

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

Minutes of the October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Regular Meeting

Call to Order

Ed Bailey called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM. Ed Bailey, Dave Burgess, were present, Bob Yamartino was present by phone.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Agenda

Ed Bailey requested to eliminate agenda item #6 "Habitat for Humanity Presentation and discussion regarding 171 Hubbard Street" and add:

9a. Appointments:

- i. Zoning Board of Appeals
  - 1. Michael Olszewski – Term 05/01/2015 to 04/30/2020 Alternate - fill vacancy

***Ed Bailey made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion carried.***

Approval of Minutes of the Board of Selectmen

a. September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Mr. Bailey requested the following revisions be made to the minutes dated September 17, 2109: On page 3, under "Appointments" indicate that Paul Pizzo is an alternate. In the "First Selectman's Report" section under the Plainville Southington Health District work done section add that "1 New Septic System was permitted and installed".

***Ed Bailey made a motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2019 Board of Selectman Meeting as amended. Motion carried.***

Presentation by Town Council Bruno Morasutti regarding property transfer of unused Cul-De-Sac to 29 Aresco Drive

Bruno Morasutti, Town Council, reviewed details regarding this property transfer. He explained that the town has title to this piece of property which was part of a decommissioned cul-de-sac which occurred when Aresco Dr. was extended. The owner of the abutting property, Peter Tokarz, is currently experiencing issues with his Title Insurance company. Mr. Tokarz's attorney explained that the title company will not insure his title because of the town owned former cul-de-sac. His attorney has requested that the town convey this piece to Mr. Tokarz which is 0.06 acres or about 2,600 square feet to become part of 29 Aresco Drive. Doing so would take care of the issues Mr. Tokarz is experiencing with the title company. If the Board of Selectman approve the next step in the process would be to hold a Town Meeting regarding the transfer for final approval. At that time a new deed would be signed and a new mylar map filed with the town clerk's office for public review if necessary. Mr. Bailey explained that he reviewed information provided by Bill Warner and that back when the cul-de-sac was eliminated in 1972 the intent was to return the land to the abutting property once the road was extended, however, it appears this was never done. Ed explained that the title issue likely stems from the map not matching what is currently at the location. 29 Aresco Drive is in the process of being sold and this issue is holding up the sale process. Ed stated that the next step would be to create a resolution and set a town meeting. Mr. Bailey read the following resolution into record:

"RESOLVED: That the Board of Selectman approve a transfer of land at 29 Aresco Dr. from the Town to Peter J Tokarz, subject to town meeting approval. Dated at Middlefield on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of October 2019."

Bob spoke via speaker phone but was inaudible so Mr. Bailey explained what Bob was saying which was that the property is technically land locked with out the piece from the old cul-de-sac. When the cul-de-sac existed, the road came right up to the property but, now the owner

has no access to the land without crossing town property which does create the title issue of the property being inaccessible.

***Ed Bailey made motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve a resolution to transfer land as stated in the attached resolution as well as read into record. Motion carried.***

As part of the above resolution a Town Meeting date needs to be determined. Given the need to publish a meeting announcement while being sensitive to timeliness it was agreed to schedule the meeting for Tuesday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 at the Community Center. Mr. Bailey read into record the call of the meeting.

***Ed Bailey made motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to set the date of the Town Meeting to October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 at 7:00 PM at the Community Center, Notice of Meeting also attached. Motion carried.***

#### “Giving Garden” update and request – Jen Huddleston

Jen reported that the garden has had a very successful season having picked and donated over 700 pounds of produce! Jen pointed out that Bob came to help at the garden. She said that a local boy scout would be coming to meet with her regarding his Eagle Scout project. Jen said she will likely suggest he work on the sink area if he should decide to do his project at the garden. There was some discussion of building a base and possibly a tiled countertop area around a sink. Ed asked how she thought the garden would do going forward and she said they are planning to do some minor expansion for next year. She plans a leaf drive where residents can drop off their leaves. Jen said she has equipment on her truck to suck up leaves and chop them up to then spread over the beds to prevent erosion over the winter. Jen said the Giving Garden had two nice displays at the Durham Fair in the Discovery Tent as well as the Flower Building. She also said that Tina Gossner put together a nice presentation on the Pollinator Patch. Jen mentioned that Dave had asked for information on other local gardens that have beehives as Jen is hoping to have hives at the Giving Garden. Jen and Betsy visited Parmelee Farm in Killingworth where they have a charity garden and beehives. Jen provided a brochure about the garden and farm. There were photos of the hives that show the area is cordoned off with caution tape and fencing as well as plenty of signage warning of bees being in the area. She said with all of the signage and fencing it would be nearly impossible for a person to just wander into the area. Dave again mentioned his concern over liability in the event of bee stings and Ed said he would run it by our insurance company but didn't foresee it being an issue.

