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"Only votes talk, everything else walks." ~ Dan Rather

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BEE INTELLIGENCER

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Radio upgrade vote Tuesday

By MARJORIE NEEDHAM

Middlebury voters will decide Tuesday whether to approve appropriating \$2.7 million for a public safety radio communications system upgrade and issuing bonds to cover that cost. The polls in Shepardson Community Center will open at 6 a.m. and close at 8 p.m.

Police Chief Richard Guisti said he hopes voters will approve the expenditure so the town will have a state-of-the-art communications system that is safe for both the police and the community as a whole. "We use

that system to respond to complaints from the community," Guisti said.

Dispatcher Tom Reynolds said, "We have numerous dead spots, and I can't communicate with the officers." This worries Reynolds. "I wouldn't want anything to happen to any one of my officers or anyone else," he said. Cell phones are used as backup, but they are not the desired method of communication, and cell phone coverage in Middlebury can be spotty.

Reynolds, a Middlebury resident, said many of his neighbors can't believe this issue is still on

the table. "They can't believe it hasn't been resolved," he said. He said they told him they will vote for the upgrade Tuesday.

Former First Selectman Ed St. John sent an e-mail to some residents advising them to vote "no" Tuesday, but said he had "no clue" how many e-mails he sent out. He said he supports a communications upgrade but does not support the \$2.7 million cost. He said he feels very strongly we should be able to get into a system that is 95-95 for \$1 million less, but did not say who would provide such a system.