

**CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
TOWN HALL  
JANUARY 12, 2015**

**APPROVED**

**SELECTBOARD MEMBERS:** Lane Morrison, Chair; Charles Russell, Ellie Russell, Fritz Tegatz, Matthew Krasnow.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Dean Bloch, Town Administrator.

**OTHERS:** Robert Mack, John Snow, Peter Trono, Stephen Brooks, Mary Mead, Margaret Woodruff, Vince Crockenberg, Patrice Machavern, Valarie Graham, Lynne Jaunich, John Hammer, Charlotte News; Robin Reid, Charlotte Citizen; and others.

**ITEMS TAKEN UP:**

- 6:01 PM Ferry Road— discussion of options to address stormwater management, pedestrian accessibility and on-street parking. *Discussion only*
- 7:10 PM Employee Wage Classification Plan and Policy. *Action under consideration: approve*
- 7:30 PM Budget review. *Discussion only*
- 8:15 PM Articles for Town Meeting warning, including proposed article to vote the municipal budget by Australian ballot. *Discussion only*
- 8:40 PM Humane Society of Chittenden County—2015 Animal Control Housing Agreement. *Action under consideration: approve*
- 8:45 PM Thompson’s Point leases. *Actions under consideration:*  
Terminate lease to the Nancy L. Baker Trust U/T/A April 27, 1998, as Amended for Lots 170 & 171 at 650 North Shore Road  
Approve a new lease to Matthew C. Baker and Corrie L. Blankenbeckler for Lots 170 & 171 at 650 North Shore Road

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Morrison, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJUSTMENT TO AGENDA**

Deferred: Ferry Road – discussion to be scheduled at a future Selectboard meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Snow, resident, said that as a taxpayer he was concerned that Sullivan and Powers, auditors, found one material weakness in the 2014 Town audit. Over the last four Town audits the outside auditors have found 5 material weaknesses. There is a chronic weakness somewhere in Charlotte’s governmental organization. The leadership needs to restructure the Town financial reporting to bring accountability to address these financial deficiencies at this level, stated Mr. Snow.

**MINUTES: January 5 (9:00 a.m.) January 5 (7:00 p.m.), January 8, 2015**

**MOTION by Mr. Russell, seconded by Ms. Russell, to approve the Charlotte Selectboard minutes of January 5, 2015 (7:00 p.m.) as written, with the following edit:**

- **Page 3, line 118 - replace the word “Ask” with “Ms. Lampton to consult with...”.**

**VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

**EMPLOYEE WAGE CLASSIFICATION PLAN AND POLICY. *Action under consideration: approve***

**MOTION by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to approve the draft Salary Program Implementation and Salary Administration policies.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Bloch explained that the Selectboard had met Monday, January 12, 2015, 10:00 a.m., for the purpose of reviewing the policies. Changes included how the rules applied to current employees at 100 percent of current experience(s). Other changes were non-substantive, said Mr. Bloch.**

**Mr. Russell asked if the three years of planning and zoning experience that Jeannine McCrumb had during her tenure in Richmond were taken into account. Mr. Bloch replied yes. Prior experience was covered under rules 3 and 4, said Mr. Bloch.**

**Changes to the Implementation Policy:**

- **Page 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph: insert the word “of” between “result” and “this”;**
- **Appendix 1: delete rows 34 and 35;**
- **Appendix 2, Column T, Row 3, Town Clerk/Treasurer: insert the number “15”, and insert “Max” in the column to the right of Column “U”; Row 20, Beach Attendant: insert “Min” in the column to the right of Column “U”;**

**Changes to the Salary Administration Policy:**

- **Page 2, Table 1, Step Change: delete the “0” in front of “MIN”;**
- **Page 3, Rule 2, change to read “...experience, as determined in Rule 3, will be credited.”**

**Mr. Mack asked to have a written breakdown of \$10,000 in changes for the period of January 1 to the end of the year. Mr. Morrison clarified that the change represented Cost of Living of \$24,514 in Column AE in the Implementation Program, Appendix 1, which was available on the Town website. The amount was an estimate for the period of July 1 to June 30, and would be adjusted as necessary, noted Mr. Morrison. Mr. Brooks asked if the cost of living amount used was based on 2014 for 2015/2016. Mr. Morrison replied yes.**

**Mr. Mack asked what part of the policy documents would be printed in the 2015 Town Report. Mr. Morrison explained that employee salaries were included in the financial reports. The policies were available at the Town Hall, or on-line, reiterated Mr. Morrison.**

**Ms. Mead suggested that since the Selectboard worked and talked about the policies for a long time she would think that they would be printed in the Town Report. That way the voters could review and vote on the process, and see what the pay rates were when**

implemented on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The pay raises should be implemented on July 1<sup>st</sup> versus adjusting the budget in mid-stream. Implementing the hikes would set a precedent of pay raise expectations in mid-year, which should be avoided, stated Ms. Mead.

