

**TOWN OF MIDDLESEX  
2004 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
MARCH 2, 2004  
MINUTES**

**Selectboard Members Present:**

**Peter Hood, Chair  
Mary Alexander  
William Callnan  
Walter Kelley  
Mary Just Skinner**

**Town Clerk:  
June Lakin**

**Moderator:  
Peter Hood**

State Representative, Tony Klein spoke briefly to the town residents.  
Susan Clark, Chair of the Solutions Committee, spoke briefly reminding everyone about the new Town of Middlesex website.  
Sandra Levine, Chair of the Planning Commission, spoke briefly on the progress of the Planning Commission.

Peter Hood recognized Walter Kelley for his years of service to the Town of Middlesex, Mr. Kelley received a standing ovation.

Bob Benzing was also recognized for his years of service as well as all other town officials and volunteers.

Peter Hood called the 2004 Annual Town Meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

**ARTICLE 1: To elect a Moderator for the ensuing year.**

Peter Hood was nominated for Moderator. Abe Lewis seconded.  
Abe Lewis nominated Bill Callnan for Moderator. Betty Crowell seconded.  
Vote was taken. By show of hands, Peter Hood was elected Moderator for the ensuing year.

**ARTICLE 2: To elect a Grand Juror and Town Agent for the ensuing year.**

Bill Callnan nominated Larry Mandell for Town Agent/Grand Juror. Liz Fortman seconded.  
Voice vote was taken. Larry Mandell was elected.

**ARTICLE 3: To elect all necessary officers for the ensuing year. (To be voted by Australian Ballot)**

<b>Town Clerk</b>	<b>1 year term</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>1 year term</b>
<b>Trustee of Public Funds</b>	<b>1 year term</b>
<b>Selectperson</b>	<b>3 year term</b>

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<b>Selectperson</b>	<b>2 year term</b>
<b>Budget Committee Member</b>	<b>3 year term</b>
<b>Budget Committee Member</b>	<b>2 year term</b>
<b>Auditor</b>	<b>3 year term</b>
<b>Lister</b>	<b>3 year term</b>
<b>Lister</b>	<b>2 year term</b>
<b>Lister</b>	<b>1 year term</b>
<b>Cemetery Commissioner</b>	<b>3 year term</b>
<b>Cemetery Commissioner</b>	<b>2 year term</b>
<b>Cemetery Commissioner</b>	<b>1 year term</b>
<b>Delinquent Tax Collector</b>	<b>1 year term</b>
<b>Planning Commissioner</b>	<b>3 year term</b>
<b>Planning Commissioner</b>	<b>3 year term</b>

Sonny Knapp moved to pass over Article 3, Bill Callnan seconded. Motion carried. Article 3 was passed over.

**ARTICLE 4: To receive and act upon the reports of the Town Officers.**

Kim Cheney moved to approve the Report of the Officers. Dave Shepard seconded. Motion carried. Reports were approved.

**ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote a discount of 1.5% or a lesser amount on real taxes if paid in full within 30 days of issuance of the tax bill. (32 VSA Sec. 4773)**

Andy Leader moved to approve Article 5. Abe Lewis seconded. Motion carried. Article 5 was approved.

**ARTICLE 6: To see if Town will continue to have all taxes paid to the Treasurer, set the date as November 20, 2004 and charge interest at the rate of .5% per month or fraction thereof on overdue taxes from the due date of the tax. (32 VSA Sec. 4773)**

Bill Callnan moved to approve Article 6 as written. Motion was seconded. Discussion ensued.

Clarification of interest and penalties was given. Jepson Wulff asked if it was simple interest or compounded. Response was simple interest.

Dave Shepard asked if the Selectboard had discussed the possibility of changing the payment of property taxes to an installment system. Peter responded that the board had discussed this, but that for this year it would remain the same. He also stated that they would be looking at this issue in the future.

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Vote was taken. Article 6 passed as written.

**ARTICLE 7: To vote a budget to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Town and authorize the Selectboard to set a tax rate sufficient to provide the same. (THIS ARTICLE WILL BE CONSIDERED AS A SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS AT 5:15 PM)**

Bill Callnan moved to approve the Town Budget of \$691,591. Leroy Carlson seconded.

Discussion ensued.

Peter reminded everyone that the town was in the midst of an 18 month budget and explained how the Selectboard arrived at the proposed 2004-2005 budget. This was a 2 part process. The board took the most recent *12 month expenditures*, (Jan. 1, 2003-Dec. 31, 2003) and then went back and compared to the last *full 12 month approved budget*. (Jan. 1, 2002 – Dec. 31, 2002) As a result the budget is a 10% increase above the last *full 12 month approved town budget*, however, it is almost level to the *expenditures of the last 12 months*.

Vote was taken. Budget passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 8: Shall the Town of Middlesex authorize the sum of \$25,000 to establish a Building Fund.**

This was a Special Article submitted by the Selectboard.

Susan Clark moved to approve Article 8 as written. Mary Alexander seconded.

