

**CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
MEETING CONDUCTED ENTIRELY VIA TELECONFERENCE
MAY 18, 2020**

APPROVED

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS: Chair Matthew Krasnow, Vice Chair Frank Tenney, Carrie Spear, James Faulkner, Louise McCarren

ADMINISTRATION: Dean Bloch, Town Administrator

OTHERS: VCAM, Mary Mead, Nicole Conley, Melissa Mendelsohn, Susan Smith, Maura Wygmans, Bill Fraser-Harris, Jenny Cole, Eddie Krasnow, Hugh Lewis, Jr., Meridith Bradley, Bill Stuono, Julian Kulski, Deirdre Holmes, Debra Kassabian, Suzy Hodgson, Rebecca Foster, Laurie Thompson

AGENDA ITEMS:

5:30 PM Site visit at the former flea market site, Route 7, just south of Charlotte Crossings. After the site visit, the remainder of the meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom)

6:30 PM Adjustments to the agenda

6:31 PM Pay rate for Assistant Clerk/Treasurer

6:45 PM Communication to users of well at the former flea market site

6:55 PM Town Beach—update on planning for the summer

7:10 PM Budget Austerity Discussion•Recreation Commission—planned expenses for FY20•Charlotte Park and Wildlife Oversight Committee—planned expenses for FY20

7:25 PM Request by KR Properties for partial refund of permitting fees due to designation of open space

7:35 PM Solar net metering options

8:15 PM Discussion of planning for future uses of the former flea market site

8:30 PM Train station—clean up needed?

8:35 PM Minutes: April 27, 2020; May 11, 2020

8:40 PM Selectboard updates

8:50 PM Approve warrants to pay bills

9:00 PM Adjournment

CALL TO ORDER

Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m.

Adjustments to the agenda

Dean Bloch suggested adding:

- Discussion for designation of a hiring committee for Town Planner position opening
- Overnight closure for Thomson's Point Road during construction

Public Comment

Melissa Mendelsohn said there is an issue with her tax appraisal. Mary Mead explained that appeals go through the Town Lister and not the SB. The Board of Civil Authority will come to hear the case if there is still an issue. Melissa said she spoke to the Town Lister by phone and she is confused about her appraisal. The paperwork indicates a porch is involved. Notes from the assessor indicate there was a deck installed originally. She has never been charged taxes for this deck. She has no problem if there was a mistake but she said she is confused about what she is being charged for. She is requesting a Zoom meeting about her appeal to happen with all interested parties. Dean Bloch said he will look into setting up a Zoom meeting for her.

Pay rate for Assistant Clerk/Treasurer

Louise McCarren asked about the process and finding one common way to approach pay rate requests.

Mary Mead said the market indicates Charlotte's grading is way too low for new hires for the assistant clerk/treasurer position. Simple market adjustments are not fair, she said. After six years on the job, Christina Booher is only making \$19.55 an hour. Hinesburg starts their person in a similar position at \$21.50 an hour with an increase to \$22 an hour after 6 months, Mary said. She is asking that the position be regraded since it has been undervalued. The office handles \$16 million in taxes and that is a huge responsibility, Mary said.

Matt said the two options to adjust pay are market adjustments and to reevaluate the position with the Palmer Survey Method. He summarized the Palmer process. He asked the board which avenue they wanted to pursue if they do not want to advertise the position at the current pay grade.

Carrie Spear said Mary is the expert and the Selectboard should go with what she would like to have happen. Louise said what Mary has submitted, in terms of market adjustment, would be the easiest avenue. James Faulkner said he would also agree with Mary's market adjustment approach she submitted as an option to the Selectboard. Frank Tenney said it would be quicker to do a market adjustment.

Mary clarified that she is recommending the starting pay be \$19 an hour at step zero for this position. The range would be \$19 to \$21 depending on a new hire candidate's experience.

Matt said the issue is that the salary administration policy and grid are founded on an equilibrium of each position in Town. He suggested changing the position on the pay grid so it is no longer at pay grade 10 and to find more value and responsibility in the position. A reevaluation process is needed to get it closer to pay grade 14 where the starting rate is the same as the zoning administrator. That would entail seeing about 100 point increase, cumulatively, in the evaluation process, he said. He then explained the job evaluation grid and the process for this.

Mary asked if it would be helpful if she outlined the position responsibilities and Palmer Survey to give the Selectboard a starting point. Her recommendations would be a springboard to the process, Matt said.

Communication to users of well at the former flea market site

Dean said he wrote a draft letter to be reviewed and approved by the Selectboard. The site visit revealed there is standing water in the pump house, Matt said. Maura Wygmans said the standing water is due to a sump pump and standing water from the site and is unrelated to this matter. She said she was made aware of the electric bill issue in March. She asked for the most recent bill. She said she is guessing the bills are back to normal and that the owners of the Old Lantern have found an issue that they have resolved.

