

**MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
*405 Main Street*  
*Middlefield, Connecticut 06455*

Minutes of the April 18, 2023 Regular Meeting

Call to Order

Jim Irish called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Carol Bufithis and Jim Irish were present. Bob Yamartino was not present at the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Jim Irish asked to eliminate item 12 from the agenda as there is nothing prepared as of now. Barbara-Jean DiMauro retired on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

***Carol Bufithis made a motion, seconded by Jim Irish, to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion carried unanimously.***

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes of Selectmen Meetings

a. March 21, 2023 Regular Meeting

Jim Irish noted that on page 4, the word “house” should be replaced with “high.”

***Carol Bufithis made a motion, seconded by Jim Irish, to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2023 Regular Meeting, as amended. Motion carried unanimously.***

Public Communications

None.

Set date of Annual Town Budget Meeting for Monday, May 8, 2023, 7PM at the Community Center

Jim Irish noted that the Board of Finance has been working diligently on the budget and will be coming in a little bit lower than the original proposed budget. Their public hearing will be on April 20, 2023 and the Board of Selectmen should set the Annual Town Budget Meeting for Monday, May 8, 2023.

***Carol Bufithis made a motion, seconded by Jim Irish, to set the date of the Annual Town Budget Meeting for Monday, May 8, 2023, 7PM at the Community Center. Motion carried.***

Registrar of Voters and Early Elections

Jim Irish reported that there has been activity in the state legislature to have at least one or two weeks of early voting in town. That would mean that the town would have to have registrars and deputy registrars working two weeks in a row full-time. Bob Yamartino had suggested that they contact the legislators and Secretary of the State to ask for an expansion of absentee voting to afford greater access. Carol Bufithis did not feel it is as essential for Middlefield as it is for some cities.

Ms. Bufithis wondered if this has to happen across the board or if individual towns can decide. Mr. Irish wasn't sure, but Mr. Yamartino told him he felt it was statewide. Ms. Bufithis added that she believes in the concept, but also understands the implications for the town. Jim Irish felt that the town should push back because it isn't as important here as it might be in other areas. He will raise this issue at the RiverCog meeting as well as it will have financial implications and people's time.

RiverCog Affordable Housing Committee Appointment

Since there has been no one identified for this committee as of now, Jim Irish volunteered to serve on the committee temporarily. Carol Bufithis stated that she has been urgently looking for someone to serve on the Board of Education, but will get back to searching for this representative as well.

***Carol Bufithis made a motion, seconded by Jim Irish, to appoint Jim Irish as the temporary representative from Middlefield to the RiverCog Affordable Housing Committee. Motion carried.***

Celebration of Life to commemorate Edward Bailey - Sunday, April 23, 2023

Jim Irish noted that the Celebration of Life to commemorate Ed Bailey is coming up this Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 2:00 in Peckham Park. The area has been prepared and the monument now has a

town seal in the center. Carol Bufithis hopes that flowers will be planted as well and she felt that Country Flower Farms would be happy to donate them. On Sunday, there will be a tent and chairs for invited guests.

#### Community Road Clean-Up - Saturday, May 6, 2023

Carol Bufithis noted that she and Hannah Malcolm have erected signs and Lyman Orchards is going to donate some doughnuts. There will be coffee and all necessary supplies available. Trucks will be available throughout the weekend at Peckham Park.

#### Selectmen/Selectwoman Reports

Jim Irish noted that there will be an election for two Board of Education members at the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Both Maura Caramanello and Jamie Roraback have their terms ending at the end of the fiscal year. He was not sure if they are running for reelection or not. There will also be two slots on DMIAAB available as well, for Jim Malcolm and Howard Weissberg. Carol Bufithis was 90 percent sure that Mr. Weissberg would run again and she will speak with Mr. Malcolm.

##### a. Cell Tower Update

Jim Irish reported that the cell tower contract is under negotiation and they have forwarded a list of requests.

##### b. Ross Road Tires Update

Jim Irish stated that the property was cleaned up on the day of the board's last meeting. The total cost of the remediation is just under \$30,000. They are now in the process of pursuing the fine of \$12,000 for the delay which will be the second lien on the property. If both liens were to be granted the town will almost break even. This should go to court in the next week or two.

Carol Bufithis asked if people are still living in the house, but Jim Irish did not know the answer to that.

##### c. OSHA Update

Jim Irish reviewed that OSHA had found a number of items of concern in the town garage which resulted in fines totaling approximately \$3,750. After discussion and negotiation with OSHA, they have received a 50 percent reduction in the fines and are now under \$2,000. The town has also found out that OSHA will provide help to the town by auditing programs and doing some training for free.

##### d. Other

Jim Irish spoke with Pete Tyc who mentioned that Middlefield's two state senators are interested in sitting down with Chief Tyc and Bob Yamartino to talk about what support they can offer to the Fire Department. Carol Bufithis would be interested in attending as well.

Mr. Irish also reported that it is likely that not much work will be done on the culvert at Lake Beseck until the end of May because they are waiting for the concrete castings.

Mr. Irish also reported that the daytime Resident Trooper got promoted and the town will be losing him. The evening shift trooper will be transitioning to the day shift and they will talk to the barracks about additional coverage.

Jim Irish also explained that the Estuary Transit District Board asked him if he had been formally appointed and to provide a copy of it to them. Mr. Irish explained that that is their legal name, but they have transitioned to River Valley Transit.

***Jim Irish made a motion, seconded by Carol Bufithis, to appoint Jim Irish as the Middlefield representative to the Estuary Transit District Board. Motion carried.***

Carol Bufithis did not have a report about Sustainable CT, but will be pushing forward in May, June and July.

#### Adjournment

***Carol Bufithis made a motion, seconded by Jim Irish, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Motion carried unanimously.***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

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Alwaz First