

**CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD
MARCH TOWN INFORMATIONAL MEETING
CHARLOTTE CENTRAL SCHOOL
MARCH 4, 2019**

APPROVED

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS: Lane Morrison, Chair; Matthew Krasnow, Carrie Spear, Fritz Tegatz, Frank W Tenney.

ADMINISTRATION: Dean Bloch, Town Administrator.

OTHERS: Patrice Machavern, Gerald Bouchard, Michael Yantachka, Peter Trono, Dick St George, Jon Davis, Rob Mullin, Mary Mead, Moe Harvey, Nan Mason, Margaret Woodruff, Danielle Menk, Jeff Martin, and others.

AGENDA ITEMS:

- Article 7: Shall bonds of the Town of Charlotte in an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars and 00/100 (\$275,000.00) be issued to finance the purchase of a new ambulance and related equipment to replace a 2006 ambulance?
- Article 8: Shall bonds of the Town of Charlotte in an amount not to exceed Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars and 00/100 (\$700,000.00) be issued to finance the construction of an addition to the Charlotte Library?

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Morrison, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

ARTICLE 7: SHALL BONDS OF THE TOWN OF CHARLOTTE IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$275,000.00) BE ISSUED TO FINANCE THE PURCHASE OF A NEW AMBULANCE AND RELATED EQUIPMENT TO REPLACE A 2006 AMBULANCE

Patrice Machavern, CVFRS representative, reviewed a CVFRS Capital Reserve Fund request to replace a 2006 E-Series 2-wheel drive ambulance with a new ambulance. The proposed Town Meeting Article 7 is a vote for a \$275,000 10-year bond, explained Ms. Machavern.

Mr. Morrison noted that the bond's first year interest payment will be \$21,000.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Following further discussion regarding the proposed bond and the proposed ambulance purchase, Peter Trono asked how many crews are needed to two ambulances. Mr. Mullin replied that Rescue has two ambulances; the A-1 and a back up. The back-up ambulance does not have a separate crew. Mr. Mullin briefly reviewed the number of paramedics and EMT's and volunteer EMT's available to crew an ambulance.

Mr. Trono noted that one-half of the call-outs are for out of town runs. He has heard the response time is impressive. As a Charlotte taxpayer what assurances will he have that an

ambulance will come if he needed help and that a crew will be available, asked Mr. Trono. Mr. Mullin said that crews and the A-1 ambulance are ready 24-7 with advanced life support crews in Charlotte. There are 50 percent less calls for out of town services. District 3 dictates mutual aid out of town service. For Charlotte daytime there are first response crews that go on calls as well, said Mr. Mullin. Mr. St George stated that the turn over rate for multiple calls runs about 2 percent.

Mr. Trono asked if there is a mechanism for reimbursement for the miles put on the ambulance if one-half of the calls are out of Charlotte. Mr. St George replied that if Rescue goes to Vergennes then they are billing for the miles. It is a mutual aid system. If Charlotte Rescue has a contract that will provide for maintenance costs, said Mr. St George.

Mr. St George said that that there are ambulance services that are shutting down. Regionalization of services could save money. He would be support of regionalization if there is a cost sharing benefit, said Mr. St George.

Mr. Mullin reported that since May 2014 Charlotte has never logged any out of service time due to crew shortages. It is a goal to keep it that way, stated Mr. Mullin.

ARTICLE 8: SHALL BONDS OF THE TOWN OF CHARLOTTE IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$700,000.00) BE ISSUED TO FINANCE THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ADDITION TO THE CHARLOTTE LIBRARY

Danielle Menk, Margaret Woodruff and Nan Mason, Charlotte Library representatives, narrated a power point presentation regarding a proposed library addition for a shared cost that includes a proposed Town bond of \$700,000 and \$700,000 privately raised funds.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Trono asked if the library will remain open during construction of the addition. Ms. Menk replied that the library will be open during the entire construction process.

Mr. Trono noted that the library roof had been replaced recently, and asked if the walls were still freezing. He has estimated that the proposed addition project will cost \$700 per square foot for the 2,200 square foot project, which hasn't been approved yet. If the library size is doubling then there will be parking issues. Parking should be worked out at the Planning Commission hearings. What happens if 20,000 people come to the Library and can't park. He would want to know what kind of heating system is planned, how the square foot price was decided when you don't know details. Was a cost analysis done, asked Mr. Trono. Ms. Woodruff said that the Library Trustees did have cost concerns and talked with the architects. The square foot price of \$225 per square foot estimate was done by Black River. The architect knows the project has to be brought in on budget. There is a difference in costs between the new and renovation estimates of \$225 per square feet for construction. She thinks that is a reasonable number, said Ms. Woodruff.

