

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2021 @ 6:30pm
Community Room and Zoom**

Selectboard present in community room: Chairman, Jeff Lessels, William Rescsanski, Jeremy Wood, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrative Assistant (via zoom)
Patricia Chaffee- Tax Collector/Town Clerk (via zoom)
Keith Weed – Highway Department
Mark Laflam – Fire Department

Invited Guests: FMRSD Superintendent – Lori Landry
FMRSD Transportation – Arthur Lufkin

Public Present: Lillian Babbitt, Mark LaFlam, Robert Beaudry, Joan Ilves, Philip Turner, Alissa Bascom, Arthur Grenier, James Carter and Richard Carter attended in person and nine (?) attended via zoom

Mr. Lessels called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Mr. Lessels opened the public hearing to accept the ARPA funds. Mr. Robert Beaudry asked if the Board would consider using the funds to pay down the tax rate. It was noted that the funds may not be used for that purpose as there was a list of applicable ways to spend the funds and that was not one. Mr. Lessels commented that the Board has not finalized their plans on how to spend the funds.

Public Hearing was closed at 6:36pm.

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to accept the ARPA funds. Mr. Wood seconded the motion; motion passed.

Recognition of Guests/Public Comment:

Chair Lessels recognized Lori Landry, FMRSD Superintendent and Arthur Lufkin, Transportation for FMRSD. Ms. Landry talked about the priorities for the school year; academics, health and wellbeing. There are COVID protocols in place, students will be wearing masks. She noted the current situation with the Route 12 closure and referred to Mr. Lufkin to discuss it further. Mr. Lufkin noted that the buses would be using South Hemlock to move students around the closure. Mr. Wood noted that there might be some push back from the railroad which could possibly delay any repair until spring 2022. Mr. Wood also noted that there was already an accident on South Hemlock, today, the first day of school. Mr. Lufkin noted that in the winter it would only be a small section of road that may need additional maintenance, as the normal bus route turns around at Octagon Drive. Mr. Lufkin also noted that if Interstate 91 were to be used it adds substantial time to the routes. Mr. Wood asked about risk mitigation when the snow falls. Ms. Landry noted that they will be working on all possible safe routes. Mr. Wood asked that Mr. Lufkin communicate with Charlestown Highway Superintendent, Mr. Weed, when it comes to Charlestown roads. Ms. Andrus noted that she and the other members of the Boards have concerns over the use of South Hemlock with buses and more car traffic. She agreed that Mr. Lufkin needs to communicate with Mr. Weed. Ms. Landry hoped that more students would take the bus. Mrs. Alissa Bascom asked if the school will help to encourage the students to ride the

bus? Ms. Landry responded that the school could do something to help. Ms. Andrus asked that the schools try to get the students to use the buses instead of driving their personal vehicles.

Mr. Rescsanski asked about increases to the cost of the Town for the additional use of South Hemlock. Mr. Lufkin felt there would be no additional costs. Mr. Weed noted they would have some as there is the small section that needs additional treatment to make it passable for the traffic. Mrs. Bascom also asked if routes could be combined to potentially lessen the traffic on South Hemlock. Mr. Lufkin noted that there used to be seven (7) routes within Charlestown and now there are only four (4). Mr. Lufkin offer one of the FMRSD radios to the Police or Highway Department as an additional way to communicate. Mr. Lufkin should talk to Chief Connors about the radio.

Chair Lessels thanked Ms. Landry and Mr. Lufkin for attending.

Mr. Phil Turner spoke next regarding the contract with Consolidated Communications, Inc (CCI) for the broadband project. Mr. Turner noted that the contract has been reviewed by the Town's attorney and is now being reviewed by CCI. The major issue is with insurance for subcontractor's debt of damages, as most work is done by subcontractors. Mr. Turner also noted that he was waiting on the payment schedule from CCI to make sure it is in line with the bond payments. Mr. Rescsanski noted that he was concerned that CCI had started to do some work. Mr. Rescsanski had called CCI and confirmed that work was in fact being done. This is bothersome as there is no signed contract in place. Mr. Turner was not aware of this and was asked to contact CCI to see what is happening. It was noted that all the Town has is dig safe requests that were done by subcontractors not CCI. Ms. Andrus said that the Town needs to find out what they are doing, and Mr. Turner will reach out and report back to Ms. Dennis.

Department Head Reports:

Recreation Department:

Mr. Grenier reported that soccer is starting. The summer movie night program was a success, a few were rained out and rescheduled. The pool has closed for the season and the cover will be put on September 6, 2021. The bathrooms need to be shut down and water still needs to be shut off. There is still work to be completed at Patch Park, the dugouts, the concession stand and the new building. Ms. Andrus voiced a concern about the timing of getting these things completed. Possibly Mr. Wood could help with a man lift. Mr. Grenier noted that the Fall Festival will be October 22-24, 2021. Things are moving along nicely. There are over 70 spots filled, vendors, hayrides, apple race and a 5k to list a few things.

