

**TOWN OF CHARLOTTE
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
JUNE 25, 2013**

APPROVED

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Russell, Chair; Eleanor Russell, Vice-Chair; Winslow Ladue, John Owen.

MODERATOR: Jerry Schwarz.

Mr. Schwarz, Moderator, called the Special Town Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Article 1: Will the Town vote to authorize the Selectboard to use no more than \$185,000 from the Fire and Rescue Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing an ambulance?

MOTION by Patrice Machavern, seconded by Marilyn Richardson, to authorize the Selectboard to use no more than \$185,000 from the Fire and Rescue Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing an ambulance.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Russell gave an explanation of the special meeting vote and the purpose of the reserve fund. There was an oversight and the above article was not placed on the Annual Warning for Town Meeting Day vote, thus the reason for the special meeting tonight.

Meg Modley, Chief of Charlotte Rescue, introduced her team and reported that they are now a year late on purchasing the ambulance according to the long-term maintenance and safety plan for Charlotte rescue vehicles. It has been eight years since the last purchase of an ambulance. The secondary/back-up ambulance is a 1998 and needs retiring. The primary vehicle is a 2006 and should be moved to secondary/back-up. The money for the new ambulance is already in the Capital Reserve Fund. The proposed ambulance is 4-wheel drive vehicle which will be beneficial to many residents of Charlotte.

Bob Mesaros – Asked how does the reserve fund get replenished? Chair Russell referred to the chart on page 51 of the Annual Report which shows the tax dollars being put in every year to the reserve fund. Currently, two cents on the tax rate is allocated for this fund. The revenue from the 1998 ambulance being sold would offset some of the expense.

Richard Titus – Inquired about the bid process used. There were no specific spec. sheets for ambulances. Two quotes were received for two similar trucks. These quotes were for two of the safest ambulances in the industry right now.

One community member asked why Ford was selected again knowing the problems historically. Research from neighboring towns show confidence that the current Ford engine hasn't been a problem with current chassis.

The question of mileage on existing vehicles was asked. The 1998 proposed for retirement is at 139K miles and has reached end of usefulness as a useful ambulance. The 2006 vehicle has 67K and should be used as the secondary reserve vehicle. Emergency vehicles are different than personal vehicles due to their dependency for reliability.

Jenny.... – Asked how the backup ambulance is used? Neighboring services loaned vehicles to Charlotte until it became a burden for them. Since Charlotte has had two ambulances, they are able to call in the night crew members when on the day crew is on another call. Extended maintenance of individual ambulances is now possible. The plan would be to rotate both vehicles as primary so neither takes a beating.

Ed Cafferty – asked if new ambulance will be better equipped. Some equipment remains the same. Better filtration systems, better safety in back of the vehicle, and 4-wheel drive will be improvements. Will need to purchase new defibrillators in the next couple of years to stay current technology-wise.

Debbie Ramsdell – asked if Charlotte provides services to surrounding towns? Yes, the nearest available ambulance is dispatched through 911 services. Neighboring towns also provide services in Charlotte.

A community member asked what the plan is if the article is not approved tonight. They will need to return next year with the request. The risk is more frequent breakdowns of existing aging vehicles.

Marian Sharpe – asked how many times both ambulances have been out at the same time? Data not available at the meeting.

Bob..... asked what the expected sale price will be of the 1998 ambulance. They expect to get \$10K from the sale.

A community member asked if other towns are upgrading in a similar fashion. Yes, neighboring towns are on an ambulance replacement schedule of 5-7 years.

The question was asked as to how many calls annually are received. Approximately 350-375 calls are received.

VOTE:

The vote was called. Article I carries.

Advisory Board Update:

A communication entity was set up to gain feedback for town of Charlotte fire and rescue in general. Hoping this group of volunteer citizens will be a conduit to get comments, questions and ideas back and forth.

MOTION made and seconded to adjourn the Special Town Meeting carried by voice vote.

The Special Town Meeting was adjourned at 7:28PM

Minutes respectfully submitted, Sandy Raymond, Recording Secretary.