

Select Board Workshop Joint with Millis Select Board
November 28, 2023 – 7:00 PM
Medway Senior Center
76 Oakland Street

Present: Glenn Trindade, Chair; Frank Rossi, Vice-Chair; Todd Alessandri, Clerk; Maryjane White, Member.

Absent: Dennis Crowley, Member.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Police Chief William Kingsbury; Fire Chief Jeffrey Lynch; Peter Pelletier, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director; Courtney Riley, Council on Aging (COA) Director.

Others Present: Millis Select Board: Craig Schultze, Chair; Ellen Rosenfeld, Vice-Chair; Erin Underhill, Clerk; Michael Guzinski, Millis Town Administrator; Karen Bouret, Millis Assistant Town Administrator; Anne-Marie Gagnon, Millis Council on Aging Director; Richard Barrett, Millis Fire Chief.

Discussion: Joint Municipal Services

There were no materials for the Board to review.

Mr. Trindade stated that we have been in discussion with Millis regarding joint municipal services for a long time noting, to date, we were only able to agree on Animal Control services. Mr. Boynton noted we do have successes, Medway shares Veterans' Services, Sealer of Weights & Measures services, and Animal Control services. He noted that there needs to be an analysis on how we can share various other services. Mr. Boynton referenced a meeting he had last week regarding shared 911 services. Mr. Guzinski stated that they received \$50,000 to study the potential for a new Millis Senior Center and senior services and after speaking with Fire and Police, they are interested in shared 911, as well as potentially sharing public works equipment. Mr. Boynton stated the one important thing relative to sharing of these services that we are speaking about is there is not a great amount of cost savings. He did note that we have saved a lot with shared Veterans' Services with Ashland, Holliston, and Hopkinton. Mr. Schultze stated that shared services enhances efficiencies in operations and improves services to residents but agreed that there are not necessarily cost savings. Ms. White reported that after speaking with residents, they felt that the Senior Center would be a good area to regionalize since we are already sharing each other's programs. Ms. Rosenfeld asked if there are companies that would study the efficacy of regionalization. Mr. Boynton stated that they would need to speak to employees and look into the future needs as well. He noted that most likely the future needs would be social services for all age groups as this is happening now when students age out of eligibility for school services at age 22. Ms. Rosenfeld said that her mother discussed this as a Select Board member in the 1970's and does not understand why this has not been implemented and we are still in discussion today. Mr. Schultze stated that there are roadblocks including those from the State, i.e., they could not get the state funding if they regionalized the library. Mr. Trindade shared the history of potentially sharing a high school when Medway was building the new high school and the fact that the Thanksgiving football game was the deal breaker. Mr. Boynton reported that Hopkinton and Ashland did a shared Fire study and that fell apart due to who was going to be in charge. Mr. Schultze stated that if we focus on the sharing of services then that should be palatable to all involved. Ms. Riley noted that we do not have enough space/services to deal with the older than 80 age-group, i.e., adult day care, and agrees with the need

for a study. Ms. Gagnon noted that there already is a cooperative shared effort amongst area COA Directors. Mr. Alessandri stated if we can point to early wins, better services at the same cost, get the lower hanging fruit, then it would be easier to implement the larger changes. It was noted that the state does not take the lead in this process. Mr. Boynton stated his agreement with Mr. Alessandri about focusing on the low hanging fruit. He noted that we already have regional services with fire and police with our intermunicipal agreements. There was consensus to move forward with a study. Mr. Boynton talked about the potential to share in the Millis debt service of their library. Mr. Schultze stated that he would like to put that option on the table noting that would assist with residents' tax burden.

Next steps were discussed relative to looking at senior services and hiring a consultant noting all would need to look at the proposed project scope. Ms. Gagnon stated there are a few COAs on the North Shore that are looking at regionalizing services. It was noted that the Collins Center could be a good option for consulting services. Mr. Trindade talked about the potential to share food pantry services and non-English speaking residents' need for social services. Mr. Myers suggested that the survey should look outside the box for services including partnering with private businesses, i.e., 39 Main Street, and the future Meehan project. Mr. Trindade noted that it is harder than you think to work with private entities and the responsibility should be on the municipality. Ms. Riley noted that the Willows has shared their pool facilities with Medway seniors. It was noted that nothing is off the table relative to the assessment of regional services including making existing buildings work or the building of a new facility. Mr. Boynton noted that we have purchased Medway Block for the purpose of building municipal facilities. Mr. Alessandri noted that we could expand services using existing facilities, specifically, library services. There was discussion about the need for respite services. Mr. Boynton and Mr. Guzinski stated they will get together to find a consultant to study the senior services. Mr. Trindade suggested a committee of both Millis and Medway Select Board members to continue to move this initiative forward.

Mr. Boynton requested that Ms. Langley add the following to next Monday's Select Board meeting agenda: Discussion/Vote: Support of Regional Service Research with the Town of Millis.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Langley
Executive Assistant
Town Manager's Office