Cemetery Department: Mr. Hassett reported that the temporary hires had finished painting the fence and had painted about 1,000 feet of the three-rail fence. Grave stone repairs were done to approximately 14 stones at Hope Hill cemetery. Mr. Hassett has a report with photos that he will forward to the Board for review. Mr. Wood asked if they had finished the move into the building on Springfield Road. Mr. Hassett said there were a few things left to do and due to the fact that they have been busy with mowing, more than usual, he was planning on moving into the building in a couple of weeks.

Police Department:

Chief Connors was not present to report.

Transfer Station:

Mr. Weed reported that they have been busy with the start of the new transfer station stickers. Ms. Chaffee and Ms. Dennis will be on site October 2nd to sell, as by that point old stickers will not be permitted.

Highway:

Due to vacations and COVID, there has only been two (2) members of the highway staff working. Small paving jobs have been completed, a paving schedule has not been completed yet, as the pavers are a couple weeks behind. FEMA has been in contact and will need some additional information. There are five (5) locations that will need paving due to the storm that were not part of the planned paving. The surveys are being completed for the Taylor Hill drainage project.

Town Clerk/ Tax Collector:

Ms. Patricia Chaffee reported that a new person has been hired for her office and will begin September 13, 2021. She will start to work on the deeding list for the Board to start to review.

Ms. Chaffee also reported for the Water/Wastewater Department. Third quarter bills will be out by Friday as there was a delay. She also noted that there was a form that needs to be discussed and a motion made, as to whether the Commissioners want to approve applying for the Drinking Water/Groundwater Trust Grant for the interconnect project. Mr. Wood made a motion to appoint Ms. Chaffee as the contact and approve applying for the DWGTF. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion: and the motion passed.

Ms. Andrus noted that she met Mr. Vandenburg, Mr. Poland and Mr. Damour while they were flushing hydrants; she thought they were nice, hardworking and had passed that along to them through Ms. Chaffee.

Fire Department:

Acting Chief Laflam reported currently having had 180 calls for service. With that in mind the projected number could be close to 270 calls which could over spend the payroll budget by approximately 4%. There are a possible three (3) applicants, two (2) for EMS and one (1) for Fire. He also noted that he may have three (3) more fire fighters interested in doing the EMS side. Chief Laflam noted that the non-transport license application has been located and they are just waiting for the physician at Valley Regional Hospital to sign off. Ms. Houghton asked how the Board handles the hires. Mr. Wood commented they would address it at the next meeting. Repairs on the new truck are to take place September 6, 2021.

Library Report:

Ms. Haynes reported they will be part of the Fall Festival and may again sponsor the magician. Other work with the Recreation Department was reading next at the pool and use of the large screen. On September 21st, the Library will be offering a read to a donkey day and Ms. Haynes requested use of the Bakery Building parking lot and to have it be roped off the day before. The program should run from 9:30am to 12pm. Ms. Haynes would like to block off Depot Street also, Mr. Wood noted that the neighboring businesses should be asked and then the Board can decide. Chair Lessels noted that if there were no issues with the neighbors, she could move ahead and start to work with Mr. Weed and Ms. Dennis. On September 25th, the Library will host a butterfly garden in conjunction with the Hassett family. Work is still being done for a grant to assist with the costs of new air conditioners.

Public Comment:

Mrs. Joan Ilves asked the Board why they denied Springfield Medical Care Systems' request for a tax exemption. Chair Lessels noted that paperwork was not turned in on time.

Mr. Richard Carter presented the Board with a written request to consider paving Carter's Road next year and adding the expense to the budget.

Chair Lessels called a recess at 8:19pm. The meeting reconvened at 8:30pm

Administrator's Report:

Ms. Dennis reported that Ms. Emerson had submitted a report of her work and things in progress per Chair Lessels request.

There was a request from a resident to pay for the repairs to a flat tire, due to a rock in the road. This is not a normal practice to pay for these types of things. The Board agreed to deny the request.

Ms. Dennis asked if the Board wanted to move forward with applying for a credit card through Claremont Savings Bank. Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to apply to Claremont Savings Bank for a credit card with a \$10,000 credit limit. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion; motion passed.

Ms. Dennis presented the Board with the agreement from St. Jean Auctioneers for the upcoming auction on October 2nd. Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the agreement with St. Jean. Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion; motion passed. There was a short discussion regarding minimum bids. Mr. Wood made a motion to set the minimum bid at \$10,000 for the parcel on Unity Stage Road. Ms. Andrus seconded the motion; the motion passed. The other parcels will not have a minimum bid.

The Work Zone Agreement was in the packet to be signed, this is for the State to work on Route 12 to fix the damage from the storms the beginning of August. Mr. Wood made a motion to sign the Work Zone Agreement. Ms. Andrus seconded the motion; motion passed. Mr. James McClammer contacted Ms. Dennis as he was looking for the wetland permits, Ms. Dennis reported that it was not in the office as of yet but it has been requested.

Fuel bids have gone back out, with a due date of September 15th. Request for bids is also out for General Assessing services for 2022-2026.

