

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
August 5, 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
Kelly Wright- Administrative Assistant (via Zoom)
Patricia Chaffee- Town Clerk/ Tax Collector (Via Zoom)
Keith Weed- Highway and Transfer Station Department
David Duquette- Water/ Wastewater Department
Chief Patrick Connors- Police & Ambulance Department

Chairman St. Pierre called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm. 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. The meeting will be recorded.

Crack Sealing Bid Openings:

Mr. Keith Weed reported there are 21 streets that need to have the cracks sealed. Mr. St. Pierre proceeded with the opening the bids.

1. Vermont Road Works LLC- Total \$23,100.00 Certificate of insurance and liability were included
2. Maurice's Enterprises LLC- Total \$23,425.00. Certificate of insurance and liability were included

The board will have Mr. Weed review these and report back to the board.

Public Comment:

Mrs. Nancy Houghton asked about the previous discussion regarding the intersection Old Springfield Rd and Springfield Rd and the cost to the Town. Ms. Houghton feels there are other intersections that are also a safety concern and should be addressed. Ms. Shelley Andrus also voiced her concern with the Old Springfield Rd and Springfield Rd intersection and how it will be blocked during the work. Mr. Weed reported the road will stay open while the road crew is working on the intersection and NH DOT has offered to assist with this project. Mr. Weed said the cost would be minimal to the Town. He estimates it would require one load of asphalt which costs \$65.00 per ton.

On August 8, 2020 Ms. Dennis, Chief Connors, Mr. Weed and Mr. John Kallfelz one of the engineers from NH DOT met to review the intersection of Old Springfield Rd and Springfield Rd and the Beautification Coalition's plan for downtown. The NHDOT has assumed the Town was responsible for the intersection but it actually is the NHDOT responsibility. NHDOT recommended eliminating a granite island at the intersection and having one opening with an increased size of 60-65 foot. Mr. Weed will ask NHDOT to put all the specifications on paper for the potential change at Old Springfield Rd and report back to the board. The board agreed a hearing would be required. There was discussion regarding the speed limits on certain roads,

turn lanes on the right hand side to help decrease accidents and adding sidewalks and changing sidewalks from asphalt to concrete. The board decided to have Chief Connors and Mr. Wade review other roads of concerns with excessive speed and safety issues for both motor vehicles and pedestrians and report back to the board.

Communications:

The board discussed and has recommended all Town Boards and Committees shall take meeting minutes. Meeting minutes need to be either emailed or hand delivered to Ms. Chaffee so she can post them on the website. There was a brief discussion about training someone else to post meeting minutes if either Ms. Dennis or Ms. Chaffee weren't available to post meeting information on the website. No decision was made.

Upcoming Meeting Items:

August, 26 2020 Selectboard Workshop

8:00 am –9:00 am at the Community Room- Tax Deeding with Ms. Chaffee

9:30am-11:00 am at the Old Town Hall- Training on public meetings, postings and minutes with Ms. Dennis.

Library Comcast Update:

The work hasn't been completed yet. There need to be additional Ethernet lines run before Comcast can finish the high speed upgrade. Ms. Haynes has called All Service to run the new lines and then will schedule Comcast to come back. Mr. Streeter stated there are several separate lines and many of them are old and not up to speed. By adding one new HUB on the Main floor should give the entire building better internet connection. This will be beneficial for Board and Committee meetings who choose to hold Zoom meetings in addition to residents accessing WIFI outside the building. The upgrade will help achieve better video and audio.

Facebook Policy:

Mr. Lessels reported the Town should have a Facebook policy for employees and Committee members. Ms. Town has been working on creating an informative Facebook page for residents. Mr. Lessels feels the best place for residents to get information they want, is to attend meetings, call or stop in at the Town office. Chief Connors recommends the policy outlines who you are representing either a department or as yourself. It also falls under freedom of speech.

Mr. Streeter stated it is important for Zoom meetings to be available for residents to access. Residents will hear first hand the discussions and decisions made at board and committee meetings. It would be nice if the Zoom meetings can be posted so the public can access them. The non-public portion of these meetings will need to be addressed. No decision was made but the board will discuss once the Library internet upgrade is completed.

3- Way Stop Signs:

Mr. Wade asked Chief Connors if it would be beneficial to put a 3-way stop sign at the intersection of Sullivan St and Acworth Rd. After discussion the consensus of the board is they would like Chief Connors to review and suggest additional 3-way stop signs.

Department Head Reports:

Water/ Wastewater - Mr. David Duquette reported the department has been working on routine paperwork, cooper levels and State reports. There is an old water line from the 1960's on the top of Paris Avenue that will need to replace. Dig Safe will come in and it will take a day to fix. Mr. Duquette said the department will notify residents when the water will be turned off for a day.

