Charlestown Selectboard Workshop December 30, 2020 @ 4:00 pm Zoom and Community Room

Selectboard present and location: Chairman Albert St. Pierre (Community Room), John Streeter (via Zoom), Jeff Lessels (Community Room), William Rescsanski (Community Room), Scott Wade (Community Room).

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)

Justin Shaw- Water/Wastewater Department Head (Community Room)

Patricia Chaffee- Water/Wastewater Administrator (via zoom)

Public: Alissa Bascom (via Zoom), Gabriel St. Pierre (via Zoom), Jeremy Wood (Community Room), Steven Neill (Community Room)

Chairman St. Pierre called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Mr. Lessels 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.

Mr. Wade asked to read a letter to the Selectboard and have it recorded into the meeting minutes:

"Let me start by saying that this is in no way singling out a single person because of a single event. I believe that we are all human and that we all make mistakes. However, I am noticing a trend with one of our select board members. Over the last several months there have been multiple incidents with Mr. Streeter that has jeopardized the integrity of our board, the reputation of our town and opened the door for legal ramifications.

The first incident I will mention, without going into detail, pertained to a personnel issue that was dealt in non-public sessions. It was quickly released to the public and put the town in a serious legal situation. Mr. Streeter was not immediately forthcoming about leaking this information but in the end did take responsibility of the matter.

In the last couple months, the select board was going through department head reports. Chief Connors was updating the select board and the public of major accident on rt 12 in South Charlestown. The Chief was giving praise to our emergency responders and credited them with how they responded, controlled the scene, and acted with the professionalism we expect out of everybody. Mr. Streeter chimed in immediately after and stated that was not the story he was told and wanted a non-public to discuss the matter further. This completely took away from the gratitude and praise the chief was trying to share. Later in non-public Mr. Streeter shared his take on the fire departments response and made serious accusations. This initiated an investigation. We learned that the accusations were false and related to a matter several months earlier. To this day Mr. Streeter has not admitted to this mistake.

Recently the board invited the school board members to our meeting for an update on the school and 2021 budget. There was a discussion about a new social worker position that the school is trying to budget for. The chairman, Albert St. Pierre, called on Chief Connors and asked for his input on the need for such a position. The chief expressed it would be a good position that would help a lot of families. Later, we find out it was discussed with the school in a way that tried to pit the school against the police department. This has happened within other departments recently as well. This is a game of dirty politics and it does not belong in Charlestown.

A week and a half ago there were a situation at the finance committee meeting. The meeting had adjourned but the zoom platform was still recording. This ended up recording private conversations with committee members while the public was still listening and viewing. Not only was this damaging to those

members reputation but the reputation of the finance committee and the select board. Not to mention it was illegal.

After this occurred, Mr. Streeter sent out an email letting the select board know that there was a hot mic moment that involved members of the finance committee. He stated in his email that the finance committee adjourned at 7:30 and he shut off the tv and ended the meeting before going to the bathroom. When you watch the video, he comes in about 14 minutes after the meeting had adjourned and says, "I didn't realize they ended early". These cannot both be true and at least one of them is a lie if not both. John is single handedly jeopardizing the credibility, integrity and reputations of this board and our community.

The way I see it there are only two options or outcomes that can come of this. The first would be for the board to censure Mr. Streeter. This idea was proposed by John himself. He also stated that he was willing to "fall on his own sword" over this and I think was an offering it as an easy way to just slap him on the hand.

A censure would also mean a few other things that all of us, including Mr. Streeter, need to consider. Not only would label him for not acting with the same level of integrity as the rest of the board but it would also be the first time the Charlestown select board ever had to censure somebody. First time ever and it would change the history of Charlestown select board indefinitely. To me that is a devastating blow, and it would be embarrassing for everybody, our residents, our community, and our employees and all that work hard to make Charlestown a great place.

It would also be devastating for Mr. Streeter to be labeled with a censure. John, you clearly have long term political goals and censuring you will have a significant impact and not just locally. It would be difficult for you to ever get involved with town committees again and you would go down in the history books as being the first select board member in Charlestown to be censured.

The other option would be for Mr. Streeter to resign and try to maintain credibility with his constituents. This would prevent him from being censured, it would prevent our town from dealing with the embarrassment that would follow, hopefully keep this out of the papers and it would allow all of us to move forward. So, I ask you John, did you mean it when you said you would be willing to "fall on my own sword"?"

Mr. Streeter responded that he made a mistake and he would take responsibility for it; but he is not willing to resign over it. If the rest of the Board wishes to censure him; that will be their decision.

