

**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
SELECTBOARD WORKSHOP
NOVEMBER 5, 2019**

Selectboard Present: Steve Neill (Chair), Jeffrey Lessels, Albert St.Pierre

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis – Administrator
Keith Weed – Highway Superintendent

Meeting was called to order at 3:45 AM.

The Selectboard told Ms. Dennis that the Finance Committee had not received minutes for the last three meetings and were inquiring. Ms. Dennis stated that it was an oversight and she forgot that she was responsible to forward those to the Finance Committee. Additionally, the Finance Committee would like October Budgets and updated revenues for next meeting and any of the smaller budgets that are completed.

The Highway budget was reviewed; Mr. Weed explained that he was looking for additional funds to clean all the catch basins within the Town as they had not been done for several years. Mr. Weed has requested \$350,000 for paving and construction projects, he presented several different scenarios for using these funds. Mr. Weed explained to the Selectboard that the Highway Department was on a good track to have nearly all the roads in Town repaved or resurfaced; but a previous Board took funds out of the budget and recommended the Highway Department shim the roads instead. Mr. Weed also requested that the budget line for Crack and Chip Sealing remain level funded at \$160,000. After some discussion the Selectboard agreed that it would be in the Town's best interest to get back on track with the plans to repave and resurface roads. Mr. Weed is requesting additional funds to purchase a trailer to haul the Bobcat and Excavator as they have been borrowing one, but it seems as though it's time for the Town to purchase their own. The Selectboard agreed, but requested the funds be added to Capital Outlay as it's a onetime purchase. The Selectboard and Mr. Weed discussed the above requests and their overall potential increase the Highway Department budget. The Selectboard suggested a cut to paving and Construction Projects back to \$275,000 and Crack/Chip Sealing back to \$75,000. The Selectboard would like to see the final Highway budget with a three percent increase to wages, along with adjustments to the benefit lines accordingly and the increase in the health insurance rates.

The Transfer Station budget was also reviewed; there is no significant increase to the budget. Mr. Weed has budgeted additional funds in the Dues, Subscriptions, Licenses and Education line because every time staffing changes at the Transfer Station new employee need to go to training and get DES certifications. The Selectboard questioned the Demo budget line, after looking at a more current budget report, the line was increase to \$36,000. Ms. Dennis will make an adjustment of three percent to the salary lines and adjust the benefit lines accordingly. Additionally, she will work to make the 2020 budget better reflect the hours worked by the Full-time Highway employee who has been driving for the Transfer Station.

Mr. Weed left the meeting.

Ms. Dennis updated the Selectboard on the properties that were taken by Tax Collector's Deed. Mr. Gary Knight Jr and Mrs. Alichia Knight submitted their letter of intent to repurchase the property at 928 Old Claremont Road and requested the Selectboard waive the 10% penalty. Mr. Neill made a motion not to grant this request, seconded by Mr. Lessels. Motion passed to not waive the 10% penalty.

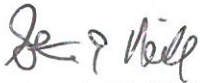
The Selectboard worked with Ms. Dennis to set the tax rate. The unofficial tax rate was up \$2.58 from the 2018 rate, to \$40.12. Fund balance and overlay was discussed, in addition to the outstanding Utility appeals/abatements and their effect on the fund balance. The Selectboard decided to use the maximum amount the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) will allow the Town to use, leaving a fund balance amount of 5%. Using this amount the tax rate is increased to \$39.11, making it up \$1.57. The updated information was submitted to the DRA and the official tax rate should be received tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT:

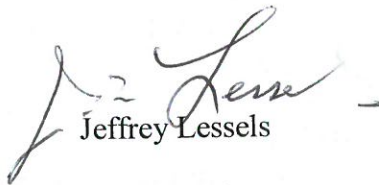
Mr. Neill moved to adjourn this meeting. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. With all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Dennis

Approved,



Steven A. Neill, Chair



Jeffrey Lessels



Albert St. Pierre

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the November 20, 2019, Selectboard meeting.)