The Best Western water line that goes across the bridge to Springfield, VT has been a concern for Mr. Duquette for the last three years. He explained if it breaks it will drain the Town's well in no time. He has been requesting Holiday Inn fix this for years. Now that the hotel has changed ownership he is asking the board for direction. After discussion the board agreed to give The Best Western a deadline in which to give the Board of Selectmen a plan.

Mr. Streeter made a motion to direct either Mr. Duquette or Ms. Chaffee to send a letter to The Best Western requesting them to present a plan within 30 days to the Water Commissioners explaining how they will address and fix the water pipe issue under the old toll bridge. If the Town doesn't receive a plan then the Town will shut the water off. Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on roll call; the motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

A copy of this letter will be mailed to Vermont Department of Transportation.

Mr. Duquette asked the board's permission to spend \$6,909.00 to clean out both water tanks. This should be done every five years. After discussion the board decided to table this until the next selectmen's meeting.

Police Department:

Chief Connors report the department has handled the following:

1. 4,465 calls for service
2. 58 arrests
3. 415 motor vehicle stops
4. 39 crashes
5. 13 search warrants

The new Dodge SUV is road ready. It just needs computers installed. Mr. Weed had the highway department do some work on the brakes on another cruiser. The Town is still in need of a mechanic.

Chief Connors has applied for the Highway Safety Grant which will help with extra patrols for traffic violations. There will be another grant available in the future called the Operations Grant that Chief will be applying for.

Chief Connors spoke on behalf of the Whelen detail. Whelen hired the police department to provide detail and is reimbursing the Town for this service.

Ambulance Department:

Chief Connors reported the department has had the following:

1. 292 ambulance calls
2. 188 Charlestown responded to
3. 66 Golden Cross responded to
4. 67 Springfield Fire Department responded to
5. 8 Walpole Ambulance responded to

The department has had some good recruiting and is waiting for several background checks to come back. There are 14 active members. The Ambulance Sustainability Committee has been meeting on the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 6pm -7pm in the Community

Room. There have been a lot of productive conversations and the committee has set up some guest speakers to attend upcoming meetings. At the next meeting Mr. Mark Houghton from the Walpole Fire/Ambulance Department will talk to the group about how Walpole manages their combined departments.

Transfer Station:

Mr. Weed reported the department has been having issues with residents treating the Town employees poorly. However, it was previously mentioned that employees had been spit on. Mr. Weed has inquired, and this is untrue. Ms. Chaffee said there was previous discussion regarding a solid waste task force. This committee could assist with the master plan.

Highway Department:

Mr. Weed reported there was no damage with the last rain storm. The previous rain storm caused more damage and the department is still cleaning up from it.

The road side mower will be picked up and for the next six weeks one of the crew members will be doing road side mowing.

The new flatbed trailer will be in on Monday.

Mr. Weed has left messages for the NH Bridge Division to discuss the Borough Bridge and the hydraulic study done from the engineer. Mr. Weed would like to put the Bridge project out to bid this year and see if it can be address. In 2019 the Town received unanticipated monies in the amount of \$98,000 and as far as the Town knows it will receive the same amount of monies this year.

Mr. Weed has hired a new employee and hopefully he will start next week.

Agenda Items on August 12, 2020 Workshop

1. Main Street & Sidewalks
2. Transfer Station
3. Water/Bond/Fees
4. Computer Security
5. Purchasing Policy
6. Website

Recreational Department: Nothing to report

Fire Department: Nothing to report

Cemetery Trustees: Nothing to Report

Administrators Report:

Ms. Jessica Dennis reported the board has a request from the Fire Department to recruit new hires by advertising via Facebook. After discussion the board agreed to allow this if advertising is run by the Selectboard's office first.

Fall Mountain School District is looking at reopening and using a Hybrid Model for the 2020-2021 year. More information will be determined in the near future.

Appointments to the Ambulance Sustainability Committee were discussed. Ms. Dennis reported Chief Connors was not originally listed as a member and was not appointed either. After discussion, Mr. Streeter made a motion to appoint Chief Patrick Connors to Ambulance Sustainability Committee; Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

Melanson and Sons came to look at the library roof and determined there is a hole in the roof but upon further discovery found the water was not solely coming from the roof. A leader box was suggested to catch the water coming off the east side of the building by the gable. Ms. Dennis is waiting for a quote. Ms. Dennis has also sent a pictures of the handicapped ramp and hallway Hodgkin's and Son so they can see the continued water coming in.

