’s Office. Eckles asked if this is just for this year. Ramsay answered that the voters set the tax due dates each year at Town Meeting and that this change is being requested for this one year.

**MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
**ARTICLE 5 ADOPTED**

**Article 6: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote, pursuant to 32 V.S.A. §1674, to set the penalty charged by the collector of delinquent taxes for delinquent tax payments as follows: no penalty on any balance paid by the due date for the final installment; a 1% penalty on any balance not paid by the due date for the final installment and an additional 7% penalty on any balance not paid within 10 days of the due date of the final installment? Interest will continue to be charged on each installment not paid by the due date at the rates previously approved by the Town at the March 2016 Town Meeting, i.e., 1% per month or fraction thereof for the first three months, and thereafter 1.5% per month for each month or fraction thereof?**

**Kahn moved the adoption of Article 6; Carpenter seconded.**

**MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
**ARTICLE 6 ADOPTED**

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**Article 7: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury authorize the Selectboard, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §1786a(b), to borrow funds to finance improvements to the Memorial Sports Center in an amount not to exceed 100,000 to be financed over a period not to exceed five (5) years?**

**Seeley moved to adopt the following alternative motion, "Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury authorize the Selectboard to borrow a sum not to exceed \$100,000, payable over an initial term of five years, subject to re-funding at maturity, for the purpose of financing improvements to the Memorial Sports Center?" Carpenter seconded.**

McAuliffe, President of Friends of Middlebury Hockey, explained what borrowing \$100,000 from National Bank of Middlebury could do for the center. He noted that the loan would only be paid back by members of Friends of Middlebury Hockey and not by the Town. Improvements to the building would be accessible public restrooms, an elevator, concession area improvements, a meeting room and an on-site manager's office.

Adler supports the improvement request and asked if there will be future improvements made to the roof to support solar panels. McAuliffe answered that the Town owns the building and that decision would be up to the Town when the roof needs to be replaced. Ramsay indicated the roof would need to be replaced soon. Adler replied that he would love to see solar panels installed.

Ann Lafiandra asked if it would be beneficial to enable use of the building for more activities when hockey season is over. McAuliffe answered that the building does host graduation and other events. The improvements could bring new revenue to the town; he's looking to bring a new football team in, for example.

Asermily mentioned that she would like to see access to the rest rooms, even if there are no events scheduled. McAuliffe answered that he will discuss this with Ramsay.

Poppy Rees asked if there is going to be more skating available to lower income families. McAuliffe answered that he is working with groups to bring back public skating sessions and would be happy to discuss this further with Rees.

Tony Niemo noted that there are options for people to get scholarships for skating.

Frank Winkler asked if the loan would be with National Bank of Middlebury and what the rate would be. McAuliffe answered the loan would be with the National Bank and the rate would be Prime plus .25%, equaling 3.25% or 3.5%, which is comparable to a Municipal Bond rate.

Silberman asked what the difference is in the text of the Article compared to the original Article. Ramsay answered that there's a need to extend the loan, so it's been clarified to provide for refinancing at the end of the five year term.

Asermily asked if there has been consideration of other technologies for making the ice, since the addition of an elevator is going to spike the electric bill, and prolonged use of the building for other events is going to add to the electric bill. McAuliffe replied that no other research has been done on other technologies.

Swift mentioned that there have been improvements in the building to save on electricity.

**Horn moved to call the question. Adler seconded.**  
**Motion to call the question passed by voice vote.**

**MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**  
**ARTICLE 7 ADOPTED AS PRESENTED**

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**Article 8: To transact other business proper to be done.**

Senator Ruth Hardy honored Foster Brothers Farm, recipients of the 2019 Innovative Dairy Farm of the Year award. Deeply rooted in the Middlebury community, Foster Brothers Farm is the first dairy farm in New England to receive this award. Tricia & Nicole Foster came forward to accept the honor and award given for sustainable farm practices. The audience offered a rousing round of applause. Hardy also thanked Moderator Douglas for his service.

The following candidates introduced themselves: for Moderator, Susan Shashok; for Selectboard, Nick Artim, Victor Nuovo and Heather Seeley; for ACSD Board, Betty Kafumbe, James Malcolm, Lorraine Morse, Steve Orzech and Ryan Torres; for Library Board, Catherine Nichols.

The Moderator then invited discussion on the Articles on the Australian ballot the following day.