Bill Callnan explained that the town buildings are in need of some work and that the Selectboard felt that it was time to do some planning in regards to these buildings. The Town Shed is in need of some major repairs due to new State Regulations, the Town Clerk's office is having major water leakage problems in the vault, and the Fire Station Building needs to be addressed. This fund would be set up as a starter to this project. Studies are needed to establish the best direction the town should take in this area. Funds would be used for these studies, and possibly some repairs. Peter added that this would not mean the town would be spending this money, but they are raising this money, putting it away in a separate account to fund these expenses that the Selectboard know are coming. So that when those expenses come, this would be an offset to these expenses so that the board will not have to raise as much in taxes in one year, or have to go out and borrow all the money. This is a small start to this fund.

Mary Skinner directed the voters attention to the Selectboard report on page 9.

Heather Furman asked if the expenditure of the fund would be at the discretion of the Selectboard or would there be another way of informing the voters how the money would be expended. Peter responded that it would be at the discretion of the Selectboard,

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however, if there were to be any major renovations to any of the buildings, it would come before the voters in the budget, or as a Special Article. There would be many opportunities in the planning process for input as to how this money is spent. George Fox stated that he felt if the town was going to build a new fire department/town hall, that this would be an added expense. Peter clarified that this money was not for a new building design, but a study of what is needed for our town buildings. What are some feasible solutions. Jepson Wulff asked who would manage that process, Peter responded that the Selectboard would manage this. The Selectboard will hire someone for this study, they have a bid from Black River Design, but other bids may be looked at. Cost comparisons will be done as to these suggested solutions.

Vote was taken. Article 8 was passed. A no was heard in the house.

### **ARTICLE 9: Shall the town of Middlesex appropriate the sum of \$5,000 for the Town Conservation Fund to be used to fund land conservation and other conservation projects in Middlesex. (BY PETITION)**

Susan Clark moved to approve this Article. Heather Furman seconded. Bill Rossmassler, Chair of the Conservation Commission spoke to this Article. (See attached for explanation of Conservation Fund.

Leroy Carlson moved to call question and asked for the Conservation Commission provide a written report for next year's Town Report on this issue. Question was seconded. Motion carried to Call Question. Article 9 was voted. Article 9 passed. Several "No's" were heard in the house.

### **ARTICLE 10: Shall the Town of Middlesex appropriate the sum of \$9,245 for the support of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. (BY PETITION)**

Paul Harrington moved to approve Article 10. Kim Cheney seconded.

Mary Neville Hood, a Representative on the Board of Trustees for the Kellogg-Hubbard Library explained that the amount requested, was determined by the number of Middlesex "users" of the library. She stated that 576 Middlesex Residents held cards at the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, and that last year 21,973 items were "checked out" of the library.

A brief discussion supporting the BookMobile in Middlesex was heard.

Charles Brett asked about the use of the lawn at the library. Mary Hood stated that she would check into this for him.

Shawn Field moved to call question. Motion was seconded. Vote taken, Question was called. Vote was taken on the Article. Article 10 passed.

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**ARTICLE 11: Shall the Town of Middlesex authorize expenditures of \$800 for student scholarships to the 2004 Community Connections Summer Camp? (BY PETITION)**

Colleen Austin moved to approve Article 11. Deb Wolf seconded.

John Puleio, Site Coordinator for Community Connections, based at the Rumney School. John explained that Community Connections is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3 year Federal Grant. The \$800 would be put toward scholarships for kids to go to summer camp free of charge. The weekly cost is \$100 per child. As the grant is ending, the Community Connections are looking for alternate ways of funding. These scholarships would be provided to income sensitive families. The rate was arrived by taking the percentage of free and reduced lunches at school and the participation for the last 2 summers.

Deb Wolf reported that the Rumney Community Connections is one of 9 sites and that because they have been frugal with their funds, they are able to offer a 4<sup>th</sup> year. She stated that they are trying to become licensed at each of the 9 elementary schools and that would make them eligible for state subsidies. Funding is being requested of 6 towns.

Charles Brett asked if that in the future, if all these organizations that request funding from the town could do a matching grant type of request so that they would be getting revenue without constantly raising the tax base.

Vote on the Article was taken. Article 11 was passed.

**ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town of Middlesex appropriate the sum of \$150,000 to the Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department for the purchase of a pumped fire truck and associated equipment. (BY PETITION)**

Sonny Knapp moved to approve Article 12. Karen DuPont seconded.

President, Rob Laclair and Fire Chief Mark Tillinghast spoke to this Article.

Rob explained that the President of the Fire Department manages the business end of things and the Fire Chief managed the fire fighting and emergency medical technician end of things. Rob stated that the current engine the fire department is using is a 1977 engine. The pump on it has a huge leak and the cost of replacement is around \$18,000.

Mark explained that the funding requested is for a brand new fire pumper. The truck the fire department has in mind has a Freightliner chassis, a 300 hp Mercedes Diesel engine, 2000 gallon tank, a 1200 gallon per minute pump, and aluminum and stainless piping. This truck would be anticipated to last for another 20-30 years.

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Rob stated that the fire department does not plan to take the current truck out of service. They will move it to the other side of town and use it for a tanker.

