

**Charlestown Selectboard Workshop**  
**Wednesday, September 29, 2021**  
**5:00 – 8:00 P.M.**  
**Community Room and Zoom**

**Selectboard Present:** Jeremy Wood (Vice Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton. Jeff Lessels joined the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

**Staff Present:** Mark LaFlam - Interim Fire Chief  
Patricia Chaffee - Town Clerk/Tax Collector  
Jennifer Haynes - Librarian

**Others Present:** Paul McKenney of Municipal Resources (Zoom), Alissa Bascom (Zoom)

**Call to Order:** Jeremy Wood called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

**Consent Agenda:** William Rescsanski motioned to accept the Consent Agenda, Nancy Houghton seconded motion, motion carried 4-0

**Minutes of previous meetings: September 22, 2021 Workshop** – Mr. Rescsanski motioned to accept the minutes, Ms. Houghton seconded, motion carried 4-0

**Municipal Resource, Inc.: Paul McKinney - Final Re-evaluation Figures**

The re-evaluation has been completed. The final value for the Town is \$375,089,161. The overall increase between 2020 assessed value and 2021 final assessed value is \$68,109,353. The overall change is 23% increase in assessed value, residential properties went up 22%, vacant went up 19%, mobile homes 29% and commercials went up 24% on average. Two years of sales from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2021 there was an assessment to sales ratio of 99.09%. When looking at the last year, April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 the ratio was 97.6%. The Town is approximately 97.6% of market value. Coefficient of dispersion, (quality rating) for a two-year period is 10.1 and one-year period is .924. Price related differential is making sure they are not over assessing the low-end properties and under assessing the high-end properties is 1.01. Preliminary notices were mailed to all taxpayers on August 28, 2021. There were 122 scheduled hearings held between September 10<sup>th</sup> through September 18<sup>th</sup> with 72 in-person hearings, 43 phone hearings and seven hearings held by Zoom. People questioned the large increase and it was explained when assessed values increase the tax rate is adjusted accordingly so there may not necessarily see a difference in the tax bill. The last re-evaluation was done in 2016. The goal of the re-evaluation was to adjust all property values to bring to market value for an equitable tax burden. Utility values have not been received. Notices will be sent to anyone that had a hearing or a value change. Ms. Houghton motioned to accept the final re-evaluation summary as presented. Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion, motion carried 4-0.

**Fire/Rescue – Anthony Giordano**

Mr. Giordano said a non-public meeting was not required for the discussion. He said everything he had seen was very positive and he was ready to join the department. He has talked to a lot of firefighters that were interested in certification. He noted he would have his license within a week after the departments license was issued. He is certified but did possess a state license. He is due to be re-certified in March 2022 and will be fully licensed at that time. He asked questions about the structure of the service. Mr. Wood stated the structure of chief, assistant chief, captain and

(3) lieutenants. Everyone would fall under the fire department without a separate EMT and/or fire side. Mr. Giordano said he was interested in providing support for the lead person but was not looking to be the number one person responsible for everything. He wanted the service to get off the ground and be successful. He believed there was a large call volume in the Town. Ms. Blouin-Andrus said she believed the Board saw Mr. Giordano as a mentor, his knowledge and experience was beneficial to the Board and department. In addition, Mr. LaFlam had his lead officials, but the board would like Mr. Giordano's knowledge and experience if he is interested in being involved. Mr. Lessels said he thought of Mr. Giordano as more of a consultant to the service, realizing he would not be on every call. Mr. Giordano said in the future, he may be willing to step into another role but at the present would like to see the department be successful.

### **Non-Public Reputations (2)**

At 5:31 p.m. Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into Non-Public session for Reputations. Nancy Houghton seconded the motion, motioned carried 5-0.

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 5:55 p.m.

Mr. Rescsanski motioned to hire Roger Rumrill as a fire fighter, Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded. Mr. Rescsanski – Nay, Ms. Houghton – Nay, Ms. Blouin-Andrus – Nay, Mr. Lessels – Nay, Mr. Wood – Nay The motion failed.

Mr. LaFlam said he had talked to Jay Whitcomb and believed all the parts were in. He is convinced his computer on the phone system was the problem.

The quote on the tanker is between \$5,500 to \$7,500. Research on the repair will continue as the goal is to repair the housing but the damage to the interior will not be known until the repair is in progress.

At 6:00 p.m. Ms. Houghton motioned to go into Non-Public session for Reputations. Mr. Lessels seconded motion, motion carried 5-0

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 6:09 p.m.

