

**CHARLESTOWN SELECTBOARD WORKSHOP
COMMUNITY ROOM & ZOOM
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2022
5:00 – 8:00 PM**

Selectboard Present: Jeff Lessels (Chair), Jeremy Wood (Vice Chair), William Rescsanski, and Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis, Town Administrator Pro-Tem
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary

Others Present: James McClammer, Tom Cobb

Mr. Lessels commenced the workshop meeting at 5:02 p.m. Mr. Lessels identified the members in physical attendance and those attending via Zoom.

2022 Warrant/Budget/Petition review:

Mr. Lessels commenced a discussion regarding the 2022 Warrant Articles. Ms. Dennis discussed the mowing bid received by the Town in the last Selectboard meeting on January 5, 2022. Mr. Rescsanski commented that he would be comfortable putting the mowing bid back out to bid. The decision was tabled by the Selectboard until March. Ms. Dennis mentioned to the Selectboard that the Finance Committee would like the \$75,000 for chip sealing be returned to the 2022 Budget. Mr. Rescsanski motioned to return the \$75,000 devoted to chip sealing back into the budget, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote. Ms. Dennis explained that the Town is billed annually in June for the Property Liability Insurance, and the insurance company provides a "not to exceed" (worst case scenario) figure for budgeting purposes. Discussion was held concerning the finance committee meeting the following week. Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to adopt the budget as amended in the present meeting, Mr. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

James McClammer to discuss Great River Hydro:

Mr. Lessels welcomed Mr. McClammer to the meeting, and disclosed that the Selectboard would like to discuss certain matters relating to Great River Hydro. Mr. McClammer asked questions pertaining to the Town's involvement with this company. Mr. Wood discussed the flowage rights and expressed his concern about erosion near the bridge adjacent to Fort Number 4 in Charlestown. Mr. McClammer discussed the final licensing agreement by Great River Hydro, and their claim that they are going to decrease ramping rates, and that this has had an impact on erosion. Discussion was held over water levels on the Connecticut River rising higher than they have been in the past. Mr. McClammer identified his position as a commissioner on the Connecticut River Joint Commission (CRJC), and their mission to advocate for Towns and land owners. Mr. McClammer disclosed that the CRJC is associated with three dams on the Connecticut River. There are also two other dams in Massachusetts, owned by First Light. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission would like all the dams relicensed at the same time. The relicensing coordination for all five dams is presenting scheduling difficulty. The Selectboard and Mr. McClammer then discussed the issue of flowage rights. It was disclosed that the rights to allow Great River Hydro to flood the properties potentially date back in the 1920s and 1930s.

Mr. McClammer raised questions regarding a potential mitigation and enhancement fund; wherein property owners would place personal resources into a fund which can be sourced for repairs when they arise. A revenue sharing discussion commenced, identifying the river as a public trust resource. Mr. McClammer stated his interest in having people involved regarding a discussion concerning revenue sharing. Mr. Rescsanski raised questions regarding the timeline in which a decision to proceed could be made.

Mr. Wood motioned to go into non-public at 5:45 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (l) Legal, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 6:27 p.m.

Minutes of Previous Meetings:

Mr. Wood motioned to accept the minutes of January 5, 2022 – Regular Meeting. Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion, and the motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Consent Agenda:

Mr. Rescsanski motioned to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Administrator's Report and Correspondence:

The Selectboard discussed the School Deliberative Session on Wednesday, February 2nd, and subsequently decided to cancel the Selectboard meeting scheduled for that date. Ms. Dennis brought up the department head evaluations that required scheduling. Ms. Dennis reviewed the process from the previous year, wherein each Selectboard member evaluated a department head individually, and then came back together to discuss. Mr. Rescsanski voiced how he would prefer to not use that format for this year. Mr. Wood stated he would prefer a working group setting. Consensus was reached as a Selectboard to adopt a group evaluation format for this year. The first of these evaluations was scheduled for January 26th, with evaluation overflow being placed on the February 9th meeting's agenda. Mr. Wood asked which warrants were petitions, Ms. Dennis told the Board the last five were (13 through 17). Mr. Wood stated he would amend Articles 16 and 17 to zero at the deliberative session. Mr. Rescsanski questioned when the Selectboard's letter is needed for the Town Report. Ms. Dennis identified February 14th as the final date in which items can be submitted for the Town Report. Ms. Dennis disclosed that the Joint-Loss Management Committee is working on enrolling the Town in the Town into the Prime program so there can be a reduction in Property-Liability insurance premiums. This was said to be listed onto on-going policies under consideration.

On-Going Business:

Mr. Tom Cobb discussed the urgency of preparation work necessary to conduct the mowing this year. Mr. Lessels communicated to him that the Selectboard would be putting the project back out to bid in mid-March. Mr. Rescsanski asked if the bid were accepted in March would he have enough time to plan for the summer mowing. Mr. Tom Cobb stated that he has the equipment presently, and if his bid were accepted in March he would be able to follow through and complete the summer mowing. Mr. Lessels discussed how there has been challenges in communication between the Selectboard and the Finance Committee. Mr. Lessels discussed the potential effects of adopting a Town Manager model. Ms. Dennis stated that the Selectboard has always provided

a recording secretary to the Finance Committee. Ms. Houghton stated that the Board may need to take a more stringent approach to the allowances provided to the Finance Committee. Ms. Dennis stated that she posts the meetings, hearings and invites department heads for the Finance Committee. Mr. Wood suggests a list is given of their responsibility so future chairs and co-chairs are clear on roles and responsibilities. He stated that they are a check and balance to the Selectboard because in past Selectboard decisions have had long-term financial ramifications. Mr. Tom Cobb discussed the challenges in speaking with department heads about budgets and then the Finance Committee changing the budgets presented. He discussed the Selectboard's knowledge of the budget, and the finance committee's suggestions of revision and deletion from presented budgets. Mr. Lessels clarified that the finance committee is advisory in their role. Mr. Lessels commented on his frustration on issues with transparency and feedback between the Selectboard and the Finance Committee.

