

Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
July 1, 2020 @ 6:30pm Zoom meeting

Selectboard present and location: Chairman Albert St. Pierre (community room), John Streeter (community room), Jeff Lessels (community room), William Rescsanski (community room), Scott Wade (community room).

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via Zoom)
Kelly Wright- Administrative Assistant (via Zoom)
Patricia Chaffee- Town Clerk/ Tax Collector (Via Zoom)
David Duquette- Water & Wastewater Department
Keith Weed- Highway & Transfer Station Department
Chief Patrick Connors- Police & Ambulance Department
Chief Charles Baraly- Fire Department

Public Present: Patrick Adrian, Alissa Bascom, Rosie Smith-Hull, Luci Smith, Steven Neill, Tom Cobb, Daryl Osgood

Chairman St. Pierre called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Wade made a motion to go into non-public session on 91:A 3 II (c) reputations, the motion was seconded by Mr. Streeter and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

The Selectboard reconvened to public session at 6:29 PM.

Chairman St. Pierre welcomed everyone to the meeting at 6:33 PM. The pledge of allegiance was recited. Chairman St. Pierre recited the protocol for holding public zoom meetings due to the COVID- 19 executive order per Governor Christopher Sununu. Any motions will be on a roll call for the recording secretary.

Chairman St. Pierre opened the Water Rate Public Hearing at 6:40 PM by reading the public posting notice and stated where the public postings were made available.

Public Hearing:

Mr. Wade stated the current water rate is .0235 per cubic feet and the proposed increase will be .0420 per cubic feet. Mr. Wade said it's unfortunate the 80% increase came all at once and not spread out over a number of years. There are issues that need to be dealt with now and the board plans to make the best decision possible. He went on to explain the increased water rate is not to completely fund the interconnection project in North Charlestown. Ms. Chaffee prepared two sample water bills. The first one is for an average home and the increase rate would be

approximately \$16.00 additional per quarter. The second sample is for a larger business and the increased rate would be approximately \$280.00 additional per quarter. The new rates will go into effect July 15th.

The Water/Wastewater department has been underfunded for years. In approximately, 2001 or 2002 the Water and Wastewater departments borrowed money from the general fund. The original plan was the department would budget yearly payments to repay the general fund. This didn't happen. The remaining balance owed is \$350,000. The current Selectboard would like to start repaying the general fund by adding an additional \$50,000 to the Water/Wastewater budget. It will take seven years to repay the general fund.

Ms. Chaffee explained the Water/Wastewater department operates on what is billed. There was approximately \$4,000 remaining at the end of the year. She explained some Towns use different formulas and she compared usage fees. There was a request if Patty could put the comparison on the website, for residents to see how Charlestown compares to other NH Towns. Ms. Chaffee agreed she could do this.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding whether or not a portion of the water rate increase would be allotted to the Interconnection Project in North Charlestown. Chairman St. Pierre answered the increase will help pay for some of the engineering costs. Next year the Selectboard plans to propose a \$2 million bond to fund the interconnect water project in North Charlestown. The plan will deliver water from Charlestown's primary well to North Charlestown. The well in North Charlestown has arsenic levels that exceed the State guidelines. The Selectboard have considered numerous other options including drilling a new well and enhancing filters but after the research and consulting with the engineers and Water Superintendent, Dave Duquette, the water interconnect was the best choice to ensure clean and safe water. Mr. Lessels reported if the Town fails to address this, then the Town could potentially face up to a \$4,000 per day in State fines for not being in compliance. The board estimates the total project will cost up to \$5 million but grants are expected to cover the majority portion.

Chairman St. Pierre closed the public hearing at 7:12 PM.

Mr. Wade made a motion to increase the water rate to .0420 per 100 cubic feet; Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

Public Comment:

State Representative Steven Smith joined the meeting. He asked if the board would reconsider changing the title of the recent job posting from Social Distance Enforcer to Pool Monitor. There was discussion regarding the \$5.50 pay difference for the enforcer and lifeguard. Lifeguards are

there to save lives and should be paid more. No decision was made to change the lifeguard's rate of pay. The board did agree to change the name to social distance monitor.

Mr. Cobb asked if the Selectboard has heard anything from the Beautification Committee regarding the parking on Main Street. Mr. Cobb plans on paving their parking lot within the next few weeks. The board answered the Beautification committee is talking to the NH Department of Transportation.

Mr. Daryl Osgood from Old Acworth Stage Road was present and asked if the board has made a decision regarding his gravel and labor invoice he gave the board in January. The invoice was to repair the damage done to the road from the logger. Mr. Osgood stated he had previous permission from the Selectboard and Mr. Keith Weed to work on the Class VI road and there should be minutes about this agreement. After discussion Mr. St. Pierre reported there are two issues the board will need to look into before making a decision. The first one he would like to see the minutes giving Mr. Osgood permission to work on the Class VI road and he would like to review the gravel invoice.

Selectboard Comment:

Mr. Rescsanski asked if the Selectboard was aware that the planning board acted as the zoning board of adjustments when they gave KanDy Investments a defacto variance to operate a six unit apartment building in Zone A.. The board asked if this could be discussed at the July 15th meeting.

Mr. Wade reported he had spoken to Chief Connors regarding his concerns at the intersection of Old Springfield Rd and Springfield Rd. Motorists travel at excessive speed and there are a lot of pedestrians on this road. Mr. Wade recommends putting up temporary barricades to deter traffic from using Old Springfield Rd as a short cut. After further discussion it was decided more information was needed before a decision could be made.