Mr. Trono reviewed that the total cost presented is \$1.4 million and you are saying the cost is \$250 per square foot for renovations and new construction. The numbers don't jive, said Mr. Trono. Ms. Woodruff said that Black River Architects are familiar with municipal, school and library projects. A significant contingency was built into the budget to cover potential increased costs of construction. The \$1.4 million estimate is the cost of the entire project that includes site work, construction, permitting, furnishing, renovations, etc, said Ms. Woodruff. Mr. Trono replied so that is figured into the \$250 per square foot cost. This is for a wood frame building of 2,200 square feet. He read an article that the library addition project is keeping the size and cost down so that they don't have to put in a sprinkler system. He thinks the cost is more like \$700 per square foot, said Mr. Trono.

Mr. Trono said that you are asking the Town to bond \$700,000 and the Library will fundraise matching funds. Who pays bills first, the Town, or Friends of the Library, asked Mr. Trono. Ms. Mason said that \$400,000 in pledges has been raised, and will be realized over a two year period. The architects have done a lot of municipal buildings and libraries. The architect firm has a cost estimator, said Ms. Mason.

Mr. Trono suggested that the Library Trustees slow down and get the permit approvals and matching funds then bring a bond vote to the Town next year. Ms. Mason stated that costs will rise higher next year due to inflation and cost of building supplies.

Ms. Menk said that there won't be 20,000 people coming to the library at one time. She doesn't anticipate having new programs; just to have more space for the current programs. The feasibility study done is confidential, said Ms. Menk. Mr. Trono said that he is interested to know if there is a need for the project. For example, the plans show a conference room. If there is a space problem then you could bring kids to the Town Hall, or Senior Center, suggested Mr. Trono. Ms. Menk said that the Town is not interested in having things and kids brought to the Town Hall. The room is a program room, stated Ms. Menk.

Mr. Trono asked what happens if the Friends of the Library can't raise the \$700,000 match. What happens if the Town bond money is spent first, asked Mr. Trono. Ms. Menk replied that if the money isn't raised then the design could be modified, or something. The committee is not done fund raising. If the bond vote passes that might give more donors the impetus to give more, said Ms. Menk. Ms. Mason suggested that if the bond passes then the Library might be able to apply for a \$100,000 grant.

Mr. Morrison asked that the Library Trustees invite the architect to the Town Meeting to answer questions regarding concerns and costs. The architect's card board model should be displayed at the meeting, said Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Tegatz said that estimated costs should contain money for hard drawings, and when available would be more accurate.

Mr. Trono asked if that isn't backwards. Shouldn't they take \$100,000 from the Friends to pay for the architects drawings and studies, and then ask the Town for money based on that. When someone builds something they go to the bank with concrete numbers. The Town is the banker. It is no different then building a 2,000 square foot wood frame house. In this case the Library is tapping into existing water and sewer systems and that saves costs, said Mr. Trono.

Mr. Trono asked what the end cost of the Library's new roof that the Town recently paid for. He understood that it was \$45,000, said Mr. Trono. Mr. Tegatz replied that the cost was for more than a roof. There was new insulation, a heating/air vac system and frozen pipes issues. The original price was for a new roof. The roof and insulation replacement came near the original proposal, said Mr. Tegatz.

Mr. Trono reiterated that it is unusual to ask for a bond for a project not yet approved, and suggested slowing down and get good numbers. Ms. Woodruff said that the committee did due diligence. They spoke to the Bond Bank and she doesn't feel like we are acting in an unusual manner. The bond is for an "up to" certain amount. If the cost to build the project comes in under budget then some money will return to the Town, said Ms. Woodruff.

Mr. Trono asked if the Library will pay out the Library's share first and then use the Town bond. It is the Town that floats the bond, said Mr. Trono.

MOTION by Gerald Bouchard, that the amount for the bond shall not exceed the Library fund raising portion, and as the building gets built both funds get drawn down at the same time in the same amount. Motion failed due to a lack of a second.

Mr. Morrison said that no action is needed on Article 8, which is a warned item for Town Meeting. How funds are expended can be taken up on a future Selectboard agenda after a new Board is elected. Article 8 is on the March Town Meeting ballot and will take place, said Mr. Morrison.

Mary Mead, Town Clerk, reviewed that pledged donations to the library are a "promise" and some of the funds will come in over two years. The Library committee doesn't have \$350,000 in the bank, so those funds can't be spend first. The library donations and bond should be spilt when the project starts, said Ms. Mead.

Mr. Morrison said that he has talked to the Selectboard members. If the Bond passes and the planning proceeds with a better price the Selectboard doesn't feel that earth should be turned over until the total \$1.4 million amount is raised. A \$700,000 bond is a commitment by the Town. The library has pledges that will be paid in over two years that are promissory notes. The money is not in the bank yet. When the Library committee has promissory notes that add up to \$700,000 then we are safe. If bond passes there should be more enthusiasm and Library's \$700,000 might be raised, said Mr. Morrison.

Jeff Martin asked how many towns have used private and public funds for projects. Ms. Woodruff pointed to the Shelburne library project. Mr. Martin said that the Library committee is raising money, and it is common for people to commit pledges 2-3 years out. The Library Trustees could have come to the Town for a \$1.4 million bond. Go into the library and see the usage and tight space. There are 330 programs this year, serving toddlers to the elderly, stated Mr. Martin.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no Other Business.

ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: 5 ayes; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

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