Mr. Rescsanski does not wish to censure him, but would like to discuss some of these issues. Mr. St. Pierre would like to discuss so the Board can "clear the air." Mr. Rescsanski continued by saying he would dispute the facts in many of the incidents and the "hot mic" incident alone if not enough for him to consider censuring Mr. Streeter.

Mr. Lessels feels that Mr. Wade's letter points out all of his concerns also. Mr. Streeter previously accused Mr. St. Pierre and Mr. Lessels of dominating the Board, but he feels that Mr. Wade, Mr. St. Pierre and he have tried to reach out and get them involved. One particular situation comes to mind that is troubling to Mr. Lessels and this was a recent Recreation Committee meeting when Mr. Streeter was heard speaking poorly of St. Pierre, Inc. Specifically with regard to the handicapped playground at Patch Park, the comments made at that meeting has resulted in invoices totally almost \$10,000. If not for the comments the work would have been donated and no bill would have been received. These are the actions that leave Mr. Lessels wondering what kind of team player Mr. Streeter is and leaves Mr. Lessels very concerned.

Mr. Streeter stated that the questions was never about St. Pierre, Inc doing the work, it was about the Selectboard not approving the donation of the time and material donated by St. Pierre, Inc. The Board accepted the donation of a generator from Mr. Wade for the Town Hall and a donation from the Rotary Club for the same project. However, a similar vote was not taken for the donation of the work at Patch

Park. Mr. Streeter stated his issues was not the donation, it was the fact that the Selectboard did not accept the donation.

Mr. Wade addressed the concerns about the donation. The donation of the work should not have been a surprise as it was discussed by the previous Selectboard and there were no objections at the time or since.

Mr. Lessels understands the point that Mr. Streeter is making with regard to the donation, however, this has been an ongoing project. Mr. Lessels pointed out that many projects have been completed throughout the years without the Selectboard's approval, through the generous donations of local businesses. Additionally, Mr. Lessels does not agree with some of the actions Mr. Streeter has taken with regard to the school. Mr. Lessels brought the conversation back around to the original issue that could have gotten the Town into some real "hot water." Which was a non-public decision that ended up "on the street" before action could be taken by the Board. This situation could have cost the Town a lot of money and embarrassment, and this particular situation speaks directly to Mr. Lessels underlying concerns about Mr. Streeter's actions.

Mr. Wade asked Mr. Streeter if he knew everyone that was listening to the Recreation Committee meeting that night. And isn't it true he made a personal attack towards the St. Pierre's.

Mr. Streeter did not feel he made a personal attack towards anybody and if it were taken that way he apologies. Mr. St. Pierre stated that he would like to wrap this up and get on with the rest of the meeting. He continued that he and his wife, Carol, were listening that night and felt the comments made by Mr. Streeter were very hurtful and Mr. Streeter probably would not have said them if he knew the St. Pierre's were listening. Part of the frustration, is that the Recreation Director sat through the entire meeting, and did not speak up regarding his knowledge of the project at Patch Park. Mr. St. Pierre only submitted bills for the work at Patch Park after listening to the meeting and hearing the comments made by Mr. Streeter. Lots of planning went into this project, the St. Pierre's worked closely with the Recreation Director and the committee to arrange the placement and work on the project and during the Recreation Meeting; no one spoke up regarding their knowledge of this. An invoice was also submitted for power raking the baseball and softball fields. If St. Pierre cannot donate without asking permission, then they will stop donating. Both of the invoices for the handicapped swing and the raking of the fields were generated because St. Pierre had not asked to donate the projects.

Mr. Streeter stated that he feels it is important to acknowledge companies and individuals whom donate to the Town, and publicly accepting those donations at a meeting is a way to thank them. Additionally, Mr. Streeter askes questions so that he has answer when members of the public question him about certain projects and if there had been further discussion at the Selectboard meeting he may have had some answers.

Mr. Rescsanski inquired what the difference was between St. Pierre donating and the Selectboard not allowing Sam Putnam to donate time at Patch Park. He is grateful for the donation by St. Pierre but doesn't understand why it's different. Mr. St. Pierre stated that this project has been on the agenda since 2016 and Mrs. Alissa Bascom worked closely with the Recreation Committee to follow this project through to completion. This was not a spur of the minute project, it was thoroughly planned project done with the cooperation of a Town Committee.

Mr. Wade and Mr. Lessels both expressed their frustrations with Mr. Streeter and Mr. Rescsanski and their unfamiliarity with the processes and not taking the time to learn the processes. Mr. Lessels feels the Town's Department heads are currently holding the Town together as the Selectboard is so dysfunctional. He wishes the Mr. Streeter and Mr. Rescsanski take some time to take a step back and

learn. He would like this entire conversation to be reflected into the minutes as well as Mr. Wade's entire letter. He will not push for a censorship of Mr. Streeter; he respects him and his work, but would like it to be clear that he is frustrated by some of his actions.

