

TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
WATER COMMISSIONERS
ZOOM WORKSHOP MEETING
MAY 27, 2020 at 4:00

Selectmen Present and their location: Acting Chairman: Jeffrey Lessels- Town office, Albert St. Pierre- work office, John Streeter- home office, William Rescsanski- Town welfare office, Scott Wade- home office.

Staff Present: Jessica Dennis- Administrator
Kelly Wright- Administrative Assistant
David Duquette- Water/Wastewater Department Head
Patricia Chaffee- Water/ Wastewater Department

Public Present: VHB Consultants David Fenstermacher

Acting Chairman Lessels called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Mr. Fenstermacher addressed the board and reviewed the progress of their work. They have finished their walk thru and identified the Department of Transportation's Right of ways. By doing this they hope this will help with obtaining the permits required for the project. They are working on a draft set of plans and hope to finish up their survey work soon. The goal is to finalize the survey and wetland evaluations.

Mr. David Duquette reviewed with the new Board members the purpose of this water interconnection project. He explained in 2021 the State of NH is lowering the arsenic levels to .05 parts per million. This is lower than the EPA regulation. If the Town does not address this now, then when Mr. Duquette runs his state regulated water testing the Town will not be in compliance. There is plenty of water in Bull Run to connect the two systems and bring water to North Charlestown than build a new pump station. The project is a substantial cost, however, adding an additional filtration system to the existing system is also costly and should the State lower the arsenic level again, the system cannot meeting requirements.

Mr. Duquette reported grants and loans are in process to secure financing. The projected cost for the water interconnection project is approximately \$4,600,000. Mr. Wade asked about what other grants are available. Ms. Chaffee responded they are in the process of applying for a USDA Rural Development grant and a NH Water Trust grant. The Board discussed the bond and how much will the Town need. The goal is to offset some of the cost by increasing water rates; and the remaining would come from

the bond. The voters will vote on the bond amount in March 2021. Mr. St. Pierre stated the public will need to be informed of the importance of passing this warrant article.

There was discussion about what has been paid for and what is the remaining. Ms. Chaffee answered, \$60,000 has been spent on surveying and there is a remaining work will cost approximately of \$300,000 that needs to be secured. After the survey work has been completed Mr. Duquette and Ms. Chaffee will schedule a meeting.

The board discussed three additional water requests. The first was for Morway's Park. Ms. Dennis reported the previous board and Mr. & Mrs. Vanier agreed upon the following. The Vanier's would be responsible for the cost of removing an abandoned mobile homes in exchange for a tax and water abatement. The water abatement was overlooked last year. After discussion Mr. St. Pierre moved to honor the previous agreement, Mr. Wade seconded the motion. Mr. Streeter stated he would like an amount of the abatement in the motion. After discussion Mr. St. Pierre rescinded his motion, seconded by Mr. Wade to hold off until the next selectmen's meeting when Ms. Chaffee can provide an exact amount.

The board reviewed and discussed with Mr. Duquette the bill sent to the Anglican Church for their replacement water meter. Mr. Duquette stated this was not a good installation to begin with. The Town has a policy addressing frozen meters and feels it is not the Town responsibility. Ms. Chaffee reported there was only a slight increase in water usage. Mr. St. Pierre moved to deny waiving the water meter fee for the Anglican Church and the Town's policy will be included in the letter, Mr. Rescsanski seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (Yes), Mr. Lessels (Yes), Mr. Wade (Yes), Mr. Streeter (Yes), Mr. Rescsanski (Yes); motion passed.

The board reviewed and discussed with Mr. Duquette the water request for 85 Eaton St. The home sat vacant since November 2019; the water department was not given any notification of this until Ms. Chaffee received a call this spring of 2020 from the new owner. She continued to say the department is not responsible for keeping track of vacant home. Mr. Rescsanski moved to deny the abatement for 85 Eaton St. Mr. St. Pierre seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (Yes), Mr. Lessels (Yes), Mr. Wade (Yes), Mr. Streeter (Yes), Mr. Rescsanski (Yes); motion passed.

The Board reviewed and discussed the water lines on Norman Ave. Mr. Duquette explained there are three cooper pipes feeding into this line which makes it impossible to hear if there are any leaks and the pipes are not adequate in size. The property owner has put in two filters that the Town provided, to trap the sediment before reaching the renters. The board needs to start looking at a long-term solution. Mr. Duquette

recommended a warrant article because his license does not allow him to do the work. No decision was made.

The Board reviewed the water rate proposal Ms. Chaffee presented. Ms. Chaffee reported Charlestown's rate are somewhere in the middle of other surrounding Towns. The current rate is \$.0235 per cubic foot, and the proposed rate would increase to \$.0429 per cubic foot. There was discussion regarding how to raise the \$750,000 amount which would include the first bond payment. Ms. Chaffee stated that by increasing the water rates; it would put The Town more in line with other Communities and could possibly help achieve the USDA Rural Development grant. Mr. St. Pierre moved to use the water rate of \$750,000 as proposed with the understanding this would be enough to fund the bond and there will not be an increase in 2021, Mr. Wade seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (Yes), Mr. Streeter (No), Mr. Rescsanski (No), Mr. Wade (Yes), Mr. Lessels (Yes); motion passed (3-2).

Ms. Chaffee will reach out to VHB for more information and report back to the board.

Mr. Rescsanski moved to adjourn at 6:10pm, Mr. St. Pierre seconded the motion and on a roll call; Mr. St. Pierre (Yes), Mr. Lessels (Yes), Mr. Wade (Yes), Mr. Streeter (Yes), Mr. Rescsanski (Yes); motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelly N Wright

Albert St. Pierre

Jeff Lessels

Scott Wade

John Streeter

William Rescsanski

(Note: These are unapproved minutes; any amendments will be made at the next Selectboard meeting on June 3, 2020)