

**CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
TOWN HALL  
MARCH 23, 2015**

**APPROVED**

**SELECTBOARD MEMBERS:** Lane Morrison, Chair; Fritz Tegatz, Matthew Krasnow, Jacob Spell, Carrie Spear.

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

**OTHERS:** Chris Sheehan, Ellie Russell, Claudia Mucklow, Dale Knowles, Stephen Brooks, Vanessa Crowley, Mary Mead, Christina Booher, Gary Pittman, Janet Morrison, Robert Mack, Sue Smith, Jenny Cole, Michael Russell, David Marshall, Patrice Machavern, Charles Russell, Chris Davis, Vince Crockenberg, Lynn Jaunich, Beth Merritt, John Hammer, Charlotte News; Robin Reid, Charlotte Citizen; and others.

**ITEMS TAKEN UP:**

- **7:10 PM Mowing contract. Action under consideration: approve contractor(s) for the 2015 season**
- **7:20 PM Brush-hogging contract. Action under consideration: approve contractor(s) for the 2015 season**
- **7:30 PM Chris Ouellette—bicycle ride to benefit Charcot-Marie-Tooth Association (non-profit). Action under consideration: approve organizational plan**
- **7:40 PM Gary Pittman, Charlotte Senior Center—request for authorization to design addition to the Senior Center, apply for permits, and construct addition, and have \$900 permit fees waived. Action under consideration: approve**
- **8:00 PM Financial policies—scope of work. Action under consideration: approve for submission to Sullivan, Powers & Co.**
- **8:15 PM Legislative charter to change the process for approving the municipal budget—next steps. Action under consideration: request Town attorney to create draft charter**
- **8:30 PM Appointment of Local Emergency Management Director. Action under consideration: appoint Chris Davis, Charlotte Fire Department Chief, to the position of Local Emergency Management Director for a one year term beginning April 1, 2015**
- **8:40 PM Local Emergency Management Plan. Action under consideration: approve**
- **8:45 PM Broadcasting of Selectboard meetings on public access cable television. Action under consideration: request presentation from VCAM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ADJUSTMENT TO AGENDA**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Claudia Mucklow, resident, expressed concerns regarding comments made by Mr. Morrison related to the new Selectboard in recent news articles. That set a wrong tone to a good start, and she hoped that that attitude would change, said Ms. Mucklow.

Robin Reid, resident, asked that the Selectboard consider her as a Charlotte Safety Committee candidate.

David Marshall, Civil Engineering, Inc, handed out copies of a Burns property wastewater report, dated September 10, 2011 to the Selectboard members.

**MINUTES: March 9, 2015**

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to approve the March 9, 2015 Selectboard minutes as written, with the following edits:**

- **Page 3, line 127 – replace the word “subdividing” with “subdivided”; line 129 – add to the sentence end “...driveway that has been constructed.”**
- **Page 5, line 204 – add “Mr. Spell”; line 208 – add “Mr. Morrison”; delete lines 210-211; line 214 – replace the word “NEXT” with “FUTURE”; line 215 – change to read “...Polices-Scope of Work” and delete “Statement-discussion”; delete lines 220-222; line 226 – replace “Mr. Morrison” with “Mr. Spell”**
- **Page 6, line 231 – change to read “...applied for and didn’t get...”; line 233 – replace the word “eligible” with “competitive”, and add “municipal” between the words “for” and “planning”; line 236 – insert “septic system” between the words “the” and “allocation”.**

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

**MOWING CONTRACT. Action under consideration: approve contractor(s) for the 2015 Season**

Mr. Morrison reviewed three Land Maintenance contract bids received for mowing Town land.

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Ms. Spear, to award the FY2015 season Land Maintenance contract to Mow, Mow, Mow, Inc. for a total of \$21,500.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Spell asked what the process was for change orders. Mr. Morrison explained the Land Maintenance scope of work, which was a focused effort based on the bid package. It could be amended as needed, said Mr. Morrison. Mr. Tegatz said that Dale Knowles did the contract work last year, knows the process, and was experienced regarding the mowing frequency.**

**Ms. Mead pointed out that the Town budget had a \$23,000 line item in Land Maintenance. There was also extra money in several line items for mowing, such as**

the park, and berry farm, said Ms. Mead. Mr. Krasnow suggested that the Selectboard should review the line items to make sure that the money was allocated properly.

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

**BRUSH-HOGGING CONTRACT. Action under consideration: approve contractor(s) for the 2015 season**

Mr. Morrison reviewed three Brush-hogging contract bids.

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Ms. Spear, to award the FY2015 Brush-hogging contract to Preston for a total of \$2,200, and an additional hourly rate of \$70 per hour.**

**DISCUSSION:**

Ms. Mead asked if the \$2,200 was coming out of the Land Maintenance line item. For the future, there should be separate line item for brush-hogging for the purpose of tracking the costs, said Ms. Mead.