Mr. Rescsanski feels all major decisions should be made at Town Meeting and the Selectboard should work to be transparent. He does not feel he is holding back the Selectboard by asking questions. He likes to get into the weeds and ask questions.

The Selectboard moved onto the agenda provided by Ms. Dennis.

End of Year Purchase Orders and Contracts

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to accept the list of year end encumbrances; if the St. Pierre, Inc invoices for the \$7,888.95 for the installation of the handicapped accessible swing and \$2,080 for the power raking of the baseball and softball fields are removed. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion; with an amendment; to include the Recreation Committee send a Thank You and the Recreation Director and Mr. Streeter send an apology to the St. Pierre's and to accept the work as a donation. Mr. Rescsanski further added that the motion include PO# 85592 for the overhead door repairs at the water barn for \$444.50. On a roll call vote, motion passed. Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Sade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (abstained)

Mr. Chaffee mentioned that Recreation Committee wanted to pay \$3,500 for the work done at Patch Park regardless of the donation.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion for the Recreation Committee to encumber the \$3,500 for work at Patch Park. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. On a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes).

Patriot Energy Contract

Mr. Dennis explained that every 36 months the Town puts its electricity suppling out to bid. The current contract is due to expire on December 31, 2020. The contract provided by Patriot Energy would provide the Town electricity at .0735 per kilowatt hour for all the accounts serviced by Liberty Utilities and one account with Eversource.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to accept the Patriot Energy contract at .0735 per kilowatt hour, seconded by Mr. Wade. On a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes)

1991 American LaFrance Fire Truck Bids

Mr. Dennis explained that when she provided the bids after they were opened at the December 23rd meeting, there were in fact three bids there. One from Mr. Moholland for \$2,600; one from Adirondack Emergency Services for \$3,000 in the form a credit toward equipment; and \$3,501 from St. Pierre, Inc. All three bids where there last week at the bid opening, it's not clear why there was confusion.

Mr. Lessels made a motion to accept the bid from St. Pierre, Inc in the amount of \$3,501, Mr. Wade seconded the motion. On a roll call, motion passed. Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes) Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (abstained).

Bond for Broadband Internet

Ms. Chaffee explained that RFP's where put out to provide Broadband Internet access to the residents of Charlestown. If the Board is willing to support the project, a bond hearing will need to be posted as soon as possible. There is already a bond hearing posted for January 13th, Ms. Chaffee would be looking

to have this hearing on the same night with the Selectboard's support. The Committee who worked on this project would be looking to support the proposal from Consolidated Communications. The discussion continued.

Mr. Wade made a motion to move forward with the bond and get a warrant article on for Town Meeting, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. On a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes).

Finalize 2020 Budget

Chief Connors joined the meeting to get clarification from the Board on budgeting for a Fast Squad in 2021. There was a lengthy discussion about the how much funding might be needed and where to fund the wages in the budget. Mr. Wade made a motion to change to "Ambulance" to "EMS" in the Budget and to budget \$6,000 for salaries and \$4,000 for a Administrative Assistant salary. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lessels and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes).

Mr. Wade made a motion to reduce the Heritage Commission budget back to \$2,000; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion. Mr. Streeter spoke on behalf of the Heritage Commission that they were going to finish enclosing the cannon with those funds. A comment was made that all departments have been asked to make sacrifices in next year's budget. On a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Streeter (no).

Funding for The Fort at #4 was discussed. Mr. St. Pierre stated that the Board may see a petition for \$5,000 in the 2021 Budget. Mr. Streeter made a motion to put a special article on the warrant for \$5,000 for The Fort at #4, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. On a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (abstained).

Mr. Rescsanski inquired about encumbering the \$75,000 for chip sealing as there was no purchase order included in the earlier motion. Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to encumber \$75,000 for chip sealing, Mr. Wade seconded the motion. On a roll call; motion passed. Ms. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes)

There was a discussion about other Special Warrant Article, such as the lease purchases and concerns that were mentioned at the Finance Committee about the Special Article for the Recreation Director. Since the Selectboard wants to put this on the warrant as a special article, the Finance Committee would like the language of the article to include the financial impact on the 2022 budget when the position will be funded for a full year.

2020 Town Report Dedication

Ms. Dennis has sent out a recommendation to the Selectboard, but does not have a response from all members. Mr. St. Pierre will discuss the recommendation with Mr. Streeter and Mr. Rescsanski and ask that they respond the Ms. Dennis so the decision can be finalized.