Mr. Russell suggested printing the first one-third of the Salary Administration policy, Appendix 2. That laid out individual pay, and then the Selectboard could orally present how the data was gathered, the Palmer Study, etc. Drafting/writing a policy was the job of the Selectboard versus the voters, said Mr. Russell. Mr. Morrison said that by the time the Town Report went to print the 2015/2016 information could be added.

Mr. Trono asked if the added cost to pay Town employees had been calculated. Mr. Morrison replied that it was estimated at \$24,500, more or less.

Mr. Trono asked if the Town Attorney had reviewed the policies for any shortcomings. Mr. Morrison replied no. A consultant was used, said Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Trono asked when Frank last looked at the drafts. Mr. Morrison said that it was not needed. The data and overall philosophy hadn't changed, said Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Mack asked if anyone had run the numbers from start to finish, and if Frank shouldn't review the final document. Mr. Morrison explained that the numbers were run multiple times. Frank didn't need to see the final draft, said Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Brooks suggested publishing the new fiscal implementation data in the Town Report, which would push aside all static and questions, or note in the Town Report that the policies were available at the Town Hall. Mr. Tegatz pointed out that there was a large volume of documents underlying the policies. It would be enough to say that it was all available, said Mr. Tegatz.

Mr. Morrison said that the Charlotte Citizen and Charlotte News could run articles that all the information was available on the website. The policies were simply a standardization of employee pay, said Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Brooks said that the documents represented a major significant financial decision. The printer could insert a fold-out with the information in the Town Report, suggested Mr. Brooks.

Mr. Mack stated that there were areas of the documents that he didn't like. There could be other way to be fair to other employees. He could go over what those areas were. He was concerned regarding future problems like with the CVFRS MOA, said Mr. Mack.

Mr. Tegatz said that the vacation program required review. He would like to condition approval of the motion pending that review, and that pay compensation for anyone past Step 15 should be addressed, said Mr. Tegatz.

Mr. Mack said that his concern was that any employee hitting year 15 might not stay working for Charlotte.

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

**BUDGET REVIEW. *Discussion only***

The Selectboard reviewed a draft Town budget - expenses as follows:

- Page 1, Selectboard, Legal Expenses row - change Budget 15-16 column to \$30,000 and the 'Change' column number to \$5,000.
- Page 1, Town Clerk, Clerk Salary – change to read Clerk/Treasurer Salary.
- Page 1, Planning and Zoning, Town Planner/Zoning – change to read Planner/Zoning Adm.
- Page 1, Planning and Zoning, Village Planning – consider deleting the line item.
- Page 2, Delinquent Taxes, Legal – staff to research how legal charges were accounted for.
- Globally, hide any row with all zeros, such as Town Clerk, P/T Assistant Clerk.
- Globally, add line numbers to the left of the Account Description column.
- Page 3, Library – bold “Library”.
- Staff to research \$3,000 for the Library Assistant under the Library budget.

Mr. Mack asked to have a Year To Date actuals with percentages report. Mr. Russell suggested that staff could add a column with the Year To Date expenditures and percentages to the draft budget for the next Selectboard meeting. Ms. Mead said that a NEMRC budget status report was the only report needed.

Mr. Tegatz asked if the draft budget could be printed out to mimic the NEMRC report.

In response to a question, Mr. Bloch said that the Library Assistant salary had not been corrected yet.

Ms. Russell noted that the CVFRS representatives would appear at the Thursday, January 15, 2015, Selectboard meeting at 10:00 a.m. for a discussion of the CVFRS draft budget. Ms. Russell would remind CVFRS that revenues needed to be included.

Mr. Mack asked that the Selectboard schedule evening meetings to allow the general public to attend versus morning meetings.

Mr. Trono asked the Selectboard to send him a summary of the morning January 15<sup>th</sup> Town/CVFRS budget meeting.

Mr. Mack suggested that a better breakdown of bridges under the Highway budget was needed. Mr. Bloch noted that a separate Charlotte Bridge Repair budget for FY2016 report was available for review.

Mr. Mack asked if there would be a remaining balance in the covered bridges line item in the Highway Reserve fund. Mr. Bloch replied yes. Mr. Tegatz briefly reviewed grant funding for engineering work and potential grant funding for construction.

