

**CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
TOWN HALL
NOVEMBER 24, 2014**

APPROVED

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

ADMINISTRATION: Dean Bloch, Town Administrator.

OTHERS: Sarah Larson, Kristopher Larson, Thomas Larson, Larry Hamilton, Betsi Oliver, Bonnie Christie, Hugh Lewis Jr, Betsy Tegatz, David Pill, Bill Kallock, Catherine Hughes, Jenny Cole, John Hammer, Charlotte News; Robin Reid, Charlotte Citizen; and others.

(NOTE: the agenda was heard out of order, but appears as published for continuity.)

4:00 PM SITE VISIT: For Kristopher and Sarah Larson’s application for a Highway Access Permit, south side of Lake Road, just east of the town ballfield.

4:15 PM SITE VISIT: For Thomas and Kristine Larson’s application for a Highway Access Permit, east side of Lake Road, just south of Holmes Road.

ITEMS TAKEN UP:

- **6:40 PM Kristopher and Sarah Larson—request for a Highway Access Permit (HAP-14-05) for an access serving a proposed building lot on Lake Road east of the town ballfield. Action under consideration: approve**
- **6:50 PM Thomas and Kristine Larson—request for a Highway Access Permit (HAP-14-04) for an agricultural access off Lake Road south of Holmes Road. Action under consideration: approve**
- **7:00 PM Budget review:
Tree Warden; Board of Listers; Energy Committee; Road Commissioner**
- **8:00 PM Revise format of the Town Report to include only the auditor’s report and Town Meeting warning in booklet mailed to all voters/residents, and provide all other materials by hard copy upon request and on town website. Discussion only**
- **8:45 PM Appeal by Thomas and Denise Kessler of the Zoning Board of Adjustment’s Findings of Fact (ZBA-14-02). Action under consideration: authorize the town attorney to enter an appearance in the appeal to the Environmental Division of Superior Court**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Morrison called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MINUTES: November 13

MOTION by Mr. Russell, seconded by Ms. Russell, to approve the November 13, 2014 Charlotte Selectboard minutes as written, with edits:

- Globally correct the name “DeStigter”;
- Page 6, line 268 – replace the word “Administration” with “Administrator”;
- Page 7 line 306 – add “Ms. Hartley, ...” to the beginning of the sentence.

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

KRISTOPHER AND SARAH LARSON—REQUEST FOR A HIGHWAY ACCESS PERMIT (HAP-14-05) FOR AN ACCESS SERVING A PROPOSED BUILDING LOT ON LAKE ROAD EAST OF THE TOWN BALLFIELD. Action item
MOTION by Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Krasnow, to approve a request by Kristopher and Sarah Larson for a Highway Access Permit, HAP-14-05, for an access serving a proposed building lot on Lake Road east of the Town ballfield, with a culvert 15” x 30’ as recommended by the Charlotte Road Commissioner.

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

THOMAS AND KRISTINE LARSON—REQUEST FOR A HIGHWAY ACCESS PERMIT (HAP-14-04) FOR AN AGRICULTURAL ACCESS OFF LAKE ROAD SOUTH OF HOLMES ROAD. Action item

MOTION by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to approve a request by Thomas and Kristine Larson for a Highway Access Permit, HAP-14-04, for an agricultural access off Lake Road south of Holmes Road.

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

BUDGET REVIEW:**Tree Warden**

Larry Hamilton, Charlotte Tree Warden, reviewed a proposed FY2015/2016 budget of \$1,000, which was a \$100 increase over the current budget.

Mr. Tegatz asked if removing Japanese Knotweed by the Tree Warden was an overlap of the Invasive Species Committee’s work. Mr. Hamilton replied no. The Invasive Species Committee was focused on Frog Bit and Phragmites removal, said Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Hammer stated that the Town was seriously lucky to have someone of this quality for a Tree Warden. Larry Hamilton was one of the best in the state and deserves public recognition, said Mr. Hammer.

The Selectboard gave Mr. Hamilton a standing ovation for his work on behalf of the Town.

Board of Listers

Betsy Tegatz and Betsi Oliver, Listers, summarized a proposed FY2015/2016 budget. Proposed salary increases were due to increased hours to prepare for and send out Town-wide reappraisal notices, which was last done in 2008, said Ms. Tegatz.

Ms. Russell asked that the Listers add printing expenses and postage to the budget; refine the number of hours required for the up-coming reappraisal; and research the increase in mapping expenses.

