

**CHARLESTOWN SELECTBOARD WORKSHOP
COMMUNITY ROOM & ZOOM
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022
5:00 – 8:00 PM**

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

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon, Admin. Asst. to the Selectboard
Diane Dezan, Human Resources/Payroll
Patrick Connors, Chief of Police
Mark LaFlam, Chief of Fire Department

Others Present: Richard Carter, Larry Parkhurst, Lou Beam, Steven Neill, Dee Hassett, Alissa Bascom, Rosie Hall, Joan Ilves, Terry Salisbury, Kathleen Eames, Greg Bascom, Jason Ayotte, Bill Cass and Rob Guyet

Non-Public RSA91-A:3 B- Hiring

Mr. Wood commenced the workshop at 5:01 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 5:02 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion. The motion carried 3 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 5:21 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 5:22 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 5:35 p.m.

The meeting let for recess at 5:36 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 5:43 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 5:44 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputations, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 6:13 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion to seal non-public minutes (a Reputations) of the 4.13.2022 Selectboard meeting for twenty-four (24) months, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion, and the motion carried with an affirmative 5-0 verbal roll call vote.

Mr. Wood discussed the vacant treasurer position in town, and the garnered consensus of the Selectboard to offer the position of treasurer to the identified applicant with an anticipated start date of 6/01/2022.

The meeting let for recess at 6:14 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 6:28 p.m.

Department of Transportation- Jason Ayotte Route 12 update

The Selectboard welcomed representatives from the Department of Transportation to present information on the planned repairs to NH Route 12. Jason Ayotte, Bill Cass and Rob Guyet were present for the discussion to share updated information and answer questions from the public. He disclosed the initial project plan, and the obstacles that were encountered up until the present date. Mr. Ayotte reviewed the 2021 storm events that affected Route 12. He described how the excessive rain created voids under Route 12 (holes under the concrete slab under the roadway), as well as sluffing, which he detailed was movement creating small superficial failures on the outside of the road. He discussed the poor drainage from the roadway, with excessive high water going through the roadway which created the roadway failure. He stated that in the original proposal the planned excavation of the roadway was going to destabilize the railroad embankment. Mr. Ayotte detailed the initial plan of building a wall to excavate up to 10 feet. He stated that after much coordination, it was determined that the roadway was not wide enough to do all of the repairs necessary. He stated that there was an overlapping right of way between the railroad and the roadway. Mr. Ayotte described how the project was going to impact Great River Hydro. He discussed the steps that were taken starting with approvals and pre-authorization in November. Mr. Ayotte described how Casella Construction was the low bid contractor, and how they started construction on 1.03.2022. He stated how Casella began excavating the roadway in February and March. He described how the testing process (which involved drilling) began in February. He stated there were three weeks of drilling/testing to determine the strength of the soil and then the facing had to be tested as well.

Mr. Ayotte discussed the issues that were encountered during this period. He stated that with initial drilling they found that the soil was not strong enough to hold. He stated that at the beginning of March they encountered variations in the track, and that's when the railroad took steps to shut down the project. As a result, Mr. Ayotte stated that a number of alternatives were discussed with the railroad on how to proceed with the completion of this project. He stated that between March 8-11 of this year, design meetings were held with the railroads and two viable alternatives were identified. The only option the railroad wished to proceed upon, per Mr. Ayotte, involved a C-Cant Wall which would create a long concrete wall. Mr. Ayotte commented on this particular option as being extremely costly. He stated that there was dewatering within the contract, but the railroad stated they wished for no more dewatering. The other costly stipulation, per Mr. Ayotte, was to anchor to rock. He stated that the ultimate solution would be part of the 10-year plan. He commented that the present plan would be a short-term solution to open up traffic on the roadway. Mr. Ayotte commented that this design option includes slope stabilization which has to go all the way down to the flood plain. He stated that presently the majority of the work is outside the influence of the railroad, but that on this very day he was informed that the railroad approved the contract.

