

**TOWN OF CHARLOTTE
SELECTBOARD
AUGUST 9, 2010**

APPROVED

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Russell, Ed Stone, John Owen, Jenny Cole, Winslow Ladue.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: None.

OTHERS: Ellie Russell, Larry Hamilton, Dorothy Pellett, Moe Harvey, Nary Meade, Marty Illick, Nancy Wood, Kate Lampton, Stephen Brooks, Jennifer Adsit, Frances Foster, David Krolach, Mariana DuBurl, Gary Pittman, Mary Volk.

Call to Order

Charles Russell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Adjustments to Agenda:

None.

Public Comment:

Stephen Brooks, resident, made a joint request (Mr. Hamilton and Brooks) that the Selectboard authorize an expenditure of \$320 from the Non-designated fund to remove a Box Elder from a hedge located on the north side of the Habitat project on the Burns property. Mr. Stone suggested asking Junior to remove the tree for free.

Minutes of July 26

MOTION by Winslow, seconded by John, to approve the minutes of July 26, 2010, as written with edits.

VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

Allocation to the Charlotte Conservation Fund for FY 10-11 – Discussion only

Charles reviewed three proposed municipal tax rates. Proposal #3 would raise the rate one cent versus two cents.

Mary Mead, Town Clerk, reviewed that the budget was done and noted that the Town should always lower the tax rate when possible. The Conservation Fund could be funded up to a maximum of two cents.

There was lengthy discussion regarding the level of funding of the Conservation Fund (currently at \$665,000 with the potential to grow to \$850,000 if the two cents based on the Grand List was maintained); what projects the Conservation Committee was working on now and in the future; concerns related to high taxes in the current economic climate; and the wording that established a Conservation Fund that was voted on at March Town Meeting (“...no more than two cents...”).

Kate Lampton pointed out that a proposal by the Board to lower the Conservation Fund from two cents to one cent was sudden. There should be input from the Conservation Committee. The committee would be willing to conduct an analysis for the next tax year. Winslow pointed out that the voters approved that the Selectboard would approve a rate up to two cents, and asked, does that mean between zero and two cents. Mary pointed out that the Board was setting a tax rate in August that would be applied to the Town’s November tax bill. Dorothy asked how one cent would affect the taxes of a \$250,000 house. Marty stated that money used for Charlotte land conservation projects goes to Charlotte land owners. It is leveraged money spent for a public benefit and stays in Town.

It was suggested that the Selectboard retain the two cents and continue discussion for the next tax year.

Set Tax Rate – action item: approve tax rate for FY10-11

MOTION by Ed, seconded by John, to set the FY10-11 tax rate at \$0.15256 as presented.

DISCUSSION:

Stephen Brooks reiterated that the Town voters approved language of up to two cents and that was wise. John said that the language allows the Board to change the two cents, but (he) would also like to have the Conservation Committee analysis. Ed suggested bringing the issue to the voters (at Town Meeting) and let the voters say what they want. John suggested amending the motion for the Conservation Committee to conduct an analysis by a certain date. Ed and John withdrew the motion.

MOTION by Ed, seconded by John, to set the FY10-11 municipal tax rate at \$0.1820.

VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

For a future Selectboard agenda: Conservation Fund report; 1) Presentation re: process, vision, values, etc., 2) Presentation by or near to July 1st re: an up-to-date picture of projects including time lines.

Brush-hogging of Town Lands – actions: 1) prioritize areas to be brush-hogged; 2) authorize brush-hogging by Mack’s in lieu of lease payment

1) prioritize areas to be brush-hogged

Jenny read an e-mail that summarized brush-hogging done for last year.

MOTION by Ed, seconded by John, to approve brush-hogging of Town lands as summarized by Robert Mack. Motion withdrawn.

2) authorize brush-hogging by Mack’s in lieu of lease payment

MOTION by Winslow, seconded by John, to approved an agreement between the Town of Charlotte and Robert Mack to brush-hog Thompsons Point with the hours not to exceed 8 hours, Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge with the hours not to exceed 7 hours, Plouffe Lane meadow with the hours not to exceed 5 hours in lieu of lease payment; the Greenbush Road landfill cap, the Plouffe Lane landfill cap, and Barber Hill Lane at the rate of \$150 per hour; and for Robert Mack to report the number of hours back to the Selectboard for Barber Hill, Greenbush Road landfill cap, and Plouffe Lane landfill cap; and staff to send a letter to that effect to Robert Mack.

DISCUSSION:

It was clarified that Robert Mack should report the number of hours per parcel and the cost to the Selectboard. Following further discussion the Selectboard decided to revisit the agenda item at a future meeting. Motion withdrawn by Winslow and John.

Appointment(s) to Charlotte Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee – action item: to approve appointments

MOTION by Ed, seconded by Jenny, to appoint Gordon Brown and Robin Pierce to the Charlotte Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee.

VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

West Charlotte Village Septic Research Group – action item: to approve appointments

MOTION by Winslow, seconded by John, to form a West Charlotte Village Septic Research Group with a mission to explore and report the construction of a public or community facility or facilities for the purpose of providing waste water disposal for residential and commercial use in the West Charlotte Village as presented.

VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

Following a review of potential West Charlotte Village Septic Research Group candidates, the Selectboard deferred appointments. Winslow volunteered as a Group facilitator. Winslow would prepare a questionnaire to be filled out by potential Group candidates for Selectboard review. Candidates would be invited to appear before the Selectboard at the 08/23/2010 Selectboard meeting.

Pease Mountain Trail Interpretive Sign – action item: approve Memorandum of Agreement

MOTION by Winslow, seconded by John, to approve a Memorandum of Agreement between the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the Charlotte Central School, and the Town of Charlotte concerning installation, ownership and maintenance of a Lake Champlain Byway interpretive panel(s) to be installed at the following location: adjacent to trailhead to Pease Mountain Natural Area.

AMENDMENT by Winslow, seconded by John, to approve a Temporary Use Easement agreement as presented.

VOTE on amended motion: unanimous; amended motion carried.

Board Communication – discussion only

The Selectboard discussed Board communication processes, Board and (Town) committee communications, and a process related to news reporters.

Approval of Bills and Warrants

The Selectboard signed Bills and Warrants as presented.

Adjournment

MOTION by Ed, seconded by John, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kathlyn L. Furr, Recording Secretary