

**TOWN OF CHARLOTTE
SELECTBOARD
FEBRUARY 27, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Eleanor Russell, Jenny Cole, Ed Stone, Frank Thornton.
(Charles Russell absent)

ADMINISTRATOR: Dean Bloch, Selectboard Assistant.

OTHERS: Carrie Spear, Junior Lewis, Ray Curtis Jr., Dick St George.

APPROVED

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Russell called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. ADJUSTMENT TO AGENDA

None.

3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Thornton, seconded by Ms. Cole, to approve the minutes of 01/23/2006, as written with the following corrections:

Page 2, change to read "Mr. Arthaud, Rescue Department Chief";

Page 5, agenda #13, second sentence, change to read "...Class IV roads could be added to the map via Selectboard approval".

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

MOTION by Ms. Cole, seconded by Mr. Thornton, to approve the minutes of 01/30/2006 with the following corrections:

Page 2, correct the spelling of "David Perrin";

Page 3, 2nd bullet, correct the spelling of the word "along",

Page 4, change to read "3 gallons per minute".

Page 5, 4th paragraph, delete the word "within".

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

Approval of the minutes of 02/13/2006 were tabled until the next meeting of the Board.

5. APPROVE LIQUOR LICENSE FOR SPEARS CORNER STORE, INC.

MOTION by Mr. Thornton, seconded by Ms. Cole, to suspend the regular Selectboard meeting and to convene as the Liquor Control Board.

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

MOTION by Mr. Stone, seconded by Ms. Cole, to approve a Liquor License application for the Spear Corner Store, Inc., as presented.

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

MOTION by Mr. Thornton, seconded by Mr. Stone, to adjourn the Liquor Control Board and to reconvene the Selectboard meeting.

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

The Selectboard members signed the Liquor License documents.

6. ROAD RECONSTRUCTION AND BRIDGE INSPECTION REPORT - Discussion

BRIDGE INSPECTION REPORT

Mr. Lewis, Road Superintendent, reviewed a bridge inspection report, and noted the following:

- The LaPlatte Bridge #31 (Dorset Street) I beam supports and spans were beat and guard rail posts were rusted. The bridge is safe enough to operate on, but repairs should be looked into.
- The Holmes Creek Bridge is in satisfactory condition, but the knee braces were off an inch and a half. The roof would need to be lifted in order to replace the 4"x4" knee braces.
- The Lewis Creek Bridge #28 height clearance is now 11'. Signage would be ordered and put in place.
- The road crew would inspect the Lewis Creek Bridge #29.
- Staff recommended having a consultant review the condition of the Carpenter Road Bridge #30. The bridge is the highest priority.

ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

Ms. Russell reviewed a proposed FY06/07 budget line item of \$150,000 for gravel road repair.

Mr. Lewis reviewed a proposed through-road upgrade schedule as follows:

Carpenter Road 1.75 miles (to be done in FY06/07), Lime Kiln Road 2.5 miles, Bean Road 1.4 miles, Bingham Brook Road 1.15 miles, Monkton Road 0.55 miles, Lewis Creek Road 1.6 miles, Roscoe Road 1.65 miles, Converse Bay Road 1.5 miles, Guinea Road 1.1 miles, and Orchard Road 1.63 miles for a total of 14.83 miles.

Mr. Lewis noted that material prices were increasing every year. Once the road base was upgraded then it was a matter of maintenance of the road surfaces. The average road lost about an inch per year.

Ms. Spear asked if a new covered bridge would be considered for the Dorset Street Extension. Mr. Lewis replied that funding would need to be allocated if the bridge were to be replaced.

7. SPEAR GERVIA ROAD - Update

Mr. Bloch reviewed an e-mail from Liam Murphy, dated 12/20/2005, regarding a suggestion for a trail easement to replace the existing Spear Gervia Road, and a copy of a letter from Liam Murphy to Clark Hinsdale Jr., dated 11/14/2005 that questions Mr.

Hinsdale's assertion that the Spear Gervia Road provided access to Mr. Hinsdale's property. Staff has not reviewed the draft easement language. Ms. Russell stated that the Town believes that the Spear Gervia Road goes 1700' to the McGuire Pent road, but does not go to the Hinsdale property. Spear Gervia Road would be discontinued from the McGuire-Pent Road to Mt Philo Road.

Mr. Thornton pointed out that if the Spear Gervia Road was discontinued that would make McGuire Pent Road a dead end. That would be a problem for an approved subdivision south of the McGuire Pent Road. The Planning Commission has approved a right-of-way to the subdivision. There is a Site Map on file in the Town Office. A turn around would be required to rectify the situation, said Mr. Thornton. Mr. Bloch said the Swift-McCargos own the Gecewicz property.

There was further discussion regarding the approved subdivision access (Mr. Thornton said that 60' of road would have to go in for the subdivision if Spear Gervia Road was thrown up); clarify what parcels the Swift-McCargos have purchased; a Selectboard suggestion for legal counsel review; and have the property owners to formally request a hearing. Mr. Stone spoke in support of holding a public hearing and scheduling a site visit.

Mr. Bloch reviewed a next legal step, which is to hold a public hearing for the purposes of discussing the issue. A discussion of throwing up the road could come at a later meeting.

Ms. Spear asked if this was the first road under discussion to be thrown up and if the road was closed. Ms. Russell replied that the Selectboard has thrown up roads in the past. There is a state statute process that would be followed. There have been other roads suggested for discontinuance.