Mr. Ayotte stated that the next steps will be to complete the change order process and to determine what the full costs will be. He stated that realigning the rails on the railroad tracks will be necessary to process the agreement. He stated that the project must go all the way down to the slope, and easements with Great River Hydro will have to be finalized. Mr. Ayotte stated that construction has been remobilizing this week, and it is anticipated that late May is when Casella Construction can complete the project.

Mr. Ayotte then took questions from the Selectboard and the public in attendance.

One individual in attendance asked Mr. Ayotte to clarify that late May is the anticipated completion period. Mr. Ayotte stated how he discussed with Casella the materials which have already been purchased, and the materials that were not yet delivered. He stated that the materials which have been delivered will be utilized first. Ms. Blouin-Andrus questioned the likelihood of the late-May timeframe being met. Mr. Ayotte stated that after discussions with Casella he believes it to be a realistic goal that can be met. Ms. Blouin-Andrus disclosed the impact of the increase in the fuel costs, and the negative impact on residents and businesses in town. Mr. Cass, the Assistant Commissioner for the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, stated his awareness of the hardships this road closure has had upon the town. He reviewed the more complicated aspects of the original plan, and juxtaposed the present plan as being more common construction with more readily available materials. He commented that the risk and certainty is more solid, and that is feeling more confidence in the timeframe being met because presently they are utilizing less costly and more common materials in the construction. Chief Connors discussed his observations of the construction site how he has observed construction vehicles utilizing the part of the road under construction. He asked that if the road can presently support an excavator, could it support emergency vehicles. He commented how presently the town is cut off from South Charlestown, and that a one-lane opening could potentially permit individuals in town who have been affected by the road's closure some sort of short-term access to the roadway. Chief Connors reviewed his experience in working traffic closures, and stated that in a standard construction there is typically an ability to alternate traffic.

Mr. Ayotte responded to Chief Connors that there is not enough width on the roadway to have construction vehicles as well as personal vehicles on the road at the same time with required safety specifications. He then stated that Casella could operate more efficiently if the road remained closed with no traffic. Chief Connors stated that technically cars could utilize the roadway because he has witnessed dump trucks and vehicles drive over the road. Chief Connors stated that the road closure has had an impact on town services, business, and personal welfare. He advocated for personal traffic being allowed during the construction process. Chief Connors then asked if the construction work could be done at night to allow citizens use of the road. Mr. Cass commented on the risk to personal vehicles, but stated that potentially emergency services vehicles could have some access to the roadway if they followed the required safety specifications.

Mr. Wood stated that over the course of this project, the Selectboard has contacted the state at multiple levels. He stated that \$100,000 has been incurred in town costs for roads since the beginning of the Route 12 road closure. He disclosed that two businesses have already been closed because of this issue. Mr. Wood stated that the solution could have been found a year ago when the initial damage was done. Mr. Lessels detailed a historical anecdote when he was a young child, and described his observations of Route 12 being gradually affected by the geography which surrounds it. He commented on the longevity and common knowledge of citizens in Charlestown regarding the issues with this roadway. Mr. Lessels voiced his frustration of the state's inability to rectify the issues connected with Route 12. Mr. Cass commented that he hopes that the issues concerned will be addressed in this project.

Lou Beam, a Selectman for the town of Langdon, then expressed how his town has been impacted by this road closure. He stated that with his understanding of recent federal rulings concerning ARPA, a question he would pose to the state Department of Transportation is has there been any conversation with whomever is managing these funds for the costs incurred by this closure or a percentage thereof, being used to alleviate the financial burden towns have had to endure. Mr. Cass stated that ARPA funds are administered through the Governor's office and the Bureau of Economic Affairs. He stated that to his understanding, there are specific criteria for the use of ARPA funds, which have to be associated with Covid relief. Mr. Cass commented that

