

**Middlesex Town Meeting Solutions Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 7, 2009**

Present: Susan Clark, Ron Krauth, Tim Murphy, Chris Reilly, Lauri Scharf, Dave Shepard, Barb Whitchurch, Greg Whitchurch

Meeting called to order at 7:16 pm.

**1. Town Meeting Feedback**

This year there were 60 respondents to the questionnaire distributed at Town Meeting, many more than usual.

Greg suggested having a parabolic microphone for next year as it could help people speaking be heard without requiring them to speak directly into a microphone.

The budget wall charts may not be necessary next year. It would be good to have more of the handouts with budget information for those who are standing in the back.

**Childcare:**

Childcare was very popular with 30 children taking part. There were three adults, one for each group of children, and 12 teenagers helping out. Everyone paid the suggested donation such that a small amount of money went to Community Connections whereas in previous years Community Connections lost some money. It may be necessary to make the availability of the subsidy clearer next year for those who might find it difficult to pay the whole fee. The Selectboard could also be approached to see if the Town would be interested in covering the cost of childcare in the future.

**Dinner:**

The dinner was successful but meant the cook was unable to attend the meeting. One question is how to decide which organization the proceeds from the dinner will benefit each year. The dinner this year was a good fundraiser for the fire department.

**Remote Town Meeting Participation (RTMP):**

Greg wants to work on a few technical details for next year but overall it worked well this year. If remote participants are to vote, there needs to be a way for the moderator to observe their vote directly, such as hearing their voice or seeing their hand raised on a monitor. Susan suggested it may be advisable to adopt criteria pertaining to RTMP that the Selectboard could approve and use to clarify the goals of RTMP and who can participate. Greg expressed some concern that putting rules for RTMP on paper might make it more likely that someone would complain about the rules and look for a loophole.

**Discretionary Funding Committee:**

TMSC believes that next year the questionnaire for non-profits seeking funding at Town Meeting should go out to all groups seeking money, whether by petition or not. It should

be available on the website early enough for organizations to use it. This year the questionnaires were not included in the Town Report, perhaps they could be next year.

**School Budget:**

It was mentioned that some residents have expressed a desire to go back to voting on the school budget at Town Meeting rather than by Australian Ballot. This could be a part of a larger discussion of the Middlesex community. More preparation and background to help with an informed decision would likely be more productive than just petitioning for another vote on this issue.

**VPIRG Flyers:**

The question was raised as to whether it was appropriate for the VPIRG flyers to be placed on chairs. A possible solution for information such as this would be to have a table outside the Town Meeting room where such material can be made available. Dave mentioned that some material was added to the Conservation Commission table that was not their information but could have been interpreted that way.

**2. Website**

The contacts list was circulated for comment. There will need to be an interim webmaster next year when Tim is away.

Next Meeting: May 28<sup>th</sup>

Minutes recorded by Dave Shepard

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