

April 10, 2006

The Middlesex Governing Body held its' regular meeting in the Conference Room of the Town Hall. Mayor Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and gave the invocation. Members present were Commissioners Basco Lewis, Luke Robinson, Derek Bissette, Fred Hough, and Harold Meacombs. The guest list is attached and made a part of these minutes.

Commissioner Robinson moved to approve the March meeting minutes. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and it carried unanimously.

Mayor Lewis opened the floor for the Public Comment Session. No one had comments or requested any additions to the agenda. Commissioner Meacombs moved to approve the agenda with no changes. Commissioner Robinson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hough moved to accept the financial statements as correct. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and it carried unanimously.

Chief Ferrell advised the Board that he filed the grant for the police vehicle and trailer and hopes to hear something by June.

Administrator Joyner advised the Board that the Planning Board heard Jerry Perry's request to place a mobile home seven years old in a mobile home zone in the ETJ. The Planning Board recommended to leave the zoning ordinance as it stands. The Board agreed that we should leave the ordinance as it stands.

Commissioner Bissette moved to approve the Public Works\Utilities Worker\Assistant Director Job Description retroactive to January 13, 2006, with the hiring of Joseph Sherrick. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and the motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Joyner gave a quick summary of zoning enforcement efforts, noting 2 completions, 3 in progress of cleanup, 1 hearing pending, 1 abatement pending and 6 abatement orders issued.

There was a brief discussion regarding using Jerry O'Neal as a backup for Jeff Waddell while he is away on vacation or training. In October, 2005, the Board voted not to hire an independent contractor with no liability insurance to perform work for the town, and Jerry does not have any liability insurance. Administrator Joyner advised the Board that he had spoken to Mr. O'Neal and he would be willing to be employed by the town and be available for call-in's in Jeff's absence and to rebuild sewer pumps. Commissioner Meacombs moved to hire Jerry O'Neal as a part time temporary employee to be used on an as-needed call-in basis at a rate of \$30.00 per hour, and he would be

covered by the town's worker's compensation insurance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lewis moved to adopt a Resolution and a License as presented by Administrator Joyner. These two forms were recommended by Attorney Liz Fairman to be used for the purpose of placement of signage or landscaping on private property. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Bissette and it carried unanimously. A copy of the Resolution R2006-984 is attached and made a part of these minutes.

Commissioner Hough moved to appoint Commissioner Harold Meacombs, Jerry Daniel, Bobby Bissette, Ann M. Lewis, Pauline Hinnant, Cherrye Davis, Robert Matthews, Elmer Crocker, Al Smith, and Kim Overman as the Town's 2008 Centennial Planning Committee. Commissioner Bissette seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The committee will appoint its' own chairperson, give progress reports to the Board at the regular monthly meetings and submit any requests related to their purpose directly to the Board.

After a brief discussion regarding three days bereavement leave given employees in the event of a death in the immediate family, which was in the old personnel policy and not in the new policy adopted July 1, 2005, Commissioner Meacombs moved to add the three days bereavement leave back like the original policy. Commissioner Bissette seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Commissioner Robinson moved to approve the following sewer adjustments:

- (1) Rockside Restaurant from \$240.00 to \$120.00
- (2) Father & Son Restaurant from \$516.00 to 276.00

Commissioner Meacombs seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The town has received written permission from the Rural Center to begin sewer rehab work on manholes and sewer laterals. The contract for the project has been extended to December 31, 2006.

Proposed amendments to the Water and Sewer System Ordinances were distributed for review and discussion at the May meeting.

Alvin Brantley requested to speak to the Board and Mayor Lewis granted permission. Mr. Brantley advised the Board that he counted 72 turkey buzzards roosting near his home and requested the Board to take some action because the area will be smelling before much longer. After a brief discussion, most were in agreement that noise would be the best solution to the problem in the form of some type of "propane cannon". Chief Ferrell will check into the matter and report back to the Board.

