



**MIDDLEBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR WORK SESSION  
MEETING MINUTES**



**June 10, 2013**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Betsy A. Davis  
Vice Mayor C. Darlene Kirk  
Councilmember Trowbridge Littleton  
Councilmember Kathy Jo Shea  
Councilmember Mark T. Snyder  
Councilmember David B. Stewart

**STAFF:** Martha M. Semmes, Town Administrator  
Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Kevin Hazard  
Councilmember Catherine "Bundles" Murdock

The Town Council of the Town of Middleburg, Virginia held their regular monthly work session on Monday, June 10, 2013 in the Town Hall Council Chambers, located at 10 W. Marshall Street. Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

**Review of Regular Meeting Agenda of June 13, 2013**

Mayor Davis reminded Council that Jill Turgeon (School Board Representative) would be present for the regular meeting. She noted that the Council was asking her to provide a rundown of what was going on.

Town Administrator Semmes suggested the Council have her talk about what was going on with the schools.

Councilmember Shea noted that she did so during a meeting at the Middleburg Elementary School.

Mayor Davis suggested the solution was simple; and, advised that the main thing that was being asked was to change the boundary lines back to the way they were before Middleburg helped its neighbor.

Councilmember Shea opined that it did not sound like that was viable for the School Board.

Mayor Davis suggested the Town must talk to the School Board.

Town Administrator Semmes opined that it would be good to know more about charter schools. She asked whether every student in Loudoun County must apply to get enrolled.

Councilmember Shea confirmed that, by law, they did. She reported that there was a "glitch" that the local committee was working with Richmond to resolve. Ms. Shea noted that usually anyone in Loudoun County would be qualified; however, it must be by lottery. She explained that the glitch was that there may be a way to give Middleburg students a priority on another basis. Ms. Shea reiterated that currently enrollment was by lottery.

Town Administrator Semmes opined that this could potentially mean the Middleburg Elementary School would not be a neighborhood school.

Councilmember Shea reminded Council that the enrollment would be based on capacity. She advised that if the school had a capacity of one hundred fifty students, the lottery would be for one hundred fifty slots. Ms. Shea opined that it was unlikely that the students in Middleburg would not get into the school.

Town Administrator Semmes confirmed this would be the case unless the school was created as something unique such as an arts school.

Mayor Davis reminded Council that the development of an endowment was still on the table. She advised that at this point, the money could go toward helping the Middleburg Elementary School become a charter school or it could be used to endow the school, with the endowment paying the difference in the “extra” cost to operate the school.

Town Administrator Semmes suggested it would be nice to talk to Ms. Turgeon about how the cost of operating the school was calculated. She noted an email that was received from a resident in Lincoln that talked about how to calculate those costs, including debt service.

Mayor Davis suggested the staff ask Ms. Turgeon’s office for that information. She noted that the School Board office has been asked to run the numbers. Ms. Davis advised that they have been run in the past to determine the true cost to operate the school. She suggested this was something the Town needed to do as those were strong numbers that could be taken to a School Board meeting. Ms. Davis advised that the other information she would like was where the boundaries were previously located and if they were returned, how many students that would bring back to the Middleburg Elementary School. She suggested the staff give Ms. Turgeon a heads up on the Council’s request so she could bring the information with her related to the boundary and number of students in that area.

Councilmember Shea suggested the Council be careful in how it talked about this issue. She noted that she had not heard anything said during a meeting about making the Middleburg Elementary School an arts school. Ms. Shea advised that they have talked about other options. She noted that she has offered the opportunity for the school to work with her business, as well as working with other businesses, as a part of the charter school concept. Ms. Shea reminded Council that this was a hot topic and noted that it was easy for gossip to start.

Mayor Davis opined that people took the word “arts” to mean an art school. She suggested that in this case, they were talking about the arts in general, including music.

Councilmember Shea noted that there has been talk about unique math ideas and languages, as well as other things.

Town Administrator Semmes opined that at some point, the school must focus on something as it could not do everything. She suggested that if it wanted to attract students from the public school system, it must offer something unique.

Councilmember Shea reminded Council that the school would remain a public school even if it was a charter school.

Town Administrator Semmes opined that it would also attract students from the Hill School. She asked whether they would “rob” students from the Hill School to bring them to the Middleburg Elementary School.

Councilmember Shea opined that this would not occur as there was huge difference in the economics of families that attended the Hill School versus the Middleburg Elementary School.

Town Administrator Semmes questioned the cost to attend a charter school. Councilmember Shea reported that there was no cost. She noted that the parents, however, must give sixty hours of their time.

Town Administrator Semmes asked whether the regulations related to charter schools was in writing. Councilmember Shea confirmed there were some State requirements for charter schools. She noted that the PTO had put out some of the things that were required.

Town Administrator Semmes questioned whether these were State requirements. Councilmember Shea confirmed they were.

Councilmember Littleton noted that he met Janet Clarke three weeks ago, at which time she said they were working on getting Middleburg Elementary School to become a charter school. He advised that he said “this was great as the school must be kept open”. Mr. Littleton noted that he was hoping to ask Ms. Clarke some questions today.

Mayor Davis suggested the staff talk to Ms. Turgeon’s office.

Town Administrator Semmes suggested Ms. Turgeon may know about the requirements for charter schools. She opined that it would be nice to have that information.

Councilmember Shea advised that very few schools have gone through the process. She further advised that the process just changed. Ms. Shea explained that instead of applying for charter school status in Richmond, applications were submitted to the local board of education.

Town Administrator Semmes asked whether there was anything else the Council wanted the staff to ask of Ms. Turgeon. She further asked whether anyone attended the meeting on the north-south collector road. Ms. Semmes asked whether there was any interest in hearing about it. She opined that it sounded like there was significant opposition to it, including from elected officials. Ms. Semmes noted that there has been talk about using such a road to get freight to the airport.

