

**CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD  
TOWN HALL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
JULY 10, 2012**

**APPROVED**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Charles Russell, Chair; John Owen, Winslow Ladue, Dennis Delaney. **ABSENT:** Ed Stone.

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Dean Bloch, Selectboard Assistant.

**OTHERS:** Ian Pomerville, Chris Davis, David Stewart, Dick St George, Devon St George, Ed Sulva, John Snow, Sheri Duff, Charlotte Citizen, and others.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Russell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES WITH CHARLOTTE FIRE AND RESCUE**

Chief Davis reviewed materials sent to the Selectboard as follows:

- A revised job description of Kay Gault's position, updated 07/09/2012.
- A draft Administration Officer, or CEO, position, dated 07/03/2012.

Mr. Ladue asked if there would be one person as an Administration Officer, or was Chief Davis envisioning a second person. Chief Davis explained differences between an Administration Officer/CEO that would take over all the duties of the upper CVFRS personnel positions and the Administrator's Assistant position. That person would report directly to the Selectboard and Chiefs. The duties could be tweaked. The CEO would serve on the Fire and Rescue Executive Board along with two Selectboard members, two town's people, the Corporation's President and Vice President. The structure was the Administration Officer/CEO as the head, then the two Chiefs below the CEO, and then the respective officers, explained Chief Davis.

Mr. Owen asked if the Executive Board would be involved in the hiring of an Administration Officer. Chief Davis replied yes.

Rescue Chief Pomerville said that currently the Selectboard has no vote in the Fire and Rescue departmental structure. The department could ask for the Selectboard's opinion on some issue and would listen to that opinion, but the ultimate decision rested with the Fire and Rescue body, said Chief Pomerville.

Mr. Russell said that the Selectboard controlled the Fire and Rescue departments' purse strings. Fire and Rescue controls equipment, duties, and budgets, said Mr. Russell. Mr. Owen asked at what point would the Selectboard need to be involved in the decision process. Chief Pomerville replied that the departments were willing to give the Selectboard a vote through an Executive Board. The Executive Board needs to be defined, said Chief Pomerville.

Mr. Russell asked if the department structure would stay the same as it was now, or were we talking about a change where the Town takes the departments over. Mr. Stewart said if the Town takes the departments over then we need a contract and need to define what the relationship will be. Mr. Ladue said that an outcome of the discussions could be a contract. We need time to look over the materials and need to define our relationship, said Mr. Ladue.

Mr. Delaney suggested identifying what the problem was, or what was to be solved, so when finished it has been addressed. Mr. (Devon) St George said the problem was who was in charge.

**DISCUSSIONS:**

Chief Pomerville said that he has never seen a written document of how money was voted on, approved, spent, etc. Mr. Russell explained that a budget was voted on at Town Meeting. The Selectboard was responsible for reviewing CVFRS invoices and approving

checks to cover those invoices. The CVFRS budget was a part of the Selectmen's budget, said Mr. Russell.

Mr. (Dick) St George said that if Fire and Rescue were a municipal department then he would need a contract and union representation.

Mr. Snow asked if the main challenges of the Selectboard was to identify the level of scrutiny of the CVFRS, fiduciary responsibility of appropriation of money, and to see that money was fairly spent. It seemed that the Town didn't want to be responsible for the scheduling of volunteers, equipment maintenance, and day-to-day affairs, said Mr. Snow. Mr. Russell clarified that it was more. It was the Town's decision to have an ambulance, and EMT's for the benefit of the Town. The Town has the responsibility to make sure the Ambulance is available and 'in service', said Mr. Russell.

Mr. Delaney asked if the question should be a division of the financial side and service side. Mr. (Devon) St George said that regarding the financial/service sides a decision should be made first to either go with:

- A contract as a private organization with policies and procedures spelled out, or
- Municipal where the Town handles all decisions.

***ISSUES/PROBLEMS:***

- Who was in charge (Currently, the Town was in charge of the budget, and CVFRS was responsible for the day-to-day operations)
- Who gets a say/vote
- Management of the EMT's
- Volunteer – high turnover
- Management high turnover rate
- Public image issues (rumor mill directed at Fire and Rescue)
- Transparency
- Financial oversight – put controls in place as noted in the findings and recommendations of the audits
- Day-to-day financial relationship – the Town was in charge of the budgets
- Communication issues
- Clarity of processes and relationship between the CVFRS and Town
- Financial polices and procedures – written documents are lacking currently
- Distinguish between financial and service issues
- Determine if the CVFRS was a contracted private organization, a municipal department, or a hybrid

***ASSETS:***

- Cooperation between the Fire and Rescue departments
- Experienced personnel

***NEXT STEPS:***

- Define relationship
- Outline a legal agreement/contract that spells out what the CVFRS provides the Town, and what the Town provides to the CVFRS

The next meetings of the Selectboard/CVFRS were scheduled for Tuesday, July 31, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. and Monday August 6, 2012, at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Mr. Ladue, seconded by Mr. Owen, to adjourn the meeting.**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kathlyn Furr, Recording Secretary

**TO DO LIST**

- Chief Davis to continue to explore the Administrative Assistant/Administration Officer position
- Chief Davis – work on the Executive Board piece