A few other points: warranty information for the Zoom TV in the Community Room has been sent in. Revaluation letters are being sent out with the new values. There is a quote for generator maintenance, it was noted that most of the generators are Water/Wastewater. Ms. Andrus made a motion to sign the annual service agreement for the generators. Mr. Wood seconded the motion; motion passed.

Information was passed along from Community Standard Power. The Board agreed to schedule a meeting with them.

Minutes:

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to accept the following meeting minutes,

August 18, 2021 – Regular Meeting

August 18, 2021 – Non-Public #1 Hiring

August 18, 2021 – Non-Public #2 Reputations

August 18, 2021 – Non-Public #3 Compensation

August 25, 2021 – Water/Wastewater Workshop

Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion and motion passed.

Consent Agenda:

Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to accept the consent agenda, which includes the appointment for Michelle Dole to the Recreation Committee. Mr. Wood seconded the motion and motion passed.

Ms. Andrus made a motion to enter non-public at 8:55 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring), Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion; motion passed.

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 9:09 pm.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion to enter non-public at 9:10 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (c-Reputations), Mr. Wood seconded the motion; motion passed.

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 9:13 pm.

Ms. Andrus made a motion to enter non-public at 9:14 pm RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring), Mr. Wood seconded the motion; motion passed.

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 9:16 pm.

Ms. Andrus then addressed the Board and concerns about what appeared to be inflammatory emails that were sent this week regarding employees that are just doing their jobs. She noted the CCI situation and that there is a lead person and no Board member should be going out on their own to call and contact people. It should be handled through the contact or lead person. Mr. Rescsanski noted he was concerned about the Town's exposure. Ms. Andrus pointed out that utility companies can request a dig safe and have the right to work in the right-of-way without permission. Mr. Rescsanski admitted that the tone of the emails was wrong. Ms. Andrus again noted the processes and lead people that should be contacted. The three people noted in the email should not have felt they were in the hot seat, if anyone should be it's the Board. Chair Lessels noted that you can not talk down to people. Mr. Rescsanski noted that if someone different wanted to be Vice Chair he would step down. Ms. Andrus made a motion to elect Mr. Wood as Vice Chair. Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion; motion passed.

Mr. Wood made a motion to adjourn at 9:50 pm; Ms. Andrus seconded the motion and motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Chaffee, Recording Secretary

Jeff Lessels

Jeremy Wood

William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on September 15, 2021)

Charlestown Selectboard
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1
RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring)
September 1, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Community Room & via Zoom

Selectboard present and location: Chair Jeff Lessels, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus, Jeremy Wood and Nancy Houghton – all present in the Community Room.

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis – Recording Secretary

Ms. Dennis spoke with the Board about two candidates for the recording secretary position that has been advertised. Both applicants have lots of experience, Ms. Dennis would recommend hiring both in order to have a primary and back up person available. With both individuals already taking minutes, they may have time/date conflicts and it would be great for the Town to have more than one person available to take minutes.

Ms. Houghton made a motion to offer the position to both candidates in the amount of \$100 per meeting, which includes their attendance at the meeting, transcribing minutes and any amendments/correction to the minutes, the motion was seconded by Mr. Rescsanski. Motion passed.

Mr. Lessels will speak with Ms. Chaffee about the Board's decision and that she has been relieved of her interim duties.

Ms. Andrus made a motion to reconvene public session at 9:09 pm, Mr. Wood seconded the motion and motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted
Jessica Dennis, 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 September 15, 2021)

Charlestown Selectboard
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #2
RSA 91-A:3 II (c-Reputations)
September 1, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Community Room & via Zoom

Selectboard present and location: Chair Jeff Lessels, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus, Jeremy Wood and Nancy Houghton – all present in the Community Room.

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis – Recording Secretary

Ms. Dennis has drafted a memo to reflect the inaccuracies in a resignation letter recently submitted. She asked the Board to consider having it placed in her personnel file, the Board approved this.

Mr. Andrus made a motion to reconvene public session at 9:13 pm, Mr. Wood seconded the motion and motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted
Jessica Dennis, 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 September 15, 2021)

Charlestown Selectboard
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #3
RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring)
September 1, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Community Room & via Zoom

Selectboard present and location: Chair Jeff Lessels, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus, Jeremy Wood, and Nancy Houghton – all present in the community room.

Staff Present: Patricia Chaffee – Recording Secretary
Jessica Dennis – Administrative Assistant

There was discussion regarding a possible new hire for the Fire Department. This candidate is certified as a level 2 firefighter, bringing experience to the table. Ms. Andrus thought that the Board should wait to hire until the vision for the department has been finalized. Mr. Wood noted the certification level and how valuable that is. Ms. Houghton made a motion to accept this applicant for hire. Mr. Wood seconded the motion; motion passed.

Mr. Wood made a motion to come out of non-public session at 9:16 pm, the motion was seconded by Ms. Blouin-Andrus. 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 September 15, 2021)