

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Workshop Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021 @ 4:00 pm
Community Room and Zoom meeting**

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator- (via zoom)
Kelly Wright- Administrative Assistant (via zoom)
Patricia Chaffee- Water Administrator

Public Present: Steve Neill

Chairman St. Pierre called the meeting to order and opened the meeting at 4:00 pm. Mr. Wade recited the protocol for holding public zoom meetings due to the Covid-19 executive order per the Governor Christopher Sununu. All meetings will be recorded and any motions will be on a roll call for the recording secretary.

The Board of Selectmen and Ms. Dennis discussed and decided the two articles regarding Cemetery lots can be consolidated into one, based on the recommendation from Town counsel.

Mr. Wade reported the following for the next committee. The Charlestown Fire and EMS Committee would be composed of a nine member committee to study and create proposal or recommendation for the first responder program. They will also be responsible to review the organization and policies of the fire department and make any other recommendations they see fit. All recommendations will be presented to the Selectboard by October 1st, 2021.

This will be an official committee and all meetings will have minutes taken and meetings will be posted and open to the public. Membership will be requested through internal advertisement and public notices.

9 members made up of:
1 ex-officio
4 Fire/EMS Maximum
4 members of the public

At the next Board of Selectmen's meeting there will be an official announcement.

Deliberative Session:

Mr. Gabriel St. Pierre joined the meeting and there was discussion about deliberative session. There was discussion and decision to assist those residents that need help to the gymnasium, to disable the chat on Zoom, and have an additional microphones and an assistant moderator in the other room available for those who did not wish to wear masks.

On February 2, 2021 at 6:30pm the School Deliberative Session will be at Fall Mountain Regional High School.

Water Interconnection Hearing Review:

The Selectboard and Ms. Chaffee discussed the bond terms and payments. For a 30 year \$4.6 million bond at 3.5 % the first yearly payment would be \$350,000. For a 20 year \$2.9 million bond at 2.5% the first yearly payment would be \$253,750. The goal is to receive at least 1.7 million in grants.

The discussion continued about the grants and how much the Town would potential receive. Ms. Chaffee explained the warrant article must include the entire amount of the bond because the Town hasn't been awarded any funds yet. Ms. Chaffee and Dave from VHB are working on grants. They will also be applying for a State revolving grant that would possibly pick up funds not covered by any of the other grants. They are also researching the Northern Border Grant.

Mr. Wade gave an overview of his presentation for the public hearing which will cover the water interconnection project and plan B if the bond doesn't pass. Plan B is either a Green Sand filtration system in the amount of two million dollars or a bank filter systems for \$400,000 plus an additional \$50,000 for filters.

The broadband proposal was reviewed and discussed. Ms. Chaffee reported this is a tax neutral article. Mr. Philip Turner will be presenting this tonight at the hearing.

Ms. Dennis reported the Warrant must be posted by January 25, 2021.

There was discussion about the Recreational Committee's concern that they do not have the support of the Selectboard for a full-time director. They would seek support for this position for the Deliberative session.

The Selectboard discussed the open positions. Chairman St. Pierre and Mr. Streeter's terms are up this year. There will be two openings for a three year term.

Chairman St. Pierre recesses the workshop at 5:45 pm until the public hearing at 6:30pm when they will reconvene.

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 January 20, 2021)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Community Room and Zoom meeting**

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

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator (via zoom)
Kelly Wright- Administrative Assistant
Justin Shaw- Water/Wastewater Department Head
Patricia Chaffee- Water Administrator (via zoom)

Public Present: Dave Fentermacher- VHB (via zoom), Sharon Francis, Robert Beaudry, Philip Turner, Steve Neill

Chairman St. Pierre called the public hearing to order at 6:30 PM. Mr. Wade recited the protocol for holding public Zoom meetings due to the Covid-19 executive order per the Governor Christopher Sununu. All meetings will be recorded and any motions will be on a roll call for the recording secretary.

Article #2: Water Interconnection Project

Mr. Wade read the warrant article. He then gave an over view of the plan to connect the Bull Run Well in Charlestown to the North Charlestown well. Bull Run does not have elevated arsenic levels like the North Charlestown well does. The State has already reduced the accepted arsenic levels from .10 parts per million to .05 parts per million. Currently North Charlestown is at .08 parts per million after it has been treated. Mr. Wade reported as many already know unsafe arsenic levels have been linked to serious health risks.

