

**CHARLESTOWN SELECTBOARD WORKSHOP  
COMMUNITY ROOM & ZOOM  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022  
5:00 – 8:00 PM**

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

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

Others Present: Matt Decker of Drummond Woodsum (via Zoom)  
Jeff McIver, Fidium Fiber  
Mary Ellen Player, Fidium Fiber  
John Streeter and Aare Ilves (via Zoom)

**PUBLIC HEARING: Great River Hydro PILOT**

Mr. Wood commenced the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The public hearing was opened per RSA 72.74 to take public comment regarding the PILOT agreement with Great River Hydro (GRH). Mr. Wood opened up the PILOT agreement to public comment. Mr. Decker stated that there was one update from the red line version, and that was a change in Section 6 with an added clarification of "Facility Capacity" and "Force Majeure." Mr. Wood clarified the PILOT agreement of being \$50,000 per year for the upcoming seven years. Mr. Decker clarified that GRH appealed its flowage rights and filed an abatement application for 2021 that has not yet matured into a lawsuit. He stated that this PILOT agreement resolves the value of the flowage rights from 2019-2028 by agreement. Mr. Decker stated GRH will make a payment of \$50,000 a year to be a good faith compromise to side-step the disagreement over the amount of the assessment on the flowage rights.

Mr. Lessels stated that GRH license for the Dam was up for renewal. He stated he overheard GRH was going to raise the level of the river by three feet. Mr. Lessels asked Mr. Decker if this PILOT agreement affected the discussion of re-licensing of the GRH dams. Mr. Decker stated that the issue of the dams is part of the FERC process, and the Town has the right to participate in that discussion, and disagreement of the value of flowage rights is completely distinct and separate. Mr. Decker stated that the flowage rights are the only component of the PILOT agreement, and the right to submerge land and the value of the right to submerge land are bundled together in a separate tax card. Mr. Lessels pointed out that GRH has a boat landing that they operate, and he was hoping that this could be included. Mr. Decker stated that anything to do with fee parcels that could be taxed is not covered in this agreement. John Streeter (via Zoom) asked if the Town knew the proposed assessed value of the properties in question. Mr. Wood discussed the history of negotiating with GRH, and the decision to accept the offer in lieu of having to pursue other means to resolve this issue. He stated that the court fees could cost more than the amount lost with the agreement. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that the difference in assessed value from both the Town and GRH; if the Town opted not to settle, the run the risk that the court may agree with the assessor from GRH and the Town would have to refund tax dollars. Mr. Decker reviewed the difference in assessed values, and reviewed the tax rates of the

fiscal years covered within the agreement. He stated that the difference in tax rates resulted in the lump sum payment of \$50,000 being preferable given the fluctuation year by year.

Mr. Lessels made motion to close the public hearing, Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Mr. Lessels made motion to accept the settlement and PILOT agreement from Great River Hydro regarding flowage rights from 2019-2028. Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 5:22 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (l) Legal, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 5:35 p.m.

### **5:30 PM: Non-public for hiring**

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 5:36 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 6:26 p.m.

The meeting let for recess at 6:27 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 6:31 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion to seal the non-public minutes (b-Hiring) of the March 30, 2022 Selectboard meeting for twelve (12) months, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion, the motion carried with an affirmative 5-0 verbal roll call vote.

### **Consolidated Communications for Broadband Project update**

Mary Ellen Player, Vice President of Expansion for Consolidated Communications, discussed her presence at the meeting as being to celebrate the broadband project's completion. She presented a completion certificate to the Selectboard. Mr. Wood questioned the status of both old and new poles in certain parts of Town. Ms. Player stated that if these poles belong to Consolidated Communications, they will take responsibility in having them removed. Ms. Blouin-Andrus clarified the services they provide. Ms. Player reviewed the services they provide, but clarified that they do not provide television channels. Mr. Rescsanski asked if they provide email addresses. Ms. Player stated that they do not provide email addresses. Ms. Player stated that this partnership would last forever. Ms. Player stated that a 2-gig opportunity will hopefully be something that they are able to provide this summer. Ms. Blouin-Andrus reviewed that with this project being completed, the Town would be able to benefit from enhanced internet service. Ms. Player stated that they are providing customer service as well as broadband internet. Ms. Player stated that a phone service is also provided by their company. Mr. Wood questioned when the installation would begin for the fiber in Town buildings. Mr. McIver stated that they would work on a Town building list, and they will provide service and one IP to each Town building. He stated that depending on the building more than one IP may be required. The Selectboard reviewed the Town buildings that would require installation. The Selectboard and



the representatives from Consolidated posed for a picture and celebrated the completion of the project.