Mr. Tegatz said that he would contact the Charlotte Road Commissioner regarding bridge funding.

**ARTICLES FOR TOWN MEETING WARNING, INCLUDING PROPOSED ARTICLE TO VOTE THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT.*****Discussion only***

The Selectboard reviewed a draft Town Meeting Warning.

## Article 3:

Mr. Russell suggested utilizing language such as: "...to adopt a Selectboard budget of "x" amount with expenses of "x" amount and "x" to be raised by taxes for FY...".

## Article 4:

- Mr. Bloch noted that the Highway budget was included in the general budget. It clarifies what the Highway Reserve fund was and what the money was for.
- Delete "...without further voter approval." Delete: the word "such" and add "...for these Capital projects.
- Need clarification if the Highway funds could be carried over and who has the authority to put money into funds.

Mr. Mack questioned the wording of Article 4, specifically regarding highway drainage projects. The word "drainage" should be deleted, and the wording regarding voter approval should remain, said Mr. Mack.

Mr. Crockenberg reviewed the rationale regarding a proposed article that the Town budget would be adopted via Australian ballot "not sooner than five weeks after the Selectboard has been directed by the voters..." following voter review and discussion at Town Meeting. If adopted the article would become effective at the March 2016 Town Meeting, said Mr. Crockenberg.

Mr. Crockenberg explained that Will Senning, Secretary of States office, had clarified the issue as noted in a written explanation handed out for Selectboard review. The budget discussion at Town Meeting would be the same as the school budget currently.

There was further discussion regarding the current system of reviewing line items and voting from the floor on budgets versus voting a bottom total budget by Australian ballot; a suggestion to replace the word "directed" with "advised" (Mr. Crockenberg said that he was willing to accept the edit of "advised" as a friendly motion to the proposed article); if the Australian ballot article was adopted then the five weeks period gave the Selectboard time to amend the budget, which should be justified before holding an Australian ballot (Ms. Machavern pointed out that budget vote changes can not go on the Australian ballot as per state statute); the proposed article was a way to increase participation at Town Meeting while preserving the Town Meeting tradition and still allowing an Australian ballot; and if changing the date and time of Town Meeting would accomplish that objective.

Mr. Morrison asked staff to make a more official research of state statutes regarding the proposed Australian ballot article, and to contact the Secretary of State's office for a legal opinion.

Following further discussion of the proposed article, Mr. Morrison suggested adding "...effective for March 2016."

Mr. Crockenberg suggested writing newspaper articles to clarify the proposal and when it would take effect.

It was the consensus of the Selectboard to support the proposed Australian ballot article concept.

Staff would include the proposed article to change the way Town budgets were adopted on the Monday, January 19th Selectboard meeting agenda - adoption of the Town Warning of articles.

**HUMANE SOCIETY OF CHITTENDEN COUNTY—2015 ANIMAL CONTROL HOUSING AGREEMENT. *Action under consideration: approve***

**MOTION by Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to approve a 2015 Animal Control Housing Agreement between the Town of Charlotte and the Humane Society of Chittenden County.**

**VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

**THOMPSON'S POINT LEASES. *Actions under consideration:***

- **Terminate lease to the Nancy L. Baker Trust U/T/A April 27, 1998, as Amended for Lots 170 & 171 at 650 North Shore Road**
- **Approve a new lease to Matthew C. Baker and Corrie L. Blankenbeckler for Lots 170 & 171 at 650 North Shore Road**

**MOTION by Mr. Russell, seconded by Ms. Russell, to approve Thompson's Point leases as follows:**

- **Terminate lease to the Nancy L. Baker Trust U/T/A April 27, 1998, as Amended for Lots 170 & 171 at 650 North Shore Road**
- **Approve a new lease to Matthew C. Baker and Corrie L. Blankenbeckler for Lots 170 & 171 at 650 North Shore Road.**

**VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

**SELECTBOARD UPDATES**

Mr. Krasnow reported that a Community Safety Committee meeting would be held on Tuesday, January 13, 2015, with an agenda item: election of officers.

Ms. Russell reported that the Library Board had met.

Ms. Russell reported that the CVFRS Corporate Board met regarding the proposed CVFRS budget.

Next meeting schedule:

- Thursday, 01/15/2015 10:00 a.m. discussion CVFRS draft budget.
- Monday, 01/19/2015, 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVE WARRANTS TO PAY BILLS**

The Selectboard signed warrants to pay bills.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Krasnow, to adjourn the meeting.**

**VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted, Kathlyn L. Furr, Recording Secretary.