Would the funding be paid all in one year, or would the town do a loan was a question brought before the voters. Peter responded that the town would take out a note. A ten year period was discussed.

Kim Cheney moved to amend the motion if approved to authorize the Selectboard to take out a note for \$150,000 for up to 10 years. Ruth Duffy seconded.

Dale Klein moved to call question. Motion seconded, voted, and carried.

Vote on the amendment was taken. The amendment passed unanimously.

Vote on the amended Article was taken. Article 12 passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will appropriate a sum not to exceed \$970 to support the following organizations. (BY REQUEST)**

Green Up Vermont	\$100
Vermont Center for Independent Living	\$195
Washington County Youth Ser. Bureau	\$175
Onion River Arts Council	\$200
Project Graduation	\$200
CV State Police Community Advisory Brd.	\$100

Sandra Levine moved to approve Article 13. Sarah Seidman seconded.

Peter Hood reported that there had been an error in this Article. Central Vermont Community Action Council had submitted their request on time and it was mistakenly left off the warning.

Motion was made to amend the Article to include CVCAC, bringing the total for this Article to \$1170. Mary Alexander seconded. Vote on the amendment passed.

Vote was taken on the amended Article. Article passed.

**ARTICLE 14: Shall the Town of Middlesex authorize expenditures for the following organizations. (BY COMBINED PETITION)**

<b>People's Health &amp; Wellness Clinic</b>	<b>\$ 500</b>
<b>Central Vt. Crime Stoppers</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Central Vt. Home Health &amp; Hospice</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Green Mountain Transit Agency</b>	<b>500</b>

Battered Women's Services and Shelter	500
Retired Senior and Volunteer Program	500

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Washington County Diversion Program	300
Central Vt. Council on Aging	825
Central Vt. Community Land Trust	500
Good Beginnings of Central Vt.	500
The Family Center of Washington County	<u>500</u>
	\$5,925

Shawn Legendre moved to approve Article 14. Mary Hood seconded.

Julie Wilson & Kelly Ault spoke on behalf of Good Beginnings.

Dale Klein moved to call question. Second was heard. Vote to call question passed.

Vote on Article 14. Article 14 passed. No(s) were heard in the house.

**ARTICLE 15:A Resolution asking Shall the residents of Middlesex:**

- 1 Call upon our elected officials, including Vermont legislators, Congressional representatives and U.S. senators, to support the mandatory labeling by manufacturers and processors of all genetically engineered food and seeds, as well as a moratorium on the further growing of GE crops until there is credible and independent scientific evidence that these products are not harmful to our health, the environment, and the survival of family farms, and**
  - 2. Declare our support for legislation at the state and federal levels that will shift all liability from farmers to the commercial developers of GE technology for any damages resulting from the growing of GE crops, and**
  - 3.Declare our opposition to the planting of genetically engineered seeds in the Town, and resolve to actively discourage the planting of GE seeds, as a step toward making Vermont a GE-free planting zone.**
- (BY PETITION)**

Martin Kemple moved to approve Article 15. Kelly Sullivan seconded.

After much discussion, the motion to call question made and seconded. Vote to call question passed.

Vote on Article 15 was taken. Article 15 passed. No(s) were heard in the house.

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**ARTICLE 16:To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.**

Sarah Seidman spoke on behalf of the Middlesex Historical Society.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Minutes of the 2004 Annual Town Meeting as approved by the Middlesex Selectboard at their regularly scheduled meeting of March 9, 2004.

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Peter Hood, Chair

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Walter Kelley

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Mary Alexander

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Mary Just Skinner

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William Callnan

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June Lakin, Town Clerk

**TOWN OF MIDDLESEX  
2004 ANNUAL MEETING BALLOT RESULTS**

Town Clerk:	June Lakin	437
Treasurer:	June Lakin	427
Trustee of Public Funds:	June Lakin	425
Selectboard (3 yr)	Mary Just Skinner	268
	Lowell Smith	186
Selectboard (2 yr)	Mary Alexander	425
Budget Committee	Abe Lewis	409
Auditor	Helen Weed	403
Lister (3 yr)	Duncan Nichols	392
Lister (2 yr)	Dick Alderman	412
Lister (1 yr)	Karen Greenwood	396
Delinquent Tax Collector:	Allen Alexander	406
Planning Commission (3 yr)	Sandra Levine	396 }

Planning Commission (3 yr)      Lowell Smith      } 2 separate positions  
369 }

**MIDDLESEX SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**2004 BALLOT RESULTS**

School Director (3 yr)      Chris McVeigh      422  
School Director (2 yr)      Charles Merriman      406  
U32 School Director (3yr)      Rob LaClair      404  
School Budget      Yes: 335      No: 134  
Reserve Fund      Yes: 361      No: 96  
Borrow in anticipation of taxes      Yes: 356      No: 105

**PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY**

**2004 BALLOT RESULTS**

Republican:      Bush      93

Democrat:

Clark      8  
Dean      240  
Kerry      73  
Kucinich      31  
Larouche      1  
Edwards (write ins)      21