### **Minutes of Previous Meetings:**

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to approve the minutes of March 23, 2022 – Selectboard Workshop, March 23, 2022 – Non-Public #1 Reputations, March 23, 2022 – Non-Public #2 Reputations, March 23, 2022 – Non-Public #3 Reputations. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

### **Consent Agenda:**

Mr. Rescsanski motioned to accept the Consent Agenda as written. Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

### **Administrator's Report:**

Ms. Dennis reviewed the present members of the CIP committee, and asked the Selectboard if they wished to accept these as presented. Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion to accept the individuals presented as being members of the CIP committee. Mr. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Ms. Dennis discussed the police highway safety grant as intended for speed detail, DWI, and a reimbursement program. Ms. Blouin-Andrus made motion to allow Mr. Wood to sign the Police Department Safety Grant. Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Ms. Dennis discussed the Five-Town meeting scheduled for Friday, April 29, 2022 that Charlestown will be hosting. After discussions, it was agreed that this meeting would occur in-person per consensus by the Selectboard. Ms. Dennis stated that other Towns expressed wishes that the meeting be in-person. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that roads should be one of the items for discussion at this meeting.

Ms. Dennis discussed the ongoing Brownfields assessment at 150 Wetherby Road. She stated that if Town is pursuing to Phase II, and if the parcel is owned by the Town, then the Town will have to clean it up if it's found to be contaminated. She reviewed that Phase 1 was an assessment of the property. Mr. Wood stated that if the Selectboard decides not to move forward with another phase then the option to sell this property still exists. Mr. Rescsanski stated that any buyer should be aware of the possibility of contamination before buying the property. Ms. Dennis stated that the interested buyer has been in regular contact with the office and is still interested in purchasing the property. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that the interested buyer was the third bidder when it was put up to bid. Mr. Lessels questioned if the Town should explore the options of re-bidding the property to get the maximum amount possible. Ms. Blouin-Andrus suggested contacting Matthew Decker concerning the legality of selling the property. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that the Selectboard would be able to extend the 18-month length of cleaning the property if the buyer came and presented his case. The Selectboard reached a consensus to not move forward with Phase II.

Ms. Dennis presented the open items list to be addressed in the immediacy of her vacating the position of Administrator. She stated she canceled her Town credit card. The Selectboard

reached a consensus to allow Ms. Dezan to oversee the Town credit card during the interim period between administrators. The contact for legal representative for the Town was discussed at length by the Selectboard. Ms. Blouin-Andrus conveyed her disagreement of a Selectboard member being liable for the list presented by Ms. Dennis. Mr. Lessels stated that he believed that in the interim a Selectboard member be responsible. Mr. Wood stated his opinion that the Selectboard discuss the open administrator position.

Ms. Houghton motioned to go into non-public at 7:24 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 7:43 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion to seal the non-public minutes (b-Hiring) of the March 30, 2022 Selectboard meeting for twelve (12) months, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion, the motion carried with an affirmative 5-0 verbal roll call vote.

Mr. Wood stated that the contents of the list which Ms. Dennis presented in the next 30 days should be given priority. Ms. Dennis stated that the majority of the list is in a holding pattern. Ms. Dennis stated the Taylor Hill easements are still outstanding. She stated that she sent out reminder letters today to the four parties who have not yet returned their documentation. Ms. Dennis stated that she has placed in folders many of the projects that need to be addressed. Mr. Lessels stated that he and Mr. Wood would meet with Ms. Wright, Mrs. Dezan and Ms. Dennis on the morning of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Mr. Rescsanski stated that he was comfortable with the tasks being delegated for the interim at that meeting.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 7:51 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputation, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 8:16 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion to seal the non-public minutes (c-Reputations) of the 3.30.2022 Selectboard meeting for thirty-six (36) months, Ms. Houghton seconded the motion, the motion carried with an affirmative 5-0 verbal roll call vote.

Mr. Lessels made a motion at 8:20 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion, the motion carried 5 to 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

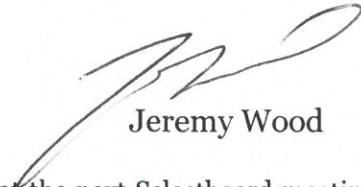
Respectfully Submitted,  
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary

  
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 April 06, 2022)