Forest Fire Warden Appointment

Mr. Charlie Steiner would like to rescind his previous resignation as Forest Fire Warden. As he did not resign on a State level and he was reappointed by the Selectboard in May, it is a decision of the Board to allow him to rescind his resignation. As far at the State of New Hampshire is concerned he is the Town's Warden for another 3 years. It was deemed that a non-public was needed for this topic.

Mr. Lessels made a motion to enter non public at 5:43 pm for RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring), Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter, Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 6:06 pm.

Mr. Wade made a motion to enter non-public at 6:06 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (a-Compensation), Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes).

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 6:27 pm

Mr. Wade made a motion to enter non public 6:28 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (c- Reputation), Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter, Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 6:32 pm.

Mr. Wade made a motion to enter non public 6:32 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (a-Discipline), Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter, Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 6:34 pm.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to enter non public 6:34 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (c- Reputation), Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter, Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 6:35 pm.

Mr. Streeter made a motion to adjourn at 6:36 pm; Mr. Lessels seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. . Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter, Mr. Rescsanski (yes).

Respectfully Submitted, Jessica K. Dennis

Albert St. Pierre Jeff Lessels Scott Wade

John Streeter William Rescsanski

Charlestown Board of Selectmen Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1 RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring) December 30, 2020 @ 4:00pm Zoom and Community Room Meeting

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)

Just Shaw – Water/Wastewater Superintendent (Community Room)

Patricia Chaffee- Water/Wastewater Administrator (via zoom)

Mr. Shaw is in attendance to speak with the Board about a potential new hire. There was a lengthy discussion about the two candidates. Each has their own strengths. No decision was made. Mr. Shaw will speak further with Mr. Rodney Rumrill and Ms. Chaffee and come back to the Board next Wednesday with a recommendation.

Mr. Wade made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:06 pm, Mr. Rescsanski 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).

Respectfully Submitted Jessica K. Dennis

Albert St. Pierre Jeff Lessels Scott Wade

John Streeter

William Rescsanski

Charlestown Board of Selectmen Nonpublic Meeting Minutes #2 RSA 91-A: 3 II (a-Compensation) December 30, 2020 @ 4:00 pm Zoom and Community Room

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)
Justin Shaw – Water/Wastewater Superintendent
Patricia Chaffee –Water/ Wastewater Administrator

A discussion occurred regarding the recent staffing changes in the Water and Wastewater Department. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Wade made a motion to increase Mr. Rodney Rumrill's hourly rate to \$29.00 per hour and to make it retroactive to December 7, 2020, the motion was seconded by Mr. Lessels. On a roll call vote, the motion passed. Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes)

Mr. Wade made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:27 pm; 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).

Respectfully Submitted, Jessica K. Dennis

Albert St. Pierre Jeff Lessels Scott Wade

John Streeter William Rescsanski

Charlestown Board of Selectmen Nonpublic Meeting Minutes #3 RSA 91-A: 3 II (c-Reputation) December 30, 2020 @ 4:00 pm Zoom and Community Room

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)

Mr. Charlie Steiner submitted his resignation as the Town's Forest Fire Warden and the Selectboard has accepted it. However, Mr. Steiner did not resign at the State level, as far as they are concerned his reappointment is good for three years. Only one other person has expressed interest in the position. After a discussion about the two interested parties; Mr. Wade made a motion to accept Mr. Steiner's rescinded resignation, seconded by Mr. Rescsanski; on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Lessels (yes), Mr. St. Pierre (yes)

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:32 pm; 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).

Respectfully Submitted, Jessica K. Dennis

Albert St. Pierre Jeff Lessels Scott Wade

John Streeter William Rescsanski

Charlestown Board of Selectmen Nonpublic Meeting Minutes #4 RSA 91-A: 3 II (a-Discipline) December 30, 2020 @ 4:00 pm Zoom and Community Room

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)

Mr. Wade asked if there had been any follow-up to the conversation that Mr. St. Pierre and Mr. Lessels had with an employee. There has been none.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:34 pm; 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).

Respectfully Submitted, Jessica K. Dennis

Albert St. Pierre Jeff Lessels Scott Wade

John Streeter William Rescsanski

Charlestown Board of Selectmen Nonpublic Meeting Minutes #5 RSA 91-A: 3 II (c-Reputations) December 30, 2020 @ 4:00 pm Zoom and Community Room

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)

Mr. Wade asked Mr. Streeter if he had reached out to the former employee who requested to speak with the Board. He has not, he was waiting to get through the holidays, he will see if she is available to attend the January 6, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:35 pm; 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).

Respectfully Submitted, Jessica K. Dennis

Albert St. Pierre Jeff Lessels Scott Wade

John Streeter William Rescsanski