Mayor Davis noted that the purpose of the road changed on a regular basis. She further noted that it was first discussed as a truck route and then a paid toll road. Ms. Davis opined that there was a lot of work to be done.

Mayor Davis opined that the appointment to the Middleburg Arts Council was simple.

Councilmember Snyder inquired as to when the Arts Council met. Town Clerk North advised that they met on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that the discussion item related to the Salamander Resort was a new item.

Mayor Davis questioned what was meant by “recreational amenity”.

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that the rezoning included the ability for the resort to create a challenge course; however, it was not well defined. Ms. Semmes advised that the recreational amenity would be something that people would physically do in the woods and would involve the creation of some structure. Ms. Semmes advised that the Town Planner would talk about this in more detail during the regular meeting. She opined that the issue was a matter of the Council deciding whether the recreational amenity was what they had in mind.

Councilmember Snyder noted that the Town co-held the open space easement with the Potomac Conservancy.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that the Town was supposed to receive a letter from them last week.

Town Clerk North confirmed the letter was not received. She reported that the representative from the Conservancy indicated that she was conducting more research; and, hoped to be able to provide the letter today. Ms. North noted that she asked the representative to have it to the staff early in the week if possible so the Council would have time to review their response.

Councilmember Shea noted that she and the Town Administrator have talked about the lunch for the retreat. She advised that they were thinking of something simple like cold cuts. Ms. Shea asked whether this was acceptable. The Council agreed it was.

Mayor Davis questioned the hours for the retreat. There was some discussion as to the proposed hours. Councilmember Littleton advised that he must leave the retreat by 3:00 p.m. as he had a business obligation that day. Councilmember Shea expressed hope to get some answers from Tyler St. Clair after she held the interviews this week. She suggested the Council plan on it ending at 3:00 p.m.

Councilmember Littleton suggested that where the Council needed to get its heads together was in January after the Salamander Resort had been open for four or five months and the Town had a history of the revenues it would produce.

Councilmember Shea opined that the retreat would help by identifying the Council's wishes. She suggested this would make this item easier to address.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that she toured the resort last week as a part of the VDDA program. She advised that Mr. Devadas talked about the resort and how he worked with communities at other locations. Ms. Semmes opined that the construction was coming along; however, there was a lot of finish work yet to be done.

Town Clerk North advised Council that during the last HDRC meeting, Mr. Devadas stated that, due to their weight, some of the stone caps for the chimneys would be brought in and placed by helicopters within the next two weeks.

Vice Mayor Kirk suggested it would be nice if the Council received a tour after the work was completed but before the resort opened.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that Mr. Devadas was happy to provide tours. She noted that he indicated that they already had eight weddings and a number of corporate retreats booked. Ms. Semmes advised that they were targeting the corporate retreats for the middle of the week when business was typically slow. She noted that Mr. Devadas believed they would achieve sixty percent occupancy in the first year. Ms. Semmes advised Council that the resort was the only luxury resort to open in the United States in 2013-2015.

Mayor Davis opined that Supervisor Clarke had forgotten about the meeting. She apologized for bringing the members in for it.

Councilmember Shea advised that she thought it was great to go into public session having had this type of conversation.

Mayor Davis reminded Council that discussion items were left for the meeting. She noted that the work sessions that were cancelled contained action items (on the regular meeting agenda) like today's in that they were a "no brainer". Ms. Davis advised that anything could be discussed at a meeting; however, she noted that there was nothing significant to discuss from this agenda because the other items were all discussion items.

Councilmember Littleton opined that it would be nice when the budget was behind the Council.

Town Administrator Semmes asked whether the members had any questions related to the budget. She reported that the real estate and personal property tax rates were out for the other towns in Loudoun County; and, advised that Middleburg's were the lowest.

**Closed Session** – Evaluation of Town Administrator

Mayor Davis reported that the closed session had been moved to the June 27<sup>th</sup> work session.

Town Administrator Semmes noted that she would perform a self evaluation. She reminded Council that they normally performed an evaluation, with the Mayor then compiling the information. Ms. Semmes advised that neither she nor the Mayor had time to address this prior to this work session.

**Miscellaneous**

Councilmember Snyder reported that he met with the Bluemont Concert Board during its regular meeting held this past weekend. He advised that he gave the 2013 concert information to the Town Clerk so she could send it to the Council. Mr. Snyder asked that it be sent to the public in the next water bill.

Mayor Davis asked who would be playing. Town Clerk North read the list of artists, which included The Taters (July 6), Daryl Davis Band (July 13), Mary Ann Redmond (July 20) and Jimmy Gaudreau & Moondi Klein (July 27).

Mayor Davis asked why the Pan Masters were not listed. Councilmember Snyder explained that they cost almost \$2,000.

Mayor Davis asked whether it was possible to get someone similar. Councilmember Snyder noted that they did have Mary Ann Redmond, who had a large following. He reported that she was only playing in Middleburg this year; therefore, all of her fans would come to the concert.

Councilmember Shea suggested this information be provided to the Police Chief.

Councilmember Snyder advised Council that he would give the board input on whatever the Council wanted. He asked that they let him know if they wanted something for next year.

Mayor Davis noted that the jazz group that played last year was good. She opined that people loved swing music.

Councilmember Snyder advised that he preferred the groups that drew the larger audiences. He reiterated his request that the Council think about what they wanted and let him know by March so he could offer the Town's input during the board meeting.

There being no further business, a motion was made and voted upon to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Betsy A. Davis, MAYOR

ATTEST:

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Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk