

MIDDLEFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
405 Main Street
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

Minutes of the March 17, 2020 Regular Meeting

Call to Order

Mr. Bailey called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM. Ed Bailey, and Carol Bufithis were present, Bob Yamartino was present via telephone. Shane Lockwood, Director of the Plainville – Southington Health District was also present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Ed Bailey made a motion, second by Carol Bufithis, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes of the Board of Selectmen

- a. February 18, 2020 – Regular Meeting
- b. March 3, 2020 – Special Joint Meeting: Boards of Selectmen, Finance, and DMIAAB

Carol Bufithis made a motion, second by Ed Bailey, to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Bob Yamartino abstained. Motion carried.

Ed Bailey made a motion, second by Carol Bufithis, to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2020 Special Joint Meeting with the Board of Finance and DMIAAB.

Presentation by Shane Lockwood, Director of Health regarding COVID-19 situation

Mr. Lockwood provided a briefing on COVID-19. He explained that information is constantly changing, sometimes by the minute. Shane reported that the number of cases is steadily increasing and that this is a historically significant and fast-moving Pandemic. At the time of the meeting there is more than 200,000 cases worldwide. People experiencing respiratory issues and or flu like symptoms could be experiencing COVID-19. Shane said that the number of cases is very difficult to track since there can be people who are infected but are experiencing mild symptoms so they don't get tested. Unfortunately, this can cause the virus to continue to spread. Shane said that he gets reports of confirmed cases as they come in. He has been working with the health district to get the most up to date information out to towns to post on their websites and provide updates as often as possible. Shane explained that he has spent about twenty years working on emergency preparedness. While there have been other outbreaks in the past that were called "Pandemic" he said none of them have been as serious or historical as this one.

Shane explained that he has been on multiple conference calls since the start of the outbreak and continues to be part of different departmental calls on a weekly basis to stay abreast of the latest information. He's been working to get the latest news and precautions out to our local businesses as well as town employees during this time. Carol asked what plans are in place for local hospitals and Shane said that the state has a 4-section mobile hospital that can be used if needed to house up to 200 people when all sections are put together or if they are erected separately can house 50 people per section. He said they are testing "Surge Capacity" to see which patients could be released from the hospital to home or other care facilities in order to free up bed space if needed. He continued by saying that in general hospitals have set up Hotlines for the public to call in with questions or concerns rather than just going to the hospital. He said on average these hotlines are getting about 1200 calls per day.

Shane said the district focus was on limiting mass gatherings and now they are shifting their focus to protecting hospitals from becoming overwhelmed. He explained that educating the public is a key factor and encouraging people to call the hotlines prior to going to hospital has really helped decrease people making unnecessary visits.

Shane noted that the latest news and information can be obtained via pshd.org, ct.gov, and cdc.gov.

The discussion continued around effective masks and proper cleaning of hard surfaces as well as the length of time the virus could live on surfaces. Shane reiterated that the best approach to limiting the spread of the virus is the simplest: wash your hands, cover your cough, stay away from those that are sick and stay home if you are sick, and clean up after yourself.

Ed explained that due to the latest developments with the virus the Town Hall & Community Center will be closed to the public effective March 19th. He said he will have town employees

conduct business via mail, email, and telephone and if absolutely necessary appointments could be scheduled.

Each member of the board thanked Shane for his hard work and shared their appreciation for everything the Health District is doing.

Executive Order 7C.5 with reference to the State of Emergency

Mr. Bailey gave a brief overview of the executive orders put forth by Governor Lamont with the board.

“With reference to the governor’s executive order 7C.5 giving extension to municipal budget adoption deadline. The Board of Selectmen move for the Annual Town Budget meeting to be June 8, 2020 for FY2021.”

Motion made by Carol Bufithis, second by Bob Yamartino. Motion carried.

Public Safety Radio Communication Equipment Update

Ed reported that the equipment has been installed and is up and running however, not on the new frequency as of yet.

L.E.D. Streetlight Conversion Update

Street lights are currently being installed throughout the town. The project should be completed by the end of March weather permitting.

RSD-13 Update

Ed said that the district is still working on the budget. He stated that while the schools are closed due to the Pandemic school lunches are still being made available. Furloughed hourly employees are being paid and the district should be reimbursed for the pay. He also said that the closure will like be extended beyond March 31st. Bob stated that most everything else the district has been working on has been put on hold.

First Selectman’s Report; Legislative Issues Affecting Municipalities

Ed reported that the Legislature is currently shut down. He said that he is going to be doing testimony on Fairs in CT regarding police over time charges. State Police charge a larger mark

up on private duty for police which includes working at fairs. The proposal they are working on would be for private duty charges to coincide with town rates which would be a significant savings.

Another legislative item Ed continues to work on is the extended draw down period for Lake Beseck which he hopes will be approved.

Ed asked the board if they had any questions regarding his budget presentation and Bob notated a correction that needed to be made to figures shown on slide 3 of the Power Point presentation.

Carol asked for clarification on a couple of line items and an explanation of what the funds are used for.

Adjournment

Carol Bufithis made a motion, second by Bob Yamartino, 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 _____