Mr. Spell asked if there was a cap for the hourly rate of \$70 per hour. Mr. Krasnow replied that the hourly rate was for work beyond the scope of work. If additional work was necessary then the rate was already set, explained Mr. Krasnow.

Mr. Bloch explained that the brush-hogging hourly rate was new this year in case a second cutting of wild parsnip was needed. Additional cutting could be done on a case-by-case basis, said Mr. Bloch.

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

**CHRIS OUELLETTE—BICYCLE RIDE TO BENEFIT CHARCOT-MARIE-TOOTH ASSOCIATION (NON-PROFIT). Action under consideration: approve organizational plan**

Chris Ouellette, application representative, explained that the ride event was a fund raiser to benefit Charcot-Marie-Tooth research. The event was held in Richmond at the Cochran Ski Resort last year. This year the event would start at 8:00 a.m. and finish at the Old Lantern in Charlotte. The three biking and walking routes would be open to friends and families. It was not a race. He had conversations with Josh Flores, the Town Administrator, and Bill Fraser-Harris, said Mr. Ouellette.

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Ms. Spear, to approve an organization plan for a bicycle ride to benefit the Charcot-Marie-Tooth Association (non-profit), to be held on Sunday, September 20, 2015.**

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Tegatz suggested that the participants should be educated regarding group riding, which would require a state permit, clarified Mr. Tegatz. Mr. Ouellette said that he would make sure that was done.

Mr. Ouellette reviewed advertising for the event via new articles and a possible WCAX interview.

**Mr. Spell said that he was interested in helping to make the event more successful. Mr. Ouellette replied that volunteers were invited to participate.**

**Mr. Bloch said that no other events were scheduled for the September date.  
VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

**GARY PITTMAN, CHARLOTTE SENIOR CENTER—REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO DESIGN ADDITION TO THE SENIOR CENTER, APPLY FOR PERMITS, AND CONSTRUCT ADDITION, AND HAVE \$900 PERMIT FEES WAIVED. Action under consideration: approve**

Gary Pittman, Senior Center representative, explained a proposal for an expansion to the Senior Center building that would improve the entrance and lobby as per an architectural site plan. The Friends of the Senior Center would fund the project design and construction. The Senior Center was asking the Town to waive the Town fees of \$900. The project was estimated at a cost of \$100,000 for completion by FY2016. The Senior Center would oversee the project, and the architect was the project manager, said Mr. Pittman.

Mr. Krasnow asked if the project would have Selectboard input. Mr. Morrison stated that as the Senior Center Selectboard liaison he would update the Selectboard as the project progressed.

Mr. Krasnow suggested that the Selectboard should review the type of construction materials to be used, such as siding. That way there wouldn't be future issues with the materials, said Mr. Krasnow. Mr. Tegatz agreed, and said that he would like to look at the project specifications before construction started.

Mr. Morrison suggested a two-step process:

1. Review project drawings before they were fully accepted.
2. A review of materials once the project details were finalized.

Mr. Pittman explained that the Selectboard had the authority to sign contracts. The architect would present a sketch proposal on April 1, 2015 and the Selectboard members were welcome to attend, said Mr. Pittman.

Mr. Tegatz asked if contract administration was a part of the architect's job. Mr. Pittman reiterated that the architect would be the project manager and would also review bids.

Mr. Marshall spoke in support of the motion and recommended that the Selectboard members review bid documents before they were sent out.

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Mr. Spell, to authorize the Charlotte Senior Center to design an addition to the Senior Center, apply for permits for the addition, to waive \$900 in permit fees, and to have the bid documents come before**

**the Selectboard prior to approval; and to authorize the Charlotte Selectboard Chair to sign contracts up to the bid documents.**

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

**FINANCIAL POLICIES—SCOPE OF WORK. Action under consideration: approve for submission to Sullivan, Powers & Co.**

Mr. Morrison reviewed the intent was to obtain assistance from Sullivan, Powers and Company to review a draft Financial Policy scope of work that would address issues identified in the Town independent audit Management Letter, and for release a Request for Proposals.

There was discussion regarding the time it took to develop a wage policy during the last year; new energies brought to the process by Selectboard members and Town staff; a Vermont League of Cities and Towns policy guide book on drafting policies; and a proposed draft Financial Policy prepared in collaboration between the Town Auditors, Town staff and Mr. Spell.

Mr. Spell suggested e-mailing the draft Financial Policy to stake holders for feedback. A draft Purchasing Policy was the next step, and there has been discussion regarding a Fraud Policy and Fund Balance Policy. With the help of community resources the Town wouldn't need to pay to have the policies created, said Mr. Spell.