lost revenue could be possible use of these funds. Mr. Cass stated that Congress passed a multi-billion-dollar infrastructure bill, and that consequently the use of ARPA funds are not being considered for such projects. Mr. Cass stated that the emergency use of these funds would not fall under ARPA specifications. Mr. Beam stated that he understood that lost revenue could be alleviated with ARPA funds. Mr. Beam stated that Langdon had looked at applying for funds from the federal infrastructure bill but were told they did not qualify. Mr. Beam stated he did not understand why the ARPA money could not be used. Mr. Cass and Mr. Ayotte stated that the present project on Route 12 would not be funded by ARPA money. Mr. Cass discussed the possibility for Block Grant Aid and additional funding for state bridges.

Ms. Francis questioned drainage calculations experienced after an extreme rainfall event. She asked if Mr. Cass would explain the previous way to manage drainage compared to the one presently planned. Mr. Ayotte stated that the cross drainage is how it is changed, with more lateral or perpendicular drainage being utilized in this current project.

Mr. Carter commented that with significant funds being used in the beginning of this project for planning, proceeding with the present plan demonstrates a waste of funds that cannot be reclaimed.

Mr. Ayotte clarified that the railroad was not going to be moved, but a portion would have to be built back up to where it was prior to the rain damage. Mr. Carter stated that it is major work to address the railroad issue. Mr. Carter asked how much far over the Department of Transportation could move the road. Mr. Ayotte commented that 15 ft. of the slope before the road belongs to Great River Hydro. Mr. Carter then gave an example of a similar road closure. Mr. Cass stated that the example Mr. Carter described dealt with an existing road. He stated that the present situation with a sub-grade road that is built upon is different.

Mr. Messini questioned if all of the approvals have been reached for this project. Mr. Ayotte stated that railroad approval was reached as of today. He then asked the rough order of magnitude with the change in cost for this project. Mr. Ayotte stated he does not expect the costs being more than what was bid. He briefly detailed the change process that goes through layers of approval. Mr. Messini asked if there are any other areas which need attention in the general roadway that the town should be looking at in the meantime. Mr. Ayotte stated that the maintenance staff can be asked about this query.

Ron Guyet stated that the known underlying materials and drainage contributed to the initial project being developed. He commented his understanding that environmentalists do not want road water being fed into the river. He stated that traffic cannot be placed on the 24-foot roadway when there is a 16-foot excavator in operation.

The meeting let for recess at 7:38 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:47 p.m.

Public Comment

Ms. Ilves stated that she came across a booklet on the internet detailing possible federal government grant funding, and suggested that the Selectboard investigate if any of these grants were applicable to the needs of Charlestown.

Dee Hassett presented a concern with Borough Road and the school bus not driving down this road since 3.18.2022. She questioned that since mud season was over, when would it be possible to get this road graded. She stated that the ledge was stirred up recently and the road conditions became worse. She voiced her

frustration with school buses not coming down the road, and reflected that she has not gone this long without having buses come down to pick up her children. She commented that she did not see a reason why the road is not being grated. Mr. Wood stated that the town started grating back roads as of today. He commented on the roads being grated, and that the delay was because the frost has lasted longer. Mr. Wood stated that he anticipates that Borough Road would be one of the roads grated in the coming week. He stated that all of the roads in the area have been impacted this winter. Mr. Wood stated he would speak to Mr. Weed concerning this issue. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated that she would talk to the school about the buses driving that road.

Minutes of Previous Meetings:

Mr. Rescsanski motioned to approve the minutes of March 30, 2022 – Non-Public #4 Reputations (SEALED), April 6, 2022 – Selectboard Meeting, April 6, 2022 – Non-Public #1 Reputations (SEALED), April 6, 2022 – Non-Public #2 Reputations (SEALED), April 6, 2022- Non-Public #3 Reputations, April 6, 2022- Non-Public #4 Compensation, April 6, 2022- Non- Public #5 Resignation. Mr. Lessels 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.