### **ARPA (American Rescue Plan) Funds**

Ms. Blouin-Andrus updated the board regarding the library. The entire project would cost about \$30,000 to upgrade the air system. The library has budgeted \$20,000 and is seeking an additional \$9,900 For the library to apply for a grant the Board needs to approve the project.

Mr. Wood said ARPA funds were to be used mainly for infrastructure projects adding the facade of the fire station is in dis-repair.

Further discussion of ARPA funds will be at the next meeting.

### **Water/Wastewater Commissioners**

Town Clerk Patty Chaffee joined the meeting at 6:09 p.m. Ms. Chaffee asked about using ARPA funds for the water sewer project. Mr. Wood believed the project would be paid for with a bond. Ms. Lessels said previously there was a consensus to use a portion of the ARPA funds for VHB. Ms. Chaffee questioned if using \$200,000 from ARPA and leaving the water revenue to cover remaining costs was an option. Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to use \$300,000 from ARPA for VHB to cover final engineering costs. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion with an amendment, "for VHB engineering from day one, for an amount less than \$300,000." The Board agreed to the

amendment. Mr. Lessels noted there was about \$462,000 in additional funds coming from the State for further disbursement.

Alissa Bascom 1. Questioned if using the ARPA funds for water interconnect benefits everyone equally or if there is additional benefit to water users.

2. Has the Board looked at the master plan and thought about using the funds for projects in the master plan.

Mr. Lessels said any infrastructure, no matter what it is, benefits the community as a whole allowing for future development. The Board plans on meeting with the Finance Committee and Planning Board to discuss use of the remaining funds.

Mr. Rescsanski believes the water department has enough funds to complete the interconnect project without using up to \$300,000 of the ARPA funds and would like to consider other uses of the ARPA funds.

Mr. Wood called for a vote: Ms. Blouin-Andrus - yes, Ms. Houghton – yes, Mr. Lessels – yes, Mr. Wood - yes and Mr. Rescsanski – no.

The motion passed in the affirmative to use \$300,000 or less for VHB engineering final plan from day one.

### **Interconnect Project Update:**

Ms. Chaffee said the booster pump was no longer in question, it was a necessity. She requested the Board confirm the use of PVC (polyvinyl chloride) pipe versus iron pipe. The PVC would need some sort of metal detector means to find the line in the future. The number of hydrants will be decreased by 9 for a savings of \$90,000. Mr. Wood asked if the savings using PVC was \$900,000. Ms. Chaffee confirmed savings of almost \$900,000.

Mr. Lessels motioned to accept the Board analysis, the recommendation of VHB and Town's water department staff to accept the change in the engineering to PVC. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion unanimously by roll call vote.

### **Chabot Water Leaks**

Ms. Chaffee said Ms. Chabot was out of town but she had spoken her. Ms. Chaffee said she had new abatement numbers and will talk with Ms. Chabot when she returns. If need be, this will be discussed at the next water commission meeting.

In addition, Ms. Chaffee said the bond was due at the end of October. If application is made and the Drinking Water Trust Fund grant is received could the application for bond be withdrawn? Mr. Wood said the Drinking Water Trust Fund grant would be about \$300,000. The USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) funds would be in addition, mitigating risks. Mr. Wood said the options were a bond, a grant from Drinking Water Trust and USDA (another type of loan). Mr. Lessels said the money owed through existing debt is through the NH Bond Bank. He said USDA had denied funds to the Town previously but due to the change in scope, cost of the project and discussions between the USDA and engineer an approval was possible. If USDA approved funding, the loan would be for the entire cost of the project at a lower rate. If the Town does not apply for a bond now, the next date to apply would be July 2022. Ms. Chaffee will do further research on the application for the bond and will begin the process of applying.

Mr. Lessels said the current application Ms. Chaffee was working on was her third. This is not included in her list of work responsibilities.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to make Ms. Chaffee the administrator of the water project. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. The Board clarified this was the title at this time.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Ms. Chaffee will be invited to the October 27, 2021 meeting to discuss a different matter.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus requested to recognize Jennifer Haynes from the library. The library has \$20,000 of the air conditioning project. The amount of money they are short is between \$9,000 and \$10,000. Library ARPA funds are available requiring a rigorous application process. She will not know until October 14 if she will receive monies and has a contractor ready now to do the work. Ms. Houghton requested to table the motion for two days. Mr. Wood said the vote to approve monies had to be made in public. The Board agreed to table the matter to Wednesday, October 6, 2021.

The Board recessed at 6:49 p.m. reconvening at 6:57 p.m.

October 2, 2021 - Property Auctions (who will attend to sign purchase and sales; property needs to be opened). Ms. Houghton and Mr. Rescsanski will attend.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to move to Non-Public at 7:01 pm for reputations, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion, motion carried 5-0

The Selectboard reconvened public session at 7:26 p.m.