8. FIRE AND RESCUE - Update

Ray Curtis Jr and Dick St George, Fire and Rescue Department representatives, reviewed potential areas of discussion that could come up at Town Meeting as follows:

- Purchase of a new ambulance
- Hiring an Administrative Assistant. An advertisement has appeared in newspapers and four candidates have been interviewed. Two more candidates are scheduled to be interviewed. A draft job description includes tasks, such as getting and distributing mail, filing reports, writing grants, assisting at audits, etc. A final hiring decision would be made after Town Meeting.

Ms. Spear asked if other towns have similar administration assistant positions. Mr. Curtis explained that some towns have full-time positions, or full-time administrators, or paid Fire Chiefs.

Ms. Russell noted that the Rescue Department has placed the order for a new ambulance for \$140,000. Mr. Curtis said the paint of the ambulance would match the fire truck(s).

MOTION by Mr. Thornton, seconded by Ms. Cole, to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign an order for the purchase of a new ambulance in the amount of \$140,000 as presented.

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

Ms. Russell signed the ambulance purchase order.

Mr. Stone noted that three New York towns have cut their Fire Department budgets in half and if that happened at Town meeting what would the impact be. Mr. Curtis reviewed that the proposed payroll budget was \$150,000. If the Town voted to cut the budget in half then the department would have to cut ambulance service. I don't know how we could operate, said Mr. Curtis.

Ms. Spear asked if Charlotte had no ambulance and someone needed help what happens. Would Charlotte have enough EMT's for coverage, asked Ms. Spear. Mr. St George explained that some towns contract with an ambulance service to provide coverage. For example, Hinesburg contracts with St. Michael's ambulance service.

There was discussion regarding current EMT coverage in Town (three persons manned two shifts to provide 24 hour coverage); the department currently paid for two full-time people and utilizes per diem staffing if there were not enough volunteers (Mr. Curtis said that there were paid people during the daytime); and that a sufficient number of crew chiefs is an issue. Mr. Curtis said that the department has to pay a per diem person to fill a night crew chief position.

Ms. Spear asked if the Rescue Department had a larger budget than the Fire Department. Mr. Curtis replied yes. The department is always recruiting volunteers, but it is a big time commitment and specialized training is required. Mr. St George said that all training is paid by the departments and is in the budgets.

Ms. Russell reviewed that health benefits and building maintenance were the two operating expenses that were increasing the most. Mr. St George said that the furnace is an issue and a new company was hired to do maintenance. In addition, there is equipment that needs regular maintenance.

Ms. Russell suggested that the Fire and Rescue departments compile a short list of possible questions and answers ready and available for discussion at the Town Meeting.

In response to a question, Ms. Cole clarified that the Fire and Rescue departments were a corporation run by towns' people.

Ms. Spear asked if the departments could use what they have for a year or two, and then come back to the voters for equipment replacement. Mr. St George explained that the fire fighting equipment/gear must pass regular inspections. Some of the equipment has been declared obsolete and needs replacing now. Mr. Curtis said that it would be a good idea to hold an informational night and invite public participation prior to the Town Meeting.

Mr. Curtis said that the departments need legal counsel advice regarding the Trust. The Fire/Rescue Corporation approved action to replace the current trustee at the February meeting. On another matter there have been contract negotiations with Verizon to increase their rent on the department communications tower. A structural study was done. A potential new lease at market rates would come before the Town.

Mr. Bloch asked for an update on a Homeland Security grant audit. Mr. Curtis replied that the department was audited three-four months ago and passed. All requirements were met and there shouldn't be an issue.

The Selectboard thanked Mr. Curtis and Mr. St George for their report.

9. OPPORTUNITY CREDIT UNION - OBTAIN ELIGIBILITY FOR REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Ms. Russell explained that a federal HUD program provided funding for non profit Community Development (NCD) grants to repair and replace mobile homes. The Board would need to pass a Resolution to authorize the CEO to designate Opportunity Credit Union to operate a Revolving Loan Fund. Ms. Russell read a cover letter from the Opportunity Credit Union.

Ms. Cole suggested inviting the Opportunity Credit Union to come before the Board at the next Board meeting.

10. SELECTBOARD UPDATE CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Russell reported on the following items:

- Adelphia was expanding cable service in Town.
- The Sixty-first Annual Town Officers Educational program is scheduled for April.
- The Old Lantern issue was at a stand still and would be a future agenda item.

Ms. Cole reviewed proposed appointments to the Thorpe Barn Committee.

MOTION by Ms. Cole, seconded by Mr. Thornton, to appoint Marsha Stone and Kent Cummings to the Thorpe Barn Committee as presented.

VOTE: 3 ayes, 1 abstention (Mr. Stone); motion carried.

Ms. Spear said that she had counted 40 transmission lines that cross the road from the Brick Store to Ferry Road. How many would disappear if the proposed VELCO line was buried, asked Ms. Spear. Mr. Lewis replied about four. Ms. Cole reviewed that the north-south transmission line running west of railroad tracks currently were on existing 35' high poles. Those poles would be replaced with new 60'-70' high poles and the existing right-of-way would change to 100' wide. Ms. Cole explained visual impacts and that VELCO was suggesting that a distribution line east-west along Ferry Road go underground. It is estimated that legal expenses would run about \$15,000, which would be less than the previous year. The Ferry Road area is a concern. VELCO has released

proposed design plans (just out) last week. We would need to look at the design proposed through the northern part of Charlotte, specifically (Greenbush) park.

Mr. Bloch said that Charles Russell would be prepared to answer any questions that the voters had regarding the Burns project.

11. BILLS AND WARRANTS

The Selectboard signed Bills and Warrants as presented.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Thornton, seconded by Ms. Cole, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: 4 ayes; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kathlyn Furr, Recording Secretary.

These minutes are subject to correction by the Charlotte Selectboard. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.