Non-Public Meetings

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 7:55 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputations, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 8:01 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 8:02 p.m. RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring, Mr. Lessels seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

The meeting reconvened at 8:07 p.m.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to go into non-public at 8:08 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.

On-Going Business:

Mr. Lessels commented on the hiring policy as it relates to the town departments which interview and hire their own employees. He stated that when town departments receive applications, prior to offering the position to an applicant, they should have Human Resources run a background check. As they will technically be town employees, Cemetery and Library Trustees, which make decisions on their own for hiring, should send information regarding the applicant to Human Resources prior to making a final decision of offering employment.

Consensus was reached by the Selectboard to choose the second variation of the Finance Assistant position to be posted online by Human Resources.

Administrator's Report

Mr. Wood discussed there are three individuals with easements that have yet to return their easement deeds to the town. The Selectboard commented on which individuals on Taylor Hill have returned their easement deeds. Mr. Wood discussed speaking with Mr. Weed regarding the street sweeper bid. Mr. Lessels stated that the only bidder whose contract had yet to be signed had contacted the town and informed them that his sweeper had a broken part and would not be operable for eight months.

Mr. Lessels stated that he spoke to Mr. Dussault regarding an issue with his neighbor in town. Ms. Blouin-Andrus commented that any further action from the Selectboard could be construed as favoritism, and that at present it is up to the citizens to find a resolution to this issue.

Mr. Lessels commented how he observed an individual at the transfer station choose not to have his box spring processed because of it being a cost he did not want to pay. Mr. Lessels brought this to the Selectboard's attention as an example of how rate increases to dispose of certain items was being received.

Mr. Wood commented on an email he sent to DES. He stated that DES awarded the contract without any Selectboard input. Mr. Lessels stated that with the involvement of DES there was an understanding prior to their funding would also include a degree of decision-making. Mr. Wood commented his concern that there was no comment requested by the Selectboard on which contractor was to be chosen. Mr. Wood commented on the deficit in information that would be coordinated under this paradigm. Mr. Wood stated that presently the construction manager position is yet another incurred cost that was not precalculated for.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus made a motion at 8:34 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion, the motion carried 5 to 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

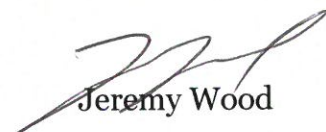
Submitted by:
Jordan Cannon
Admin Asst. to the Selectboard


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1
RSA91-A:3 B- Hiring
April 13, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeremy Wood (Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon- Admin Asst. to the Selectboard
Diane Dezan- Human Resources/Payroll

The applicant for the Building Maintenance/Custodial position started the interview by discussing his experience and his desire for wanting the town position he applied for. He discussed his experience working in Charlestown, and detailed the relevant experience for the applied position. He discussed desiring a position with longevity and stability. Mr. Wood reviewed the position as including both maintenance and custodial responsibilities. Mr. Rescsanski commented on the ability for the person who will fill this position needs to be able to work independently. Mr. Rescsanski questioned the applicant's ability to maintain organization. The applicant reviewed his professional and volunteer experience relevant to the requirements of the applied position.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to reconvene public session at 5:21 p.m.; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion.

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

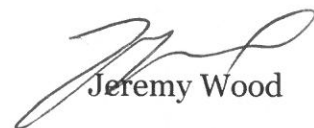
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Admin Asst. to the Selectboard


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made on April 20, 2022)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #2
RSA91-A:3 B- Hiring
April 13, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Vice-Chair), Jeremy Wood (Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon- Admin Asst. to the Selectboard
Diane Dezan- Human Resources/Payroll

Mr. Wood invited the applicant to discuss why he applied for the position of Deputy Building Inspector. He discussed his past and present building inspector experience. Mr. Wood described the nature of the position as regards to it being often infrequent and on-demand. Ms. Blouin-Andrus recommended the applicant speak to the town Building Inspector to gain a deeper understanding of the needs and requirements of the Deputy Building Inspector position. Ms. Dezan confirmed the applicant's contact information, and stated that she would contact him and help coordinate a discussion with the Building Inspector. Ms. Blouin-Andrus requested that the Building Inspector be present for any further interviews for this opening.

