

**CHARLESTOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 07, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.
CHARLESTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM
AND ZOOM**

Selectboard Present: Jeremy Wood (Chair), Shelly Blouin-Andrus, William Rescsanski, Jeff Lessels (Vice-Chair), Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary
Kelly Wright, Administrative Assistant
Keith Weed, Highway Department
Shawn O'Hearne, Fire Department
Mark LaFlam, Fire Chief
Stacey Hassett, Cemetery
Kelly Vigneau, Recreation Department
Jason West, Custodian/Building Maintenance
Patrick Connors, Police Chief
Diane Town, Finance Assistant

Others Present: Richard Carter, Alissa Bascom, Margaret Drye

Call to Order

Mr. Wood called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Wood welcomed those in attendance and led the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comment/Input

Margaret Drye introduced herself as an individual running for state representative for District #7, and noted that she was in the Our Town Newspaper.

New Business

Mr. Lessels opened the bids for aggregate crushing. Mr. Wood read the first bid from St. Pierre Incorporated for 1-inch crushed gravel of 4,000 yards which would be \$6.00 per yard totalling \$25,000. There was only one bid. Mr. Lessels made a motion to accept the crushed gravel bid from St. Pierre Inc. at the amount of \$6.00 per yard. Ms. Houghton

seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes) Ms. Houghton (yes). Motion passed.

Department Head reports commenced with Ms. Chaffee via Zoom. She stated that she will have some personnel changes in the office. Election day is next Tuesday. Mr. Wood asked if she was all set for the election. Ms. Chaffee stated that Friday at 5:00 p.m. there will be a test of the ballot machine. She stated that Mr. Weed will be setting up the voting booths on Monday afternoon. Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked about an increase in the proposed budget. Ms. Chaffee stated that the dog licensing equipment is going up so it will be over the amount that she requested in her budget. Mr. Lessels stated that Mr. Vandenburg was not present at this meeting. Ms. Chaffee stated that he will be attending the Water Commissioners Meeting the last Wednesday of the month. Mr. Lessels asked if at the Water Commissioners Meeting would they will get a briefing of how they will be cleaning the tank in North Charlestown, and stated he would like a detailed report on how this will be handled. Ms. Chaffee stated they will not be cleaning the tank until everything is up and running and it would possibly be the October meeting where this information would be presented to the Selectboard. Mr. Lessels asked Ms. Chaffee to be prepared to discuss dump stickers, as people have been coming into the office and not clear on how to rectify this issue. Ms. Chaffee stated her apology for the extra work in the office. Mr. Lessels asked Ms. Chaffee to discuss her ideas for a deputy in the upcoming weeks.

Mr. Weed stated that the culvert work on Acworth Road is completed. He stated that work on Unity Road has been completed but there would be additional work. That is scheduled for Tuesday to pave, and Monday for fine grading. After this paving the driveways will have to be completed. The drainage is completed on Taylor Hill. The department will do need to so some additional clean up to the properties because they impacted a lot more area than we anticipated. The clean-up and loaming will be more than anticipated on Taylor Hill. Starting this coming week state inspections this month for the town will begin. Mr. Wood asked Mr. Weed if more than one part of Old Claremont Road was ready for pipe. Mr. Weed stated that would have to be discussed in the water project. Three new containers have been received at the Transfer Station per Mr. Weed. Mr. Lessels stated that he and Mr. Weed have been working together since he received his Weighmaster license. Mr. Lessels stated he would be taking a solid waste operator's training that will allow him to assist at the Transfer Station.

Chief Connors commented on his written report. He stated that right now several police vehicles are getting new tires. Chief Connors commented on the wear and tear on vehicles in the course of their duty. Mr. Wood asked about the speed counters. Chief Connors stated that he spoke to a state representative about the location he is allowed to place these speed counters. He has heard good things about helping address traffic concerns. Mr. Wood commented on the Chief's recognition of one of the officers in his department working a difficult case in recent weeks. Chief Connors stated that he gave one of the accommodation letters of this officer to Human Resources. He stated that when an officer goes above and beyond he wants to make sure they are recognized for their work. Chief Connors stated that his team is working together to get these guys locked up. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that the town is fortunate staying steady with the

core group they have and this reflects on his leadership and appreciates their hard work. Chief Connors stated that it has been a challenging year with fatal crashes within town. Ms. Houghton stated that the Selectboard should recognize with a letter any officer that goes above and beyond their call of duty

Chief LaFlam stated that we are 2/3 through the year with 24 calls, and 8 medical calls. The call volume is down on medical. We only had one missed call for rescue squad with the new system. He stated that he is concerned about burnout and hopefully down the road they are able to add to the roster. We are starting to work on the foundation part of the fire department building. Chief LaFlam thanked the Selectboard for the positive comments and posts they have put in social media praising the fire department staff. This month is vehicle inspection, and hope the tires will pass the inspection. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that it was good to see the fire department working on their grounds. Mr. Lessels stated that the thing he has with the recreation department is also good.