Bull Run has the capacity to supply the entire Town without even coming close to it's maximum output capacity of 1.8 million gallons per day. The Town currently uses 300,000 per day. There are many benefits to the interconnection.

1. Bull Run has no arsenic in it.
2. Increased growth of new users
3. Increased water capacity for users in North Charlestown.
4. Decreased costs in water testing/filtering/well operation in North Charlestown
5. Avoid potential fines of up to \$4,000 per day from the State for non compliance
6. Use Town roadways and avoid lengthy state permitting
7. Minimal permits and blasting.
8. No easements over personal property
9. Safe and clean water for the entire Town

The funding was discussed and explained that the warrant article must reflect the entire dollar amount for the project because the Town has not been awarded any grants yet. This is not to be confused with the Town not qualifying for any grants. Ms. Chaffee is working with four grant options and some deadlines are after the Town meeting and grants will be awarded after the warrant is posted or even after the Budget has passed. Of the \$4.6 million that Commissioners are requesting; the hope is to receive \$1.7 million in grants. The increase in water rates last year

will help with making the bond payment and as of right now the Water Commissioners do not see a need to increase the rates in 2021.

The question was asked who pays for the bond. Only those users on Town water system will pay for the bond but it is required to be voted on by the entire Town.

If the bond passes the finalized plan will be completed by May, bidding on the project by June project to begin in July with a completion date of July 2022.

If the bond does not pass then Plan B options will be as follows, these are only short term bases.

1. Build a new well, which could tap into the same contaminated water source
2. Green Sand Filtration system- filters are very expensive and so is the disposal of the hazardous sediment from this, the estimated project cost is 2 million dollars.
3. Filter Bank- \$400,000 for system and additional \$50,000 for filters.
4. Potential of costly fines up to \$4,000 from the State for non arsenic compliance
5. Supply water to North Charlestown.

Questions and concerns were asked and answered from the public. All the information is on the website.

Chairman St. Pierre moved to the next public hearing.

Article #3: Broadband Internet

Mr. Rescsanski read the warrant article. Mr. Philip Turner reported he has been following the State legislature and the access of broadband internet to rural areas. He has spoken to several communities who have either completed or started the process of the broadband internet bond. Charlestown has approximately 91% of the community whom do not have broadband internet. This would be an asset given the increase in working and attending school remotely. There has been discussion while the masterplan is being update and Planning Board is researching how to make the Town more attractive to new businesses.

Nine invitations were sent to companies to bid on the recent RFP. The committee only received one complete response and that was from Consolidate Communications (CCI).

Mr. Turner explained CCI offered a complete wide solution, meeting the scope and needs of the 90% of the community unserved by broadband. As he mention CCI has successfully installed a similar fiber network in Chesterfield and Westmoreland.

CCI proposes to install an optical fiber network capable of 1 Gps speed valued at over \$2 million. This investment will be made through a Town bond, **but** CCI guarantees to pay the annual principal and interest on the bond in return for an exclusive rights to operate and mange the network. The Town would benefit from a rapid installation (1-2 years) connecting every street address in Town without incurring any out of pocket financing cost. Charlestown will own a world-class communications network. Subscribers to the optical fiber network will pay a monthly network recovery fee of less than \$10/month to CCI to use the network, in addition to the CCI standard monthly internet fees. Non subscribers will not be charged any additional fees.

If this bond passes the work can begin in July 2021. The Town payment would be a yearly payment of \$11,000 at 2.9% interest. CCI projects the market in Town is sufficient to make their

costs. There was a lengthy discussion about CCI defaulting and how the Town would manage this and many feel other companies would purchase CCI.

Ms. Dee Hassett addressed the Selectboard and reported her family and other families have had a very difficult time with their both work and children's remote learning and not having adequate internet service. She encourages the Selectboard to address this.

Chairman St. Pierre closed the public hearing.

The Selectboard voted on the following articles.

Article #2 Water Interconnection Project

Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (absent), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (yes), Mr. Rescsanski (yes)

Article #3 Broadband Internet

Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (absent), Mr. Wade (yes), Mr. Streeter (no), Mr. Rescsanski (yes) (3-1)

Mr. Wade made a motion to adjourn at 8:15 PM; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion and on a roll call; motion passed. Mr. St. Pierre (yes), Mr. Lessels (absent), 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

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