**Article 12: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury advise and encourage the Selectboard to enact an ordinance that no retail establishment shall provide a Single-Use Carry Out Plastic bag, defined as a bag with a thickness of less than 4 mils, to a customer at the check stand, cash register, point of sale or other point of departure for the purpose of transporting food or merchandise out of the establishment?**

Amelia Miller described the benefits a plastic bag ban could provide, based on the documented negative effects caused by their use. A ban could help with pollution, alleviate the fatal consequences to animals and prevent the adverse effects on human health. She listed other counties, states, cities and towns that have banned single-use plastic bags. She also mentioned that this issue has been brought to the State for approval, but the State wants to see the towns taking the lead.

Elizabeth Miska said that she saw the terrible effects of these bags when she worked with sea turtles.

Jutta Miska mentioned that reusable bags can carry more items and that we should be good role models and leave this world a cleaner place; she recommended we re-use paper bags.

Sam Guarnaccia noted that he had been to India, which has banned these bags, and saw first-hand all the effects of the use of these bags contaminating the environment. He said the pictures shown on Amelia's slides is what the country looked like and there is no choice but to support this.

Asermily reminded everyone that free re-usable bags would be available tomorrow outside the polls. She added that there is a Town Meeting Poll for people to complete, and noted that last year, this article was on that poll. There will also be a legislative poll.

Sas Carey supported the ban and showed a Tupperware container that she has had since the 60's. She wanted to raise awareness for single-use plastic.

Oettinger mentioned that there are time constraints and suggested ending this discussion.

Steve Gross mentioned that this is a no brainer and a terrific presentation and worthy cause. He said that we need to make this a State law.

**Article 11: Shall the Voters of the Town of Middlebury appropriate \$3,000 to Habitat for Humanity of Addison County to support the provision of affordable housing in Addison County?**

Margaret Carothers spoke as a founding member of Habitat for Humanity. She mentioned how many houses she has helped build and that the houses are not free. The mortgages are for only the cost of construction, with no interest charged. She appreciates all the support and volunteers who have given their service.



436 Article 9: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury advise the Selectboard to send a letter to our  
437 State Representatives, Senators, Speaker of the Vermont House, the President Pro Tempore of the  
438 Vermont Senate and the Governor of Vermont in support of the 350VT Climate Solutions  
439 Resolution which urges the State of Vermont to:

- 440 a. Halt any new or expanded fossil fuel infrastructure including, but not limited to transmission  
441 pipelines and electrical plants,  
442 b. Adhere to the State of Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan to achieve 90% renewable energy  
443 by 2050 for all people in Vermont, with firm interim deadlines,  
444 c. Ensure, with no harm to marginalized groups or rural communities?  
445

446 Article 10: Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury advise the Selectboard to support the  
447 350VT Climate Solution Resolution by committing to efforts such as, but not limited to:

- 448 a. Weatherizing town buildings and schools and installing rooftop solar panels on town and  
449 school buildings,  
450 b. Taking initiatives to reduce overall energy use while committing to improving the quality of  
451 life for residents,  
452 c. Encourage landowners, farmers, and other municipalities to implement practices that build  
453 the soil carbon sponge to cool the planet and mitigate flooding and drought,  
454 d. Actively look for opportunities to request or apply for support from the State to implement the  
455 above initiatives?  
456

457 Jack Mayer offered reasons to support Articles 9 & 10 with specific experiences that he has had in his  
458 profession as a doctor. He spoke of the first case that he saw of Lyme disease, when it was not prevalent in  
459 Vermont, and how it is now rampant. He believes that this is all due to climate change and human impact  
460 on the environment. He asks that legislators do what they can to reverse climate change.  
461

462 Alec Fleischer commented that we should halt fossil fuel infrastructure and move toward more renewable  
463 energy following 38 other Vermont towns that have passed the 350VT Climate Solutions Resolution.  
464

465 Liv Herdman commented that passing Articles 9 & 10 would be a no cost way of reducing our budget for  
466 infrastructure.  
467

468 Sullivan "Van" Barth spoke on behalf of the Middlebury Energy Committee in support of Articles 9 & 10 as  
469 they are in alignment with the Energy Committee's mission.  
470

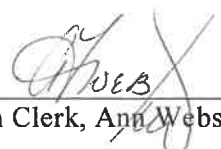
471 Not in relation to Articles 9 & 10, but George Klohck remembered Richard Goodro for his service as Town  
472 Clerk of Middlebury for 23 years and informed all present that Dick had passed away in Ormond Beach,  
473 Florida on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.  
474

475 Margaret Klohck moved to adjourn; Seconded by Albert Perry.  
476

477 MOTION PASSED BY VOICE VOTE  
478

479 Meeting adjourned at 9:50pm.  
480 Respectfully submitted,  
481 Danielle M D Woodbury, Assistant Town Clerk  
482

483  
484  
485   
Moderator, Gov. James Douglas

  
Town Clerk, Ann Webster