Mr. Hassett stated he had nothing to add to his report. Three big hemlocks that were rotten have been taken down. Mr. Hassett stated Forest Hill Cemetery once had a fountain in the cemetery and he had planned to put it up until he noticed the cast iron bowl was broken. He'd like to find someone to fix it. Mr. Wood suggested he contact Mr. Garrett Neil. We have an inspection next week for the truck, we may need some new tires.

Mr. West stated he had nothing to add to his report. The railing system at the library is completed. He has spent the month doing odds and ends around town fixing anything that came up. Mr. West stated his vehicle will be inspected. Mr. Wood stated that he overheard someone comment on Patch Park, and praised Mr. West and Ms. Vigneau for their work on Patch Park.

Ms. Vigneau stated that there were a lot of kids signed up for soccer. Games begin on 9.19.2022. Ms. Vigneau stated that the pool was closed for the season. Mr. Wood questioned when the last day of tryouts would be. Ms. Vigneau stated that there are almost 40 kids for the Under-11-year olds.

Ms. Wright stated that past month has been very busy. Two MS reports were completed. The BMSI training was completed last week. Budget season is here. Mr. Wood asked if the meetings with the department heads were scheduled. Ms. Wright stated that she has spoken with them and is finalizing the schedule and once this is done she will email them. She stated she received an updated Avitar quote, and has some questions about the quote, but has not yet heard back from the Avitar representative. She would also like to speak to Ms. Town and Ms. Chaffee about the software. Ms. Wright stated that both Primex and Town Counsel have approved the property live burn training in October. Ms. Wright stated that the fuel and propane bid has gone out and is due back on 10.5.2022. Mr. Wood asked if Selectman Mr. McCarthy in Alstead has responded with anything concerning the bids. Ms. Wright said that he has not.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to approve the live burn agreement. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes) Ms. Houghton (yes).

Mr. Lessels commented on Mr. West, recommending that he report to Ms. Vigneau for his duties. He stated he would like the Selectboard to consider this change. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that she would be more comfortable with Ms. Emerson being his supervisor, as Ms. Wright may have too many present responsibilities. Mr. Lessels stated that his intent was to suggest that someone else beside himself supervise Mr. West. Mr. West stated that reporting to Ms. Emerson may make more sense since she has experience in that work. Mr. Wood stated that he would speak to Ms. Emerson. Mr. Lessels commented on Ms. Wright, and stated he respects her efforts in the amount of responsibilities she has taken on.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to approve minutes. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes) Ms. Houghton (yes).

Consent Agenda

Mr. Lessels motioned to approve the consent agenda as printed. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes) Ms. Houghton (yes).

Other Business

Ms. Blouin-Andrus commented on the light posts that if someone wanted them they would come and get them. Mr. Hassett stated that the lamp posts are gone. Ms. Houghton asked Ms. Vigneau if the pictures she took of Old Home Day could be placed on a USB and given to the Historical Society.

Mr. Wood asked if the Police Department does awards. Chief Connors stated that the Police Department keeps a draft award letter. Chief LaFlam stated that the Fire Department does not give awards. Chief Connors stated that they have awards for Valor and Life-Saving.

Chief Connors stated that before he signs it into policy at the Police Department he would want it to have Selectboard review. Mr. Wood asked if the awards are directed from the state level. Chief Connors stated that its per department, and that there is no set state standard for awards for certain criteria. Chief Connors stated that the individual awards are up to the discretion of the department, but that ribbons are the same across all departments. Mr. Wood stated that he was not aware that police ribbons were the same across all state departments.

Mr. Lessels stated to the department heads that we're coming up on budget season, and hopes that no one takes what the Selectboard says personally. He stated that the Selectboard's purpose is to find synergy so that there can be a return of investment on tax payer investment. Mr. Lessels stated that he hopes no department head takes things

personally. Mr. Lessels stated that it will be a tough year financially, and that if personal animosities exist they must be ignored so that the town can work together.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked the department heads that their line items are where they should be. When they start working on budgets everything is where it needs to be. She asked them to double-check everything.

Chief Connor stated that with the new pay increase distribution, it's going to impact the budget in a positive way because everyone in March will receive a portion of their increase and the remaining increase will go into effect on their anniversary date. The way it's set up it levels out the budget, but setting up the budget to include these things is going to be difficult. Ms. Wright stated that Ms. Dezan has worked on the spreadsheets to ensure that data can be translated. Chief Connors stated he understood that during the budget discussion it would first go to the Selectboard and then the Finance Committee. Mr. Wood stated that many of the line items will have to be adjusted given that certain rates are increasing. Ms. Wright stated that her goal is to have multiple eyes on the budgets, and have them back to the department heads in ample time to review before speaking to the selectboard. Ms. Wright identified 9.21.2022 is the date that Chief Connors is scheduled to give the presentation of his budget. Chief Connors stated that he would like to have the budget ahead of time. Chief Connors stated that he would want to be prepared with data prior to having an open discussion with the Selectboard. Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked Ms. Wright to send out when the department heads have their budget presentation. Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked Ms. Wright if the present budget presentation dates were chosen.

