

**Excerpt from February 28, 2018
Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

**8. Police Chief Tom Hanley Regarding Conversion from Propane to Natural Gas
as the Fuel Supply for the Police Departments Heating, Ventilation &
Air Conditioning (HVAC) System.**

Police Chief Tom Hanley joined the Board to discuss the conversion to natural gas at the Police Department. He said at the time the building was constructed, the system was designed for natural gas and had to be converted to use propane. He said now that natural gas is available; the process would be reversed so that natural gas could be used. He said he ran a cost estimate and it would cost \$2,100 to have Vermont Heating and Ventilating (VHV) convert the HVAC system back to natural gas, there's no cost to connect to the Vermont Gas line, and we could save an estimated \$3,700 in fuel costs per year. He said there would still be a need for them to maintain propane tanks for the emergency generator since natural gas does not have the pressure to kick the generator over. Hanley said also, that as an emergency service provider, he likes to have an alternate source of fuel to run the building, and they would retain the parts needed to convert back to propane if needed in the event of an emergency and they lost use of natural gas.

Artim said when he had converted to natural gas at his home, Vermont Gas had done an energy audit, and he wondered if they offered that to the Police as well. Hanley said they had and they were going to try and schedule one, but he wasn't sure when it would happen.

There was discussion over the Vermont Gas energy audit and how it compares to the Energy Audit proposed by the Energy Committee. Asermily asked if perhaps Vermont Gas would cover the cost of the conversion, in light of the recent discussion over compensation to the Town for easements. Hanley said the conversion is done by the HVAC contractor and not Vermont Gas. Seeley wondered if it would make sense to hold off converting to natural gas, since the Chief had mentioned at an earlier Infrastructure Committee that the system may be reaching the end of its life cycle. Hanley said the equipment has a 15 year life-cycle, but it's been well maintained so we should get 20-25 years from it.

Asermily says she understands there would be savings, but if our goal is to have a net-zero police station, she isn't sure how this would factor into that if we decide to change systems. Artim said since this is a newer building that's better insulated than some of our other buildings, it makes sense to do this now as a "next step" and makes good value. Hanley said again this is an immediate savings and not one that takes years before you see it. Carpenter said he thinks it's the smart thing to do and if we can save money in the next year we should support the Chief in his efforts to be efficient.

Nuovo made the motion to authorize Chief Hanley to proceed with plans to convert the Middlebury Police Station facility from propane to natural gas. Khan seconded the motion.

There was further discussion on whether to wait until the energy audit was completed.

The motion carried with 6 in favor, 1 abstention (Asermily). **MOTION PASSED.**