Dave felt it was important to look into just to protect everyone.

Bob said that he thought this would be a great project and asked if Alan Poole would be involved and Jen said Alan would be the beekeeper for the Giving Garden. Jen said that she is excited to get kids involved with the project possibly having kids participate in smoking the hives and helping residents learn how the whole process of keeping bees works. She hoped that this might even encourage people to try beekeeping themselves.

Dave offered his best wishes to Jen in the future and thanked her for all that she's done for our residents with her work on the garden.

Ed, Dave, Bob, and Jen continued the discussion on topics of Solar Energy and improving energy efficiency in our town buildings as well as technology upgrades to heating and cooling systems.

### Housing Rehab Program Update

Ed explained that there are two loans that have been set to move forward, one for a new roof and one for a new well. Currently the Roof is out for bid and hopefully the well will be out for bid in the next week or so. He said that this is the first activity on this program the town has had in about five years which he's very happy for. The fund has been growing since loans have been repaid. This program is a great opportunity for people who are financially constrained to have improvements made to their homes. Funds are then paid back when the home is sold or refinanced.

### L.E.D. Streetlight Conversion Update

The town is preparing for 3 sample lights to be installed on Jackson Hill in front of the Town Hall. Ed said that the State of Connecticut is also changing out lights they rent from Eversource along Route 66 and replacing them with LED lights. He noted that when driving down Route 66 the difference is very noticeable and that properties are no longer lit up, only the roadway is. As noted previously these LED lights reduce light pollution and are more focused so as to illuminate only the roadway.

### First Selectman's Report

Ed began by distributing a Fund Balance sheet and reviewed that we have \$2.59 million in the bank which is 15.73% of our total budget of \$16.4 million, which includes the streetlight purchase, putting us in a strong position. Ed, Al Rusilowicz, and Jim Irish spoke earlier in the day

regarding the surplus and felt it was due in part to conservative budgeting and reduction in line items. Some revenue enhancements came from sold property due to tax liens, and also ECS was budgeted lower than what the state actually provided. Ed said that if he remains in position to work on the next budget that he will look to tighten it as best he can where possible and try to put forward a budget that doesn't overtax residents. He felt they've taken a good look and analyzed line items to make adjustments where necessary. Ed explained that some savings has come from property and auto liability. Though we pay \$57,000 for insurance, due to minimal losses being reported, we did receive a refund of \$5,000. He noted that over two years we've saved 18% on medical coverage and new labor contract increases employee contributions for benefits charges and our State Troopers are younger and at a lower pay scale. Also, legislative budget was changed and no longer charges towns for unpaid pension liability for troopers.

Bob spoke via phone regarding our budget surplus and moving funds around however, his comments were inaudible on the recording. There was some discussion regarding interest rates and gains from higher rates over the last few years.

Ed continued his report by stating that there had been a mosquito that tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and urged residents to take precautions as communicated by the Health District. Ed reiterated that the virus will remain active until there is a widespread hard frost so it is important for residents to protect themselves until then. The week that the infected mosquito was discovered in Middlefield the state had trapped about 4500 mosquitos and only 3 tested positive, which means EEE is not terribly widespread. A local resident who works for DEEP and sprays for mosquitos was talking with Ed and Al at the town hall. The resident said that they recently sprayed at Pachaug State Park. The state currently is only spraying at state parks due to increased mosquito activity and they tend not to do aerial spraying as it could be detrimental to other insects. Bob pointed out that spraying for mosquitos this time of year is ineffective due to the cooler temperatures and the quick decline in temperature after sunset.

### Appointments

- i. Zoning Board of Appeals
  2. Michael Olszewski – Term 05/01/2015 to 04/30/2020 Alternate - fill vacancy

***Ed Bailey made motion, seconded by Dave Burgess, to approve the appointment of Michael Olszewski to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Motion carried.***

Adjournment

***Dave Burgess made a motion, seconded by Ed Bailey, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Motion carried unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

*Tonya Hogan*

Tonya Hogan  
Assistant Town Clerk

Minutes Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed by \_\_\_\_\_