Mr. Carter asked when the Finance Committee would meet. Mr. Wood stated that once Ms. Wright sends the numbers from the spreadsheet out the Finance Committee could meet to discuss. Mr. Lessels commented on Ms. Houghton's participation on the Finance Committee. Mr. Lessels stated that if he were the Chair of the Finance Committee, he would be coordinating meetings now, and not wait for the Selectboard. Mr. Carter stated that he has not been contacted by anyone to say that the Finance Committee can commence meetings. Mr. Wood stated that the department heads need to meet with the Selectboard prior to them meeting with the Finance Committee. Mr. Wood stated that once Ms. Wright schedules department heads, this schedule can be sent to the Finance Committee so that they can begin scheduling meetings as well. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that the Finance Committee should meet to elect a chair-person and prepare for when the department heads are completed with their budget presentations with the Selectboard. Ms. Houghton stated that she does not see it being done. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that they are elected in their positions and that they have to meet and coordinate their Committee on their own.

Mr. Wood asked Ms. Wright if she wanted a copy of the live burn agreement presented to Chief LaFlam. Ms. Wright answered once Chief Laflam has the landowner sign it then she will need a copy.

Ms. Wright asked if she could present her budget tonight. She stated that at the end of packet was the proposed budget for next year. For the three of us in the office she asked about defining the job with the correct GL account. Chief Connors asked if discussions regarding certain employees in budget presentations should be in non-public. Mr. Wood

stated that all budget discussion would be done in public meetings. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that no discussion of an employee would be needed, and if it were then a non-public meeting could be called.

Mr. Lessels stated that the Selectboard is going to start at the top. He stated that the Selectboard's pay is buried in the water/sewer budget for non-transparent reason. In an effort to be more transparent, he stated that the board may want to consider reallocating the selectmen's pay in the department where most of the work is being done. He stated that we are going to start here at the top and with transparency.

Mr. Wood called the meeting to recess at 7:46 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:59 p.m.

Ms. Wright stated that health trust rates will not be available until October. The one line that we need to revisit is our telephone line, so last year's costs were placed in the budget. She stated that a few more chairs will be needed in the office. She has increased the training and seminar line in next year's budget. Ms. Wright stated that many of the same numbers were placed in the budget from last year. Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked about the line item for dental insurance, and Ms. Wright stated that this was a family plan. Chief Connors stated that with the phone line comes into the building, that is our inter-office communication is the third-party company. Ms. Wright stated that the Selectmen's Office and Town Clerk Tax Collector is still waiting for high speed internet in the office and those line items will be adjusted accordingly. Ms. Chaffe will be coordinating this because of her static line that she needs for motor vehicle. Chief Connors stated that they have to have a static line because of the needs of their department. Ms. Wright commented on the financial administration assessing clerk portion of her budget. Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked a non-public could be had next week regarding the assessing clerk.

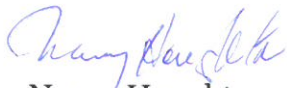
Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to enter Non-Public session: RSA 91-A:3 II(a) at 8:15pm – Personnel - 2nd Ms. Houghton. Roll call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Ms. Lessels (yes), Ms. Houghton (yes).


Mr. Lessels motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes) Ms. Houghton (yes).

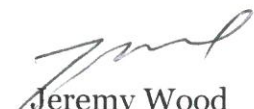
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus


Nancy Houghton


Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on September 14, 2022)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1
RSA 91-A:3 II (a-Personnel)
September 7, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m.
Community Room**

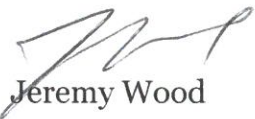
Selectboard present: Jeremy Wood (Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus, Jeff Lessels (Vice-Chair), Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary
Keith Weed, Highway Department
Kelly Wright, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Weed asked if an employee at the transfer station, who has taken on additional responsibilities, could receive an increase in their base pay. Mr. Wood stated that Mr. Weed should speak with Human Resources about where on the pay scale this increase would place this employee. Consensus of the Selectboard was reached for Mr. Weed to proceed with pursuing this pay scale increase.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to exit non-public session at 8:20 p.m., 2nd: Mr. Lessels.
Roll call: Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Ms. Andrus (yes), Mr. Wood (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes).

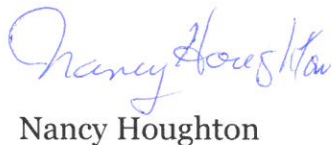
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary


Jeremy Wood


Jeffrey Lessels


Shelly Blouin-Andrus


William Rescsanski


Nancy Houghton