Mr. Krasnow said he would like to edit the drafts being created. However, it wouldn't hurt to know what an outside review of an RFP would cost. Rick Brigham said that it was a 'no-no' for an independent audit firm to write policies for a municipality the firm was performing audits for. Rick's list of recommendations noted that the Town could do some, none, or all. Rick would like to see the Town address significant weaknesses. Rick would just review what the Town was doing. He was up to speed on Town issues and it would be a good fit, said Mr. Krasnow.

Following further discussion, Mr. Morrison said that there was a Town Auditor's meeting, Wednesday, March 25, at 5:00 p.m. A review could be done on what polices were needed, what drafts were available for review by the Town Clerk, Town Auditors, and others, a process structure, and possibly post drafts on the Town website. Ms. Cole suggested starting at 4:00 p.m. with a discussion on the draft Purchasing Policy. Mr. Tegatz suggested formatting the drafts with line numbering.

Mr. Krasnow suggested warning it as a Town Auditor/Selectboard meeting.

Mr. Spell would e-mail draft of policies to the Town Administrator to disseminate.

Mr. Morrison asked staff to warn a Selectboard meeting Monday, March 30, at 7:00 p.m., possible agenda items: review drafts of the Financial, Purchasing, Fraud and Fund Balance policies.

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to release a Request for Proposal for a draft Financial Policy to Sullivan, Powers and Company.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Robert Mack, resident, suggested that the Selectboard wait a month before sending the RFP to Sullivan, Powers and Company. Mr. Krasnow clarified that the Selectboard was not asking the company to review the draft policy, but was seeking a price to send out an RFP.**

**Mr. Spell said that if the Board waited then the VLCT could be consulted. The scope of work might increase, said Mr. Spell.**

**Mr. Morrison said the request was for an hourly rate only.**

**VOTE: 4 ayes, 1 nay (Mr. Spell); motion carried.**

**LEGISLATIVE CHARTER TO CHANGE THE PROCESS FOR APPROVING THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET—NEXT STEPS. Action under consideration: request Town attorney to create draft charter**

Vince Crockenberg, Ad hoc Committee member, reviewed that the Selectboard was directed to explore adoption of a Town Charter at the 2015 Town Meeting. Committee members would provide help, if needed, said Mr. Crockenberg.

Mr. Morrison reported that the Town Attorney was consulted regarding language for an article to be voted by Australian ballot ‘...to adopt a Town budget of an “x” dollar amount’ some time after the March Town Meeting. An Australian ballot could be warned for 30-40 days, or less, from Town Meeting, said Mr. Morrison.

Ms. Mead said that ballots had to be ready 20 days before a vote.

There was discussion regarding a time line for warning an Australian ballot following Town Meeting, which could be ‘30-40 days, or less, from the Town Meeting’; a concern how a newly elected Selectboard would handle warning a budget (Mr. Russell said that the sitting Selectboard could sign a new warning at Town Meeting if an article was prepared where the money amount could be added. Mary Mead could get the ballots ready. The Town Meeting body was telling the Selectboard what they want warned, clarified Mr. Russell.); and a process for a failed budget vote. Ms. Machavern said that the situation would be no different that for a failed school budget. There had been one time that the Selectboard had been directed to cut a proposed Town budget, and that was done by looking at line items versus a total budget number, said Ms. Machavern.

Following further discussion regarding a time line to warn an Australian ballot article, Ms. Machavern suggested setting a date of the first Tuesday of April to be consistent.

Mr. Morrison said that another piece was if the Australian ballot vote failed the first Tuesday of April, then the Charter could give the Selectboard authority to present a subsequent budget number, like the school board does. Ms. Mead asked why have that a part of the Charter. Isn’t a budget re-vote guided by state statute, asked Ms. Mead.

Mr. Crockenberg said if the budget failed by Australian ballot then it would go to another Australian ballot, not another Town Meeting. The Selectboard gets a lot of feedback from the public, said Mr. Crockenberg.

Mr. Russell reviewed the wording of a proposed article. Last year it was suggested as "...article, or articles..." to address other things that affect the budget. Would it be voted on by a floor vote, asked Mr. Russell.

John Hammer, Ad hoc Committee member, said that the committee was successful getting support for a charter at Town Meeting. The committee was limited on what it could do. The Town has spoken and the Selectboard has access to resources and power. The committee would support the Selectboard, said Mr. Hammer.