The Selectboard scheduled a communication workshop for Wednesday July 8, 2020 at 4:30pm.

Department Reports:

Water/ Wastewater:

Mr. Dave Duquette reported he was on vacation last week. They did routine checks and State paperwork. They have several issues they handled.

Police Department: Chief Connors the department has been busy. Criminal activity has increased since last year at this time. From March 1, 2020 through July 1, 2020 the department has had 43 investigations dealing with varies criminal and domestic issues. Last year the department had 13. Chief plans on attending a police transparency workshop next week.

Ambulance Department: Chief reported the department has had some leadership changes. Mr. Aaron Putnam will take over the Captain position and Ms. Mandy Wright is Lieutenant. Chief would like to recommend the Selectboard appoint the following to the Ambulance Department Sustainability Committee, Mr. Scott Wade, Mr. Robert Davis, Mrs. Diane Town, Mr. Kevin McFarland, Mr. Jerry Maslan, Ms. Trina Dearborn, Ms. Mandy Wright and Chief Patrick Connors. The Committee will meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays from 6 to 7 pm starting on July 9, 2020. The meeting will be posted and minutes will be taken.

Mr. Wade made a motion to accept Chief Connors recommended appointments for the Ambulance Department Sustainability committee; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

Transfer Station: Mr. Keith Weed reported he signed a new glass contract with Keene recycling center but has cancelled it. The load he brought to the center was contaminated costing the Town \$1,800.00. Mr. Weed explained he just does not have the manpower to sort and clean glass to Keene's specifications. He is working on a new contract with New London which will cost the Town \$35.00/ per ton.

There was discussion regarding Tom Cobb's transfer station stickers for his tenants on 200 Main St. The concern was these are businesses renting commercial space not renters in apartments. Mr. Cobb stated he understood the policy to read that if he purchased his tenants a transfer station sticker it would be a residential sticker not a commercial sticker. Commercial stickers will require his tenants to go over the scales. After a lengthy discussion Mr. Streeter made a motion to authorize all four of Tom Cobb's business tenants to purchase a residential transfer station permit, Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

It was also agreed by the Selectboard to rewrite the transfer permit policy.

The Selectboard discussed Mr. Loren Reed's letter of concern regarding ice issues at the transfer station. The board would like time to review this before deciding.

Highway Department: Mr. Keith Weed reported the department has been paving in North Charlestown and working on culverts.

He received a complaint regarding a resident who put up a fence right in the road of Octagon Rd. Mr. Weed stated this will cause problem with winter maintenance and with utility companies

accessing the powerlines. Ms. Liz Emerson will write them a letter requesting they take the fence down immediately.

Fire Department: Chief Charles Baraly reported he has not given out a lot of firework permits. He still would like to amend the current firework policy to include different types of fireworks. No decision was made, Chief Connors and Chief Baraly will review the existing policy and get back to the Board.

Recreational Department: Ms. Patricia Chaffee reported the committee would be meeting on Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 6:00pm. There was discussion about the rate difference between the lifeguards and the pool monitor and was there money in the budget to adjust this. No decision was made. Mr. Rescsanski asked if COVID-19 relief funds would help offset the cost of hiring a pool monitor. Mr. Lessels made a motion to authorize the recreational department to hire a social distancing pool monitor; Mr. Streeter seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (no), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

Administrator Report: Ms. Jessica Dennis reported there will be an onsite visit for companies who wish to place a bid for the Acworth Road clean up project on July 8, 2020.

Ms. Dennis has met with Mr. Jeff Rousch about the roof leaking at the library. During the torrential downpours there was significant water in the basement. After Hodgkins and Son's and Mr. Rousch looked into the issue further it was agreed the leak was between the brick and internal side of the building. Mr. St. Pierre also reviewed the leak. Ms. Dennis was going to talk with Ms. Judi Baraly about the LCHIP grant and who would be qualified to repair the roof leak.

Mr. Streeter made a motion to seal the non-public RSA 91-A:3 (C reputation) meeting minutes from July 1, 2020 at 6 pm for two years, Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

Ex-officio Committee Reports:

Beautification Committee: The committee will be meeting with the State of NH DOT.

Conservation Commission: The committee will be putting out to bid the 1110 Acworth Road clean up project. There will be a clean up day scheduled for July 11, 2020.

School Board: Nothing to report. The next meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

Site Base Committee: Haven't met yet.

Finance Committee: The next meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2020 at 6:00 pm. Ms. Dennis will confirm this date with Mr. Dave Richardson and post the meeting.

Heritage Committee: Mr. Streeter was unable to attend the last meeting.

Planning Board: The Board approved a childcare center and have been working on the master plan.

Town Hall: Nothing to report.

Mr. Wade made a motion to approve the following meeting minutes:

June 17, 2020 – Regular Meeting

June 17, 2020- Non Public (Reputations)

June 19, 2020- Workshop

June 19, 2020 – Non Public (Reputations SEALED)

June 24, 2020- Workshop

June 24, 2020- Non Public (Reputations SEALED)

June 24, 2020- Non Public (Compensation SEALED)

Mr. Streeter seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

Mr. Lessels made a motion to accept the consent agenda; Mr. Streeter seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (no); motion passed.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Mr. Wade moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 pm; Mr. Streeter seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes); motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelly N Wright

Albert St. Pierre

Jeffrey Lessels

Scott Wade

John Streeter

William Rescsanski

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes; any corrections will be made on July 15, 2020 at the select boards meeting)