

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Workshop Meeting Minutes
November 25, 2020 @ 8:00am Zoom meeting**

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)
Kelly Wright- Administrative Assistant
Patricia Chaffee- Tax Collector/Town Clerk (via zoom)

Chairman St. Pierre called the meeting to order at 8:00 am. 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.

Ms. Dennis voiced her concern with the entire Selectboard not working together as a team. She brought up the following situations:

- Discussions outside of non-publics have been out on the streets and residents have come into the office to ask about them.
- Previous decisions being changed for different departments
- Quarantined protocols
- Eagle Times was called on the Planning Board
- Property owners were contacted after a non-public.

All of these causes more work for the staff to field these questions and concerns while still maintaining confidentiality. Mr. St. Pierre responded he has asked Ms. Dennis to schedule a meeting with the Town attorney on Wednesday December 2, 2020.

Quarantine Protocols and Covid Pay:

The Selectboard discussed the current quarantine protocol and Covid pay. After a lengthy discussion the board decided to change the current protocol and Covid pay.

Mr. Wade made a motion that the Town employees will follow the Governor's guidelines on quarantine if they travel outside of New England; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (no), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes). (4-1)

Mr. Wade made a motion effective today (November 25, 2020), that any Town employee who willingly chooses to travel outside of New England, will self-quarantine without pay. If the employee has sick or vacation time, they may use this. Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion and, on a roll call; the motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (no), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (no), Mr. Rescsanski (yes). (3-2).

Budget:

Ms. Dennis reported in 2020 she had the Selectboard's approval to hire a part-time person for the selectmen's office. Due to Covid this was not possible. The workload for Ms. Dennis as finance director and administrative assistive to the Selectboard is too much for one person to manage. Ms. Wright and Ms. Town also are managing multiple day to day tasks and not able to ever get ahead on projects some days its "putting out fires all day". Since the Board is meeting weekly it is extra work for Ms. Wright on top of her assessing responsibilities. Ms. Dennis has emailed the Selectboard the new job descriptions for the current staff in the office including the new position. Ms. Dennis did put in a full-time person in the 2021 budget. She explained in the past the selectmen's office has had four full-time employees and a part-time minute taker. Ms. Dennis would like to move Ms. Wright as her assistant and Ms. Town needs a private office to manage the Human Resource concerns for employees. The new position would be an accounts payable and receivable clerk, along with tying out with the Treasurer on a regular basis.

Mr. Lessels made a motion to add a full-time employee to the Selectboard office for the 2021 budget, Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

Ms. Dennis went over the deadlines for the 2021 budget public hearing, water bond hearing and the last day to accept petitions. The following is the proposed schedule for the 2021 hearings.

1. Budget Hearing- January 11,2021 at 6:30 pm
2. Water Bond Hearing- January 13, 2021 at 6:30 pm
3. Deliberative Session: January 30, 2021 at 10:00 am

2021 Budget Review:

Mr. Wade reported there was discussion to remove the 2021 capital outlay for the cemetery building.

Mr. Wade made a motion to remove the cemetery building from the capital outlay 2021 budget; Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and, on a roll call; the motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

Recreation Director:

There were two plans discussed:

- Plan A: \$50,000 for one full-time
- Plan B: \$50,000 for two part-timers

Mr. Wade made a motion to approve the Recreation committee's proposal for one full-time employee for \$50,000 plus benefits for the 2021 budget, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (no), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (no). (3-2)

There is \$14,000 in the maintenance line that was not spent. It will cost \$10,000 to move the safe from the Old Town Hall to the Town offices. It was decided to leave the maintenance line at \$14,000.

The Board discussed more code enforcement by increasing the legal line to \$60,000.

Mr. Wade made a motion to increase the 2021 legal line to \$60,000; Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

The Heritage Committee has not presented their budget yet, but they did request \$4,800 so they could finish enclosing the cannon in front of the Police Station.

The Town Welfare budget is level funded and Mr. Lessels reported he is seeing more clients for heating assistance. Southwest Community Services has been providing housing funds but these funds will lapse as of January 1, 2021. The food shelf has had a lot of donations but has been low on meat. Previously the Medical Center Trustees set up an account at Ralph's. Mr. Lessels will follow up with Mr. Westney. Ms. Dennis reported the Police Association had a good turnout for the food drive but not as much as last year.

Mr. Wade left the meeting at 10:00am.

Ms. Chaffee asked about payroll increase. The board would like Ms. Dennis to determine the percentage increase to the employee's health insurance and retirement rates by December 7, 2020. Last year the Selectboard agreed to the police department pay scale.

The Recreation committee would like to have a tree lighting ceremony. The Library would like to build a tunnel with holiday decorations.

Mr. Streeter made a motion to allow the Recreation committee and Library to have tree lighting ceremony and build a tunnel with decorations, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

There was discussion about the Highway lease purchases.

Mr. Streeter made a motion to put \$72,000 into the 2021 budget to lease a backhoe, one-ton truck and a 6-wheel truck, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

More discussion will follow at the finance committee and a warrant article.

There was discussion who oversees the AED's. \$1,600.00 will purchase two more AED's. These would go into the bakery building and water building.

There was discussion about putting up cubicles and creating another office space in the Town offices. There is \$10,000 in the building maintenance budget. The board will level fund the maintenance line for 2021.

Mr. Streeter reported the updated contract for the Zoom equipment is complete and ready for Chairman St. Pierre to sign.

Mr. Phillip Turner and Ms. Chaffee have been working on the broad band project. The next step is an RFP to put on the warrant. Ms. Chaffee will email the hard copy to the Selectboard and Ms. Dennis.

Mr. Streeter made a motion to adjourn at 10:35 am, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; meeting adjourned.

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 December 16, 2020)