Mr. Rescsanski motioned to reconvene public session at 5:35 p.m.; Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion.

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


Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Admin Asst. to the Selectboard


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made on April 20, 2022)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #4
RSA91-A:3 C- Reputations
April 13, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Vice-Chair), Jeremy Wood (Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon- Admin. Asst to the Selectboard

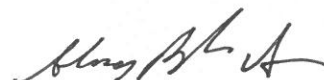
A representative from the Rotary Club informed the Selectboard that a dinner with the Governor of New Hampshire would occur on 4-21-2022. She stated that the Rotary Club was hosting this dinner at the Old Town Hall. The Selectboard members discussed their ability to attend.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to reconvene public session at 8:01 p.m.; Ms. Rescsanski seconded the motion.

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

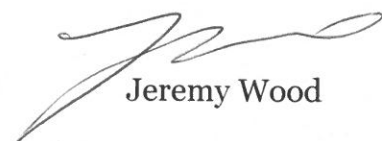
Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Admin Asst, to the Selectboard


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

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**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #5
RSA91-A:3 C- Reputations
April 13, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Vice-Chair), Jeremy Wood (Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Jordan Cannon- Admin. Asst to the Selectboard
Patrick Connors- Chief of Police

The chief of police discussed an individual who has applied for the open dispatch position. He stated that there were numerous applicants to this position, but many were removed after conducting background checks. Ms. Blouin-Andrus stated the individual being considered should demonstrate an understanding of confidentiality and the nature of working with the police department.

Mr. Lessels made a motion to approve Chief Connors' recommended candidate for dispatcher, Ms. Blouin-Andrus seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - 0 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Chief Connors stated he would like the new hire to begin as soon as she is able to leave her present position. Chief Connors stated that a part-time position candidate was also identified, but commented on the challenges in training two dispatchers concurrently.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to reconvene public session at 8:07 p.m.; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion.

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Admin Asst. to the Selectboard



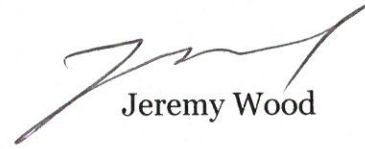
William Rescsanski



Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

Jeff Lessels



Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made on April 20, 2022)

**Charlestown Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #6
RSA91-A:3 C- Reputations
April 13, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Community Room**

Selectboard present in community room: Jeff Lessels (Vice-Chair), Jeremy Wood (Chair), William Rescsanski, Shelly Blouin-Andrus and Nancy Houghton (via Zoom)


Staff Present: Jordan Cannon- Admin. Asst to the Selectboard
Mark LaFlam- Fire Department Chief

The Fire Dept. Chief informed the Selectboard that elections for officers were conducted during the week prior. He stated that presently, the fire department has a new Lieutenant, which now ensures two medical licenses within the fire core of the department. Consensus of the Selectboard was reached to approve the Fire Department's officer elections. Chief LaFlam informed the Selectboard that four of his staff have informed him recently that they are considering retirement in the upcoming year. Chief LaFlam commented on the nature of volunteering for the fire department, and subsequently this adding fluidity to whomever he has on staff at any given time.

Ms. Blouin-Andrus motioned to reconvene public session at 8:13 p.m.; Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion.

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Admin Asst. to the Selectboard


William Rescsanski


Shelly Blouin-Andrus

Nancy Houghton

Jeff Lessels


Jeremy Wood

(Note: these are unapproved meeting minutes. Any corrections will be made on April 20, 2022)