Administrator Joyner presented a budget with no increase in property tax, water, sewer, or sanitation rates. He summarized, by department, the \$126,840 increase over the 2005-2006 Budget. Mayor Lewis pointed out that \$20,000 dollars of the increase are Powell Bill Funds. Joyner also pointed out capital outlay in the amount of \$50,000 for the police car/trailer and \$30,000 for the sewer jetter are a big part of the increase, as well as \$8,000 for metal park benches, \$7,500 for landscaping and signage, and a recommended 5% cost of living salary increase.

Administrator Joyner presented three options for sanitation: (1) keep sanitation in-house with 4 full time and 1 part time employee, (2) outsource sanitation and keep 4 full time and 1 part time employee, and (3) outsource sanitation and keep 3 full time and 1 part time employee. The Board chose option (1) at this time.

After a brief discussion on the cost of the park picnic tables, it was agreed by all that we should get more quotes on wood tables. Gordon had a quote of \$4,500, using treated and routed timber for (5) 10' tables and (2) 8' tables with the wide attached seats, versus \$8,000 for the metal tables. Commissioner Lewis has someone quoting also.

Administrator Joyner presented pictures of the recommended locations for signs to be placed at the entrances into town from all directions. He also passed around pictures of various types of signage. The Board agreed that the nicer brick column signs would be their choice and this is also chosen by the Beautification Committee. They all agreed etched letters of some type would be better due to the possibility of theft or vandalism. Gordon had obtained a quote for 3-4' brick columns, about 20" square pillars at \$500-\$600 per column. He stated that he will begin checking prices for the actual sign. DOT requires that the signs be installed before they landscape in the state right of ways. The Board agreed to move \$3,500 from Parks and Recreation for picnic tables to Streets and Sidewalks Department to be used for four brick signs for the entrances into town.

Mayor Lewis requested that the Board consider a polo-type knit shirt with "Town of Middlesex" embroidered, possibly in the town's chosen colors, whatever they might be. The shirts would cost \$25-\$27 each.

Joyner also asked the Board to look at the dirty, worn carpet in the town hall and think about replacing it as it is over ten years old. Also the chairs in the office need to be replaced or upholstered. Quotes will be presented at the next meeting. Commissioner Meacombs said the Department of Corrections upholsters chairs. No money was allocated for carpet or upholstery in the budget presented. Quotes will be presented at the next meeting.

The budget presented included a recommended 5% cost of living salary increase. Joyner advised the Board that remaining competitive was important to retain good employees. He advised that the cost of living last year was between 2-3% and no cost of living increase was given, only a pay adjustment to get underpaid employees to the

minimum salary within their job class code. He also advised that the cost of living so far this year was 3-4%, so a 5% increase would catch the salaries up to the cost of living increase for the past two years.

Mayor Lewis agreed with the 5% cost of living increase, commenting that the salary study and pay class code adopted last year was already outdated and the purpose for its' adoption was to make the job of budgeting salaries easier. Commissioner Meacombs agreed and stated that we should be adjusting the scale each year to reflect the cost of living increase for each year as was intended to keep our study up to date. Meacombs was for a 5% increase and would compromise to 4%.

Commissioner Hough stated he was in favor of 3%. Commissioner Robinson and Bissette stated they were also in favor of 3%. Commissioner Lewis stated he was for a 2-3% increase. The majority was 3% and the Board requested Joyner to bring the budget back with a 3% salary increase incorporated.

Administrator Joyner brought to the Board's attention that \$27,810 of the water fund balance reserves and \$43,625 of the sewer fund balance reserves would be used to balance the budget and they need to take a closer look at raising the water and sewer rates. He advised the Board that we cannot continue to keep dipping into the reserve funds and not raising the rates, recommending that we raise the rates in small increments and not a large increase at one time. Everyone agreed to place the budget on the agenda for the next meeting.

Being no further business, Commissioner Robinson moved to adjourn.

Jennifer Lambert  
Clerk

Mayor Lu Harvey Lewis, Jr.  
Commissioners  
Harold Meacombs  
Fred Hough  
Luke Robinson  
Derek Bissette  
Basco Lewis