

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Workshop Minutes
August 11, 2021 @ 5:00 pm
Community Room & via Zoom**

Selectboard present: Chairman Jeff Lessels, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus, Jeremy Wood, Nany Houghton – all present in the Community Room.

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrative Assistant (community room)
Patricia Chaffee- Tax Collector/Town Clerk (via zoom)
Mark LaFlam – Fire Department
Anthony Giordano – Former Ambulance Department

Ms. Andrus opened the meeting at 5:00pm.

Route 12:

The State is hoping to get the road open by winter. The State and County are both working on the situation.

Consent Agenda:

Ms. Rescsanski made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Fire & Rescue Organization:

The Board met with Mr. LaFlam and Mr. Giordano to get more input into the plan for the Rescue department. The community wants to see this in place. Ms. Blouin-Andrus noted that a plan had been submitted by the Fire Department and at that time the Board voted to move forward with the hiring process. Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked Mr. LaFlam what he sees for the rescue squad. Mr. LaFlam noted that the non-transport license needs to be obtained first, then hiring can start. He also noted that radios and pagers would need to be reprogrammed for the EMS tone. Mr. Giordano questioned the names on the non-transport license. It was noted that it was JT McMahon and Mark LaFlam. Chief LaFlam also noted that he has spoken with Dale Gerard at Golden Cross Ambulance (GCA) and if needed someone could contact the CEO at Valley Regional to see what the delay is in signing the license might be.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus asked how many EMS personnel would be needed to get the service started. It was noted that four (4) could start but up to ten (10) being the ideal number. Additional training will be needed and a possible increase to the budget. Ms. Blouin-Andrus noted that she would like to see the names of any fire personnel that would want to take the EMS course before deciding on money for training. Mr. Wood suggested that Mr. Giordano figure out what is needed for the service in regards to supplies. Mr. Giordano noted that there should be enough inventory from the Ambulance supplies to get the squad started. He will double check the supplies and he and Chief LaFlam were asked to check on the radio and pager inventory as well. Ms. Blouin-Andrus noted that she thought it was important to have Mr. Giordano play a role in this new squad. Mr. Giordano noted that he would like to be part of the EMS squad, but would like to make sure there is support from the Board and not have to beg for supplies and other necessary

items to make the squad function. He also asked to have a clear idea of what the Board's expectation is for the service.

It was decided that things would be started in small steps. First is to obtain the non-transport license. Second step to clarify Mr. Giordano role. Training will be discussed at a future date. Mr. Wood asked if the pager and radio reprogram should also take place now. Mr. Lessels made a motion to have Mr. Giordano and Chief LaFlam follow up on the non-transport license. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wood; motion passed. The Board requested an update at next weeks meeting.

Mr. LaFlam reported that two (2) of the fire personnel that have EMS certifications are on GCA's roster so they can respond to calls. There were questions about the legality of this situation and Ms. Dennis will need to check on this.

Ms. Dennis reported that things were moving in the right direction with the new fire truck repairs. A technician who is certified by Ferrara, the manufacturer of the truck, came to access the issues and has hopefully determined the fix. It will now be reviewed by Ferrara and hopefully be approved to be done at no cost.

Mr. LaFlam had been approached by a retired fire fighter, who has offered to have the mini pumper truck park at his home in South Charlestown so equipment would be on the south side of the Route 12 closure. Ms. Blouin-Andrus has concerns about liability and insurances. The Board will consider the offer.

Ms. Andrus called a recess of the meeting at 6:18pm. The meeting reconvened at 6:26pm.

Mr. Wood asked about the final plans from VHB. Chair Lessels had requested a meeting as soon as possible to review the Water Interconnect project and the recent updates. A meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 5:00 pm. Mr. Rescsanski did a follow up to the asset management plan and will attend a meeting with representatives from DES on August 18, 2021 at 10:00 am, if anyone else is interested in joining.

Ms. Dennis gave an update on the Broadband contract with CCI. There was a slight delay in the attorney's reviewing the contract, as there could have been a potential conflict of interest. The attorney believe they would not be in a conflict position, but have asked the Board to sign a waiver letter.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus reviewed the layout of the agenda and possibly a change in the meetings. It was suggested that maybe Department heads are scheduled a time to meet with the Board and not have it be part of the regular meeting. New business will be moved to the workshop agendas. Mr. Lessels noted that the changes in the agenda are not changing the plans of the Board. There was a brief discussion about where public comment should be placed in the agenda. Possibly one (1) at the beginning and one (1) toward the end if time allows.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus talked about the website and noted that neither Ms. Chaffee or Ms. Emerson should have to track down information to be posted on the Town website. Department heads need to be responsible to get that information to them. She also noted

that she would like to see the website be more user friendly. Ms. Chaffee will see how changes can be made without incurring additional costs.

Mr. Lessels gave an update on the “Team Charlestown” group. Ms. Blouin-Andrus has purchased bracelets. This is an effort to bring everyone together. A letter will be in payroll reflecting this concept and the goals as a Town. Mr. Lessels also noted that the goals should be noted in the annual report.

Mr. Wood asked if there needed to be an ex-officio to the Beautification Coalition and could it be removed from the agenda. The Coalition has good intentions but they are not an actual committee. One of the main concerns about the group is the lack of consideration for the maintenance of these projects that they propose. Moving forward any plan should include maintenance. It was noted that there are some trees on Main Street that need to be taken down and one (1) is close to power lines. There is also a dead tree behind the library.

Chair Lessels spoke to the Board members and noted that he was not impressed with a few recent emails, as the content reflected lack of knowledge. He also referred to the minutes of the joint meeting in Walpole and how a few of the questions asked by a Board member did not reflect well for the Town. All Board members should be informed and do the homework to help the Town move forward.

Mr. Wood made a motion to adjourn at 8:06 pm; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion and motion passed

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Chaffee, Recording Secretary

Jeff Lessels

William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Jeremy Wood

Nancy Houghton

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on August 18, 2021)