Following further discussion regarding a process to draft Charter language aided by the Town Attorney, Ms. Machavern said that Mike Yantachka, an Ad hoc Committee member and state representative, has been laying ground work at the legislature. He could ask the proper Legislative committees for support, suggested Ms. Machavern

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded by Ms. Spear, to request the Town Attorney to create draft Charter language to change the process for approving the Town of Charlotte's municipal budget.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Morrison said that the Selectboard could review what language would be sent to the Town Attorney at the Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting, and have the Ad hoc Committee review it before Monday for feedback. There were three key points to identify for charter language, said Mr. Morrison.**

**Ms. Russell asked what the Selectboard was asking the Town Attorney to do, and would it include proposed article language. Mr. Bloch replied that the Town Attorney would come up with the intent of what Charter language would be sent to the legislature.**

**Mr. Morrison reviewed a process for Selectboard discussion and approval of Charter language at a meeting and the Town could vote on it at the November election. Mr. Russell pointed out that there was no November election this year.**  
**VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.**

**APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR.**

**Action under consideration: appoint Chris Davis, Charlotte Fire Department Chief, to the position of Local Emergency Management Director for a one year term beginning April 1, 2015**

The Selectboard members interviewed Chris Davis, Fire Chief, as a candidate for the position of the Local Emergency Management Director.

**MOTION by Mr. Tegatz, seconded by Mr. Krasnow, to appoint Chris Davis, Fire Department Chief, as the Local Emergency Management Director for a one year term beginning April 1, 2015.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Ms. Russell said that there was already a local emergency management director. Mr. Morrison replied that the person was willing to step down in favor of the Fire Chief.**

**Mr. Davis suggested re-wording the motion to ‘appoint the Charlotte Fire Department Chief’ versus an individual. The Fire Chief has the authority to appoint an Emergency Coordinator, said Mr. Davis.**

**Mr. Spell asked if the incident commander controlled the scene. Mr. Davis replied yes. The emergency management coordinator was still needed, said Mr. Davis.**

**There was further discussion regarding skills required by an incident commander and courses needed for the position; preparing a emergency call list and a hard copy plan, which should be completed as a first step; and guide lines in an Emergency Management Plan. Mr. Morrison pointed out that Mr. Davis was the candidate for the position this year. Next year the Selectboard could consider the proposed wording for ‘Fire Chief’, said Mr. Morrison.**

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

**LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN. Action under consideration: approve**

**Mr. Bloch reviewed that a new Local Emergency Management Plan needed to be adopted every year, to be submitted by May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Town would be eligible for federal funding in case of emergencies, said Mr. Bloch.**

**MOTION by Mr. Krasnow, seconded b Mr. Tegatz, to approve a Local Emergency Management Plan, as amended:**

- **Replace John Howe with Joe Congdon, Fire Department Secretary.**
- **Correct Mr. Morrison’s email address.**

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

**BROADCASTING OF SELECTBOARD MEETINGS ON PUBLIC ACCESS CABLE TELEVISION. Action under consideration: request presentation from VCAM**

**There was discussion regarding interest in having VCAM video the Charlotte Selectboard meetings for broadcast via Channel 17 - Public TV access; questions related to costs; what the number of residents would be reached broadcasting over Channel 17; and potential equipment issues. Mr. Krasnow noted that transparency was important regarding Town business. Selectboard meetings were audio recorded and Board minutes were sufficient, said Mr. Krasnow.**

Mr. Tegatz and Mr. Spell spoke in support of inviting VCAM representatives to make a presentation. Mr. Krasnow, Mr. Morrison and Ms. Spear spoke in support of the status quo.

**SELECTBOARD UPDATES. Discussion only**

Mr. Tegatz reported on the CVFRS Corporate Board meeting as the Selectboard liaison.

Mr. Tegatz reported that he spoke with the Town Administrator and the Town Planner regarding septic capacity and systems needs for an 'imaginary' town. The information would be formatted to include Town Plan language, and prior septic and survey reports, said Mr. Tegatz.

Mr. Krasnow reported that he would conduct a ride along with State Trooper Daley Tuesday, March 24, 2015. Mr. Bloch asked Mr. Krasnow to look for areas to post the speed cart. Ms. Spear asked Mr. Krasnow to see where the 25 mph speed limit signs were on Orchard Road.

Mr. Bloch reported that the Town received a request to have the Burns property meadow separated out as a 5-year agricultural use contract.

Ms. Cole asked for an update regarding committee appointments. Mr. Bloch said that two interviews were scheduled for the April 6<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. Appointments could be made at the following Selectboard meeting, said Mr. Bloch. Mr. Krasnow asked if the appointment time line would affect committee quorums. Mr. Morrison suggested appointing incumbents to committees where there were no other candidates at the April 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The April 6, 2015 Selectboard meeting start time was set for 6:00 p.m. in order to appoint committee members.

Mr. Spell suggested that the Selectboard review and discuss a West Village designation that would open up grant opportunities.

Mr. Krasnow reviewed topics from a Saturday, March 21, 2015 VLCT Selectboard work session.

Mr. Spell suggested that the Selectboard hold open meeting law work shops for Town committees.

**APPROVE WARRANTS TO PAY BILLS**

The Selectboard signed warrants to pay bills.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

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