Mr. Wood noted October 29, 2021 was the date of the next five-town meeting. During this meeting Mr. Wood would like to discuss the recreation department and the five Town's playing each other and not playing outside the five Towns. Ms. Blouin-Andrus said Tri-Town would struggle due to lack of players. Ms. Blouin-Andrus noted there was homework related to the transfer station.

Ms. Houghton motioned to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded motion, motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Millie Barry

Jeffrey Lessels

Jeremy Wood

William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

(Note: These are unapproved meeting minutes. All corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on October 6, 2021.)

**Charlestown Selectboard  
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1  
RSA 91-A:3 II (c-Reputations)  
September 29, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.  
Community Room and via Zoom**

**Select Board Present:** Chair, Jeff Lessels, Vice Chair, Jeremy Wood, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton

**Staff Present:** Mark LaFlam, Interim Fire Chief

**Others Present:** Roger Rumrill

Mr. LaFlam said Mr. Rumrill was interested in staying on as a fire fighter. Mr. Rumrill was present to speak with the Board.

The Selectboard asked Mr. LaFlam and Mr. Rumrill to leave so the Selectboard could speak amongst themselves.

The Selectboard had a discussion amongst themselves to discuss the situation as a whole and Mr. Rumrill's future employment.

At 5:55 p.m. Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to reconvene public session, Mr. Lessels seconded, motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,  
Millie Barry

Jeffrey Lessels

Jeremy Wood

William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

(Note: These are unapproved meeting minutes. All corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on October 6, 2021.)

**Charlestown Selectboard  
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #2  
RSA 91-A:3 II (c-Reputations)  
September 29, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.  
Community Room and via Zoom**

**Select Board Present:** Chair, Jeff Lessels, Vice Chair, Jeremy Wood, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton

**Staff Present:** Mark LaFlam, Interim Fire Chief

Mr. LaFlam relayed a department member was being negative about the department in general and discouraging regarding recruiting new members.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus said she liked Mr. LaFlam's communication style and the Board had achieved a lot with Mr. LaFlam at the helm. She believed the relationship between the Board and departments was moving forward in a positive way.

The Board discussed emergency management.

Also, there had been three calls in three days for the same address. The call requires more staff to be present on the call. The Board agreed to research options to assist with the situation.

Ms. Houghton motioned to reconvene public session at 6:09 p.m. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded motion, motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,  
Millie Barry

Jeffrey Lessels

Jeremy Wood

William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

(Note: These are unapproved meeting minutes. All corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on October 6, 2021.)

**Charlestown Selectboard  
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #3  
RSA 91-A:3 II (c-Reputations)  
September 29, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.  
Community Room and via Zoom**

**Select Board Present:** Chair, Jeff Lessels, Vice Chair, Jeremy Wood, William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton

Ms. Blouin-Andrus said she sent a report to Mr. Lessels in July.

There has been little movement since that time regarding dates on projects or communication in general.

There are three teams that have not received their soccer jerseys.

Dates are not available for work on the equipment barn, the snack shack and dug out. Trees remain down in Patch Park. The gate at the pool remains open with no response to emails.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus believed the soccer tournament in Walpole was a disaster due to lack of organization and children not playing other child in the same age group.

Her thought was to have a monthly report completed to include expectations, projects completed and the status of on-going projects.

In addition, \$11,000 was allocated to the Recreation department to finish the equipment barn, including all dug outs. One dug out was completed and there has been no work done on the equipment barn. The snack shack is waiting on an electrical contractor to finish work for a project that began in the spring of 2021.

The Board discussed the recreation department at length.

Mr. Wood asked about a volunteer day to complete some of the projects. Ms. Blouin-Andrus said leadership and direction were required to complete the projects.

Mr. Rescsanski asked if it was possible to change the structure, to compensate an individual to be in charge of the park and another person to be in charge of movies etc. Ms. Blouin-Andrus said to compensate people for individual activities would be expensive and outside the recreation department budget. Most other Towns had a part-time recreation director leading volunteers. Volunteers were sustained by good communication and organized meetings.

Mr. Wood suggested the completion of a monthly report.

Ms. Houghton motioned to give the Recreation Director until the end of October to complete the equipment barn and dug outs, to distribute soccer shirts to players and to have pictures taken of the teams. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded motion, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rescsanski moved to reconvene Public Session at 7:26 p.m. Mr. Lessels seconded; motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,  
Millie Barry

Jeffrey Lessels

Jeremy Wood

William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

(Note: These are unapproved meeting minutes. All corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on October 6, 2021.)