Energy Committee

David Pill, Bill Kallock, and Catherine Hughes, Energy Committee members, reviewed a written Energy Report and projects list that included prior energy audits of the Library and Town Hall, up-coming energy audits of the Senior Center, a schedule of conferences, a community energy outreach event held, and a proposed Town Hall parking lot lighting assessment study. The budget included costs for providing weatherization kits that would be available at the Charlotte Food Shelf. The proposed FY2015/2016 budget of \$4,915 was down by \$1,500 from the current year, said Mr. Kallock.

Mr. Krasnow asked the committee to include an LED lighting assessment study for the hockey rink.

Road Commissioner

Hugh Lewis Jr, reviewed a level funded FY2015/2016 budget of \$901,250.

There was discussion regarding increased requests for speed limit signs; a 'horse crossing' sign that had been requested at Orchard Road (Mr. Lewis said that a horse crossing sign has not been purchased yet. He was not in favor of posting the crossing sign since motorists would stop looking for horseback riders after not observing them on the road. He seldom sees anyone on horseback crossing the road in that area.); paving projects that included a grant for paving part of Greenbush Road (Mr. Lewis explained that \$90,000 of a \$155,000/10 percent match paving grant for Greenbush Road had been spent. He would see if the remaining amount could be used to pave another section of the road.); repair/replacement of a guard rail at the Spear Street bridge and a guard rail needed on Spear Street at the Quinlan Bridge pull-off; and a suggestion to extend paving of road shoulders for pedestrian and bike lanes (Mr. Lewis explained the road sides lacked a good base and if the lane pavement was extended out then vehicles and trucks tended to drive on it and the blacktop cracked and buckled.).

Mr. Krasnow asked if Mr. Lewis had tried 'bulk' bargaining with other towns to get a better cost for materials. Mr. Lewis said that 'bulk' bargaining was done by all the towns for winter salt purchases so that there was one price. The price of oil changed too much for paving products, said Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Russell asked if there was funding in the Highway budget to fix the north side of Ferry Road where there was a big ditch. Mr. Lewis replied that David Marshall has not contacted him with an assessment yet.

The Selectboard thanked Mr. Lewis for his report.

REVISE FORMAT OF THE TOWN REPORT TO INCLUDE ONLY THE AUDITOR'S REPORT AND TOWN MEETING WARNING IN BOOKLET MAILED TO ALL VOTERS/RESIDENTS, AND PROVIDE ALL OTHER MATERIALS BY HARD COPY UPON REQUEST AND ON TOWN WEB-SITE.

Discussion only

Mr. Bloch reported that Britney Tenney, Zoning Clerk, researched and received three bids for printing Town Reports. People tossed the Town Reports in the recycling bins, which was a waste. A full report of 1,700 copies would cost \$4,595; 500 full reports for \$1,400; or 1,700 copies of an abbreviated report consisting of the Town audit, warning and proposed budgets for \$2,800. A combination of 500 full reports and 1,700 abbreviated reports would cost a total of \$4,200, explained Mr. Bloch.

Mr. Morrison, Mr. Krasnow, Ms. Russell Mr. Russell, and Mr. Tegatz spoke in support of printing full reports. Mr. Tegatz pointed out that there was only a \$500 difference between printing all full reports versus 500 full plus 1,700 short versions.

Mr. Hammer said that short versions could be sent out and if people wanted more data they could get that from the Town Hall, Library, or from the Town web site on-line. Ninety percent of the residents don't read the Town Report, but they want it, said Mr. Hammer.

Mr. Bloch noted that the CVU audit was not printed in the report, but was posted on-line. An abbreviated Town Report printed in a newspaper style could be sent to Town residents, suggested Mr. Bloch.

Ms. Russell said that she would want the true costs of printing full versus short versions.

Mr. Krasnow suggested getting printing cost quotes by choosing a vendor sourced world wide on-line.

Mr. Bloch suggested printing a short version with the Town audit, the Town budgets and a Town Meeting warning with a note that a full version was available from the Town Hall by request.

Mr. Russell pointed out that the CVFRS budget and audit took up 60+ pages alone.

Mr. Morrison said that a traditional full Town Report should be printed and feedback on a shorter version could be gathered during the Annual Town Meeting.

APPEAL BY THOMAS AND DENISE KESSLER OF THE ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT'S FINDINGS OF FACT (ZBA-14-02). Action under consideration: authorize the town attorney to enter an appearance in the appeal to the Environmental Division of Superior Court

Mr. Morrison briefly reviewed an appeal filed by Thomas and Denise Kessler regarding a Zoning Board of Adjustment's (ZBA) Findings of Fact, ZBA-14-02. The property was the former Affectionately Cats veterinary clinic, said Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Bloch explained that the action under consideration was to authorize the Town Attorney to enter an appearance on behalf of the Town. The applicant has appealed the ZBA's decision to uphold a Zoning Administrator's decision to deny a Certificate of Occupancy. As part of the appeal process the Environmental Court frequently asks parties to participate in a mediation action, said Mr. Bloch.