Ms. Dennis has received an email from Mrs. Sharon Francis asking for further discussion about the sidewalks and parking spaces. Ms. Dennis has all of the previous plans the Beautification Coalition has proposed. The board may want a cost comparison of concrete verses asphalt sidewalks. Mr. Weed stated in 2005 the Town voted on asphalt sidewalks and since then he has been replacing the concrete sidewalks with asphalt.

Approving New Hires & Interviewing:

Ms. Chaffee asked the Board for clarification on the hiring process. The departments are not consistent with the process and would like a clear direction from the board. Mr. Streeter stated it is important that each board member has knowledge of who works in Town and what their positions are. It would be beneficial to have a hiring policy. Mr. Wade said the department heads should have the final say. In the past a board member and department head have been involved in the interviews for some departments, but not all.

The updated corrective deed between Mascoma Bank and the Town of Charlestown has been done. The maintenance agreement between Mascoma Bank, KanDy Investments and the Town is not ready to be signed. The sale to KanDy Investments has been pushed back again pending the corrective deed.

Minutes:

Mr. Lessels made a motion to accept the following meeting minutes:

July 15, 2020- Regular Meeting

Mr. Wade seconded the motion.

Mr. Rescsanski read the following statement:

"The Workshop Meeting Minutes for July 22, 2020 says that a post I made on Facebook was disrespectful, unappreciated and it caused anger amongst Town office staff. There are no words that describe my feelings toward any Town employee. The post says nothing like "that person is untrustworthy" or doing something wrong.

I appreciate the time and effort Town employees spend answering my questions. I do not want to offend Town employees and the Selectboard, so I deleted the post. I regret that Town employees and the Selectboard are unwilling to show me the same consideration and feel the need to write a lengthy complaint about what happened in the minutes.

The illegal decision referred to in the complaint is the Selectboard instructing Ms. Emmerson not to follow state and local laws about when a zoning variance is needed. Ignoring the law means residents on Arbor Way and other stakeholders are being denied their right to know what is happening and do something about it. Kandy Investments plans to use the building behind Mascoma Bank as a six-unit apartment building. By law, they should have to request a variance from the zoning board of adjustments. By law stakeholders must be notified and given a say in the matter. Denying residents' rights while we wait for the Master Plan to be updated violates our Oath of office. The Oath does not have a disclaimer about when it is alright to ignore the law. I strongly disagree with the board's decision not to begin following all state and local zoning laws and ordinances.

Mr. Wade, what you said about me not having the authority to go above department heads for information and not having the authority to tell the Planning Board of Administrators that I think they may have done something illegal is extremely hypocritical. Do not criticize me for trying to determine what is going on and fix it, when the Selectboard is choosing not to obey the law. Choosing not to tell certain residents what is going on and give them a say in the matter."

There were no amendments made. On roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (abstained), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

Mr. Lessels made a motion to accept the following meeting minutes:

July, 22 2020- Workshop

July, 22 2020- Non Public (Reputation)

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

Consent Agenda:

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

Old Business:

Route 12A Guardrail: Mr. St. Pierre said last year a letter was sent to NHDOT requesting a guardrail on the part of Route 12A along the portion of Meadow Brook, about a quarter mile south of Pecor Road.

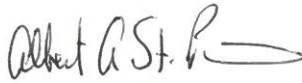
After discussion it was agreed to resend letters. Mr. Streeter made a motion to direct Ms. Dennis to send letters regarding the guardrail request to all the state representatives and NHDOT to fix the guard rail issue.

Mutual Aid agreement with Springfield: Nothing to report.

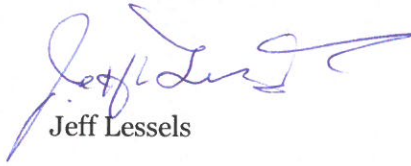
SCA- Nothing to report

Mr. Lessels made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 pm; Mr. Streeter seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on roll call motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

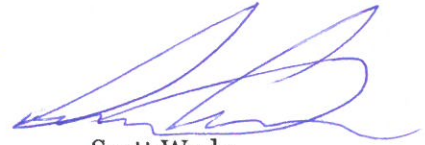
Respectfully Submitted,
Kelly N Wright



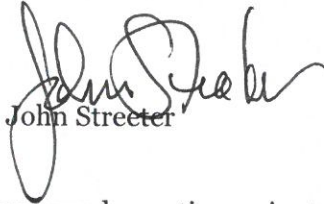
Albert St. Pierre



Jeff Lessels



Scott Wade



John Streeter



William Rescsanski

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on August 19, 2020)