Mr. Wood motioned to go into non-public at 7:10 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

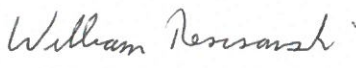
The meeting reconvened at 7:23 p.m.


Mr. Rescsanski motioned to go into non-public at 7:24 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputations, Mr. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 7:25 p.m.

Ms. Houghton made a motion at 7:26 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion, the motion carried 4 to 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

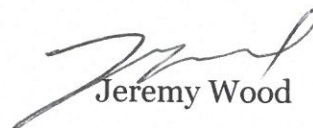
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus


Nancy Houghton


Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on January 19, 2022)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1
RSA91-A:3 II (I-Legal)
January 12, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Chair), Jeremy Wood (Vice Chair), William Rescsanski, and Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis – Town Administrator Pro-Tem
Jordan Cannon – Recording Secretary
James McClammer

Mr. Lessels discussed Mr. McClammer's ability to be a source of information regarding this issue. It was discussed how Great River Hydro is contesting the taxing of their properties in Town. Great River Hydro was identified as having a practice of renegotiating with below acceptable amounts, but ultimately deciding to pay prior to court involvement. The Selectboard discussed a utility appraiser who has been brought in to reassess property value. Mr. Wood stated that the Town is losing money on legal fees with Great River Hydro's actions. Mr. Wood voiced his wish that Great River Hydro would identify their decision instead of prolonging the issue. Discussion was centered around the two issues of revenue sharing resources and flowage rights. Ms. Dennis disclosed how the State's land values did not track new structures being added, and consequently not giving accurate reflection in updated utility values. Mr. McClammer commented that State legislator's Public Utility Commission (PUC) may be able to assist by bringing forth these issues with legislation. Mr. Wood asked what the Selectboard can do to assist the Connecticut River Joint Commission. The quarterly five-town joint meeting was brought to attention by Mr. Wood. The Selectboard discussed having Mr. McClammer attend this meeting on January 28th. The next Connecticut River Joint Commission meeting was identified to be January 24th, and Mr. McClammer stated he would ask at that meeting if they could be the host of a meeting between all Communities on the Connecticut River having challenges of this nature. Ms. Dennis stated that the Town is presently attempting to negotiate with Great River Hydro regarding the tax amount due. Mr. Wood stated that revenue sharing should be the focus of the January 28th meeting.

Ms. Houghton made a motion to reconvene public session at 6:26 p.m.; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Rescsanski – aye; Andrus – absent, Houghton – aye, Wood – aye, and Lessels – aye; motion carried unanimously.

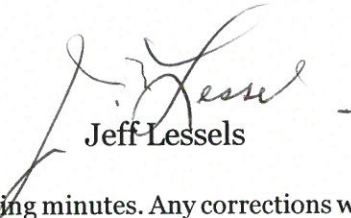
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary



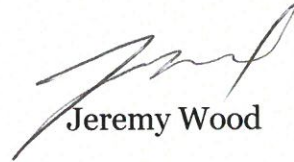
William Rescsanski

Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton



Jeff Lessels



Jeremy Wood

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**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #2
RSA 91-A:3 II (b-Hiring)
January 12, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Chair), Jeremy Wood (Vice Chair), William Rescsanski, and Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis – Town Administrator Pro-Tem
Jordan Cannon – Recording Secretary

Ms. Dennis presented an application from Gerard Beaudry to join the fire department. The Selectboard discussed the hours available presented by the applicant. It was discussed that the applicant may bring Emergency Management Systems experience. Mr. Wood stated that he would approve of hiring the applicant. Ms. Dennis commented that the acting fire chief would approve hiring this applicant. The decision was 2 – 1, Mr. Wood and Mr. Rescsanski “yay”, Ms. Houghton “nay”, and Mr. Lessels abstaining, in the affirmative of hiring the applicant.

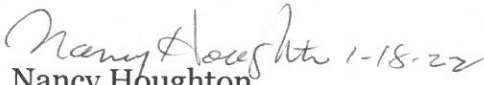
Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to reconvene public session at 7:23 p.m.; Ms. Houghton seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Rescsanski – aye; Andrus – absent, Houghton – aye, Wood – aye, and Lessels – aye; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus


Nancy Houghton


Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on January 19, 2022)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #3
RSA 91-A:3 II (c-Reputations)
January 12, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Chair), Jeremy Wood (Vice Chair), William Rescsanski, and Nancy Houghton

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis – Town Administrator Pro-Tem
Jordan Cannon – Recording Secretary

Mr. Rescsanski questioned the timing and plan to list the Town Administrator position. Ms. Dennis stated that the position was being listed this week.


Mr. Rescsanski made a motion to reconvene public session at 7:25 p.m.; Mr. Wood seconded the motion.


Roll call vote: Rescsanski – aye; Andrus – absent, Houghton – aye, Wood – aye, and Lessels – aye; motion carried unanimously.

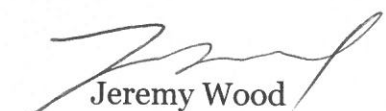
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus


Nancy Houghton


Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

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