



# TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

## Economic Development Commission

**Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday January 26, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

**ZOOM Teleconference. Share recording with viewers:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/recording/detail?meeting\\_id=h539a9W%2BSFGS9EbAxW2GVQ%3D%3D](https://us02web.zoom.us/recording/detail?meeting_id=h539a9W%2BSFGS9EbAxW2GVQ%3D%3D) Passcode: 8#z1YF2i

**Present:** Chairman Terrence McAuliffe  
Commissioner Frank Mirovsky  
Commissioner Armando Paolino  
Commissioner Mark Petrucci

**Also Present:** Linda Zukauskas, Voices

**Excused** Commissioner Anthony Minchella

**Absent:** Commissioner Ted Mannello  
Commissioner David Cappelletti

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at about 6:30 pm.  
Pledge of allegiance was said by all.

### Approval of minutes of Dec. 22, 2020 meeting.

Mark Petrucci MOTIONED to approve the minutes, SECOND by Armando Paolino and unanimously voted.

### OLD BUSINESS

Commissioners reviewed a proposal to extend the three-tier tax abatement program to four tiers, in an effort to attract large investors. A marked-up revision to the current program was provided by Armando Paolino for discussion. His proposed new tier, for capital improvement amounts greater than \$5 million, ran for six years with abatements starting from 45% in the first year down to 20% in the sixth year.

A written email comment from tax assessor Chris Kelsey agreed that the new tier was a good idea, and suggested a high abatement number for the first year because of the huge investment that would lead to long term growth in the grand list.

After discussion on how to structure an increased first year abatement, the commissioners agreed for Mr. Paolino to essentially take the proposed sixth year abatement and use it to increase the first year. He will rejigger the proposal and circulate it back to members for comment in advance of the next meeting.

Frank Mirovsky noted the importance of communicating how abatements work so the public will be inclined to support the revision. Chairman McAuliffe said he would attend an upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting to prepare them and get comments.

Mark Petrucci agreed to do a survey of tax abatement programs from surrounding towns as a point of reference.

## **NEW BUSINESS – N/A**

## **CHAIRMAN COMMENTS**

Chairman McAuliffe reminded commissioners that commercial real estate professionals Tom Hill and John Pollard, who met for discussion Oct. 27, were expected to submit a proposal to “outsource” an office official position for Middlebury as a low-cost alternative to creating such a position in-house. Mr Paolino commented that a possible annual source of private funding for Middlebury economic development was in the works, in the amount of \$1,500 to \$2,000 per year to supplement the \$1,900 current budget.

McAuliffe also said that no progress had been made on the new town website, which needed to be changed to work more cooperatively with the EDC website. He noted the current EDC web site cost \$1,100 per year and wasn't as effective as it could be due to the town website.

McAuliffe also said he would reapproach First Selectman Ed St. John with the possibility of offering town land behind Four Corners shopping area for sale to improve shopping in that area. The matter had been discussed Nov. 24.

McAuliffe also said a new commissioner was needed. He discussed some possibilities and asked for help.

McAuliffe also mentioned the “Restaurant Tour” promotion and the “Celebrate Middlebury” annual fair which EDC needs to help but doesn't have the resources to financially support and manage. He asked members to help and think about ways to get help.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Frank Mirovsky MOTIONED to adjourn, SECOND by Armando Paolino and unanimously voted at about 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence McAuliffe

Chairman—Economic Development Commission

cc. Town Clerk, Barbara Whitaker, Commission Members