Mr. Russell informed the Selectboard that he was employing Liam Murphy on another matter. It may be a conflict, said Mr. Russell. The Selectboard members said it was not a conflict of interest.

MOTION by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to authorize the Town Attorney to enter an appearance on behalf of the Town of Charlotte regarding an appeal by Thomas and Denise Kessler of the Zoning Board of Adjustment's Findings of Fact, ZBA-14-02, to the Environmental Division of Superior Court.

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

SELECTBOARD UPDATES

Ms. Russell reported on the last CVFRS Corporate Board meeting. The CVFRS audit was in the final stages. The Board was working on an update of the Bylaws and Executive Committee make-up. John Snow would present the draft CVFRS budget at the next Selectboard meeting on December 1, 2014, said Ms. Russell.

Mr. Russell said that the 'three-year Town appropriation average' language in the MOA needed to be clarified. Mr. Morrison asked Ms. Russell and Mr. Bloch to discuss the matter with John Snow.

Mr. Morrison reviewed a schedule of Wage Classification work sessions. The next meeting was set for Monday, December 1, 2014, at 5:00 p.m. prior to the regular Selectboard meeting.

Mr. Bloch asked if the Selectboard needed to meet in Executive Session regarding the Kessler appeal. Mr. Morrison replied no.

Mr. Krasnow reported that the speed cart has been ordered. He would confirm a delivery date.

Mr. Krasnow reported that Sue Smith and Marty Illick have attended U.S. EPA meetings regarding Lake Champlain, which has not met requirements of the Clean Water Act. Failure to meet the new regulations could have a financial impact. For example, Vermont's dirt roads may become 'impermeable' and regulated by the State of Vermont. He would continue to liaison with Sue and Marty, explained Mr. Krasnow.

Mr. Krasnow reported that the Community Safety Committee (CSC) has two potential committee candidates. The next CSC meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 4, 2014.

Mr. Bloch asked for two Selectboard members to attend a December 18, 2014 Legislative Breakfast. Municipal legislative priorities would be discussed, said Mr. Bloch. Mr. Morrison and Mr. Krasnow would represent Charlotte.

Mr. Morrison reported that the Town Party for volunteers was scheduled for December 20, 2014, and thanked Betsy Tegatz for arranging the event.

Mr. Russell reported that there was a meeting with Dan Manz, Essex Rescue, December 25, 2014, regarding the Essex Rescue operation and District 3.

APPROVE WARRANTS TO PAY BILLS

Mr. Morrison noted that Sharron Balaban had submitted further receipts for groceries totaling \$443.50. The Town had previously paid Ms. Balaban a per diem and round trip airfare with a flight change penalty. Ms. Balaban had been on full pay and full benefits until she finished working on October 10, 2014, reviewed Mr. Morrison.

MOTION by Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Tegatz, to approve a reimbursement request by Sharron Balaban for a total amount of \$443.50 for expenses.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Russell said that a motion has been made to pay for Sharron's groceries. Should her travel food expenses, \$18 at JFK, \$6 at Jetblue, and \$28 at JFK, be included as well, asked Ms. Russell.

Mr. Morrison said that the Town has paid \$100 in airfare penalties, and round trip tickets already.

Ms. Reid stated that she was discouraged with the Selectboard's attitude. She was not suggesting that the Town pay for all the expenses. It could be looked at as a bonus. Sharron changed her life circumstances to go with her husband to California and left a job she loved, said Ms. Reid.

Mr. Morrison explained that Sharron left Charlotte and moved with her husband to San Jose, California. Mary Mead had vacation scheduled. Sharron continued to work and covered for Mary. Sharron just stayed on board as a Town employee and finished her job on October 10th, said Mr. Morrison. Ms Reid said that it wasn't a smooth transition.

Mr. Krasnow pointed out that the Town received a \$1,100 quote from a hotel, but Sharron didn't stay there. Sharron stayed with a friend instead, said Mr. Krasnow. Ms. Reid said that Sharron purchased the groceries to pay for staying with her friend. Mr. Russell said that Sharron ended up staying 4 to 5 days more for personal business, which surprised the Selectboard.

VOTE: 0 ayes, 5 nays; motion failed.

MOTION by Mr. Tegatz, seconded by Mr. Krasnow, to pay for three food related travel expenses for Sharron Balaban as requested, for a total amount of \$52.41.

VOTE: 3 ayes (Mr. Morrison, Mr. Krasnow, Mr. Tegatz), 2 nays; motion carried.

The Selectboard signed warrants to pay bills.

ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

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