Maura said the Town has been paying for the electricity for this well pump that serves her property and the Old Lantern for 17 years. She asked if there was historical knowledge on how this situation came to be and what was agreed upon at the time when the Town acquired the 55 acres of land. She asked for documentation of the well usage agreement at that time. Louise said she has reviewed the documents and it is clear the responsibility lies with the landowners. The Town is not responsible for the electricity for this well, Louise said. The Selectboard would like well beneficiaries to come to an agreement to pay for the electricity moving forward.

Maura reiterated that it has been 17 years with no charge and it is a bit problematic to suddenly request payment for electricity.

The electric bill went up tenfold, Matt said. Maura reiterated that The Old Lantern has rectified the problem.

Louise said she would look at any supporting documents with Mary and report back but she feels the beneficiaries need to pay the electric bill. Frank said the Town does not use any water from this well whatsoever and needs to not be charged for the electricity. Maura said it was due to the Town doing good on the original deal when they got 55 acres and two homeowners got a well. There is history here that is not being addressed, she said.

Matt said his goal is to preventatively deconflict this for perpetuity. Maura said she is open to that but does not want to be responsible for any past bills. How to move forward will be discussed at the next meeting.

Town Beach—update on planning for the summer

Nicole Conley and Bill Frasier-Harris were present. Bill said if anyone wanted to know more about the garbage issue to contact him directly. Nicole said when they are given the OK by the State, she is preparing a plan to open the beach. She will post updates on Front Porch Forum. It will not be open on Memorial Day. Louise and Carrie agreed it will ultimately be up to Nicole on how the beach opening will proceed. Bill said Fish and Wildlife are not installing docks this year and Charlotte should follow that lead. To be discussed further at the next meeting.

Budget Austerity Discussions**•Recreation Commission—planned expenses for FY20**

MOTION by Matt Krasnow, seconded by Louise McCarren, to approve the two requests for necessary maintenance at the tennis courts for pressure washing and crack repair, not to exceed \$1,364. VOTE: 5 ayes; all in favor; motion carried.

•Charlotte Park and Wildlife Oversight Committee—planned expenses for FY20

Jenny Cole presented budget items for this fiscal year and asked the Selectboard for approval during this budget freeze. These include mowing, gravel for trails, repairs for a bridge, brush hogging. It is all within the budget and is more than a 5% reduction in spending. These are part of park maintenance. Matt said the park generates revenue for the Town at about \$3,000 annually.

MOTION by Louise McCarren, seconded by Matt Krasnow, to approve the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Oversight Committee's planned expenses for FY20 as presented. VOTE: 5 ayes; all in favor; motion carried.

MOTION to amend by Louise McCarren, seconded by Matt Krasnow, to approve expenditures as well as approve that the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Oversight Committee be authorized for other items within the 5% reduction in spending. VOTE: 5 ayes; all in favor; motion carried.

Request by KR Properties for partial refund of permitting fees due to designation of open space

Matt recused himself as it is a family member making the request. Frank referred to the 2012 refund and waiver policy. He couldn't find a copy of this signed by the Selectboard. He asked if this is a policy that should be looked into because it appears that it was approved at a meeting but wasn't signed by three or more Selectboard members. Eddie Krasnow asked if there were minutes and Frank said, yes, and there was a draft approved at a meeting but the Town needs to verify that this guidance is in force.

Eddie said he assumed that there was an approved policy. Frank asked about the difference in the definitions of "waived" and "refunded." Guidance for refunding fees and waivers were discussed. Frank said this is the first time this has been brought to his attention. He asked why this wouldn't be addressed when a person is applying for PUD or PRD. Why isn't this being done between sketch plan and site plan, he asked. Eddie asked how a landowner is supposed to ask for a waiver when they have not been given approval. He said the amount of fees during the process cascade down over several years. It is the goal that matters, he said. He asked, what do the minutes say and what was the original goal and how can the Town better clarify this?

Frank said it is recognized that KR Properties has done more than what is required and this is a policy process issue only. The intention of this document was to incentivize the process to help the Town.

It is over \$16,000 in fees, Eddie said. Frank said it is unclear what portion of these fees are up for being refunded because it is unclear in the current policy.

This policy should be amended and the Selectboard should certify a policy going forward to see how to better do this through the planning process. It needs to be seen if this is a valid ordinance first, and then the Selectboard will seek clarity next, Frank said. Dean will email the Town Attorney.

Solar net metering options

Matt sent everyone an edited RFP earlier and reviewed it at the meeting. The Citizen, Works In Progress, and all interested parties will be notified. There are four interested parties, two have already submitted proposals. Dean explained the purchasing policy and the Selectboard discussed the timeline for advertising. Matt said incentives change after July 1. BFP and Seven Days are also a possibility for advertising. Solar developers are going to want to make a proposal before July 1. Proposal opening is slated for May 25.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by James Faulkner, to approve the Solar Net Metering Request for Proposals. VOTE: 5 ayes; all in favor; motion carried.

Discussion of planning for future uses of the former flea market site Train station—clean up needed?

There was a site visit at the flea market earlier. Possible salt and sand shed areas were discussed. Louise asked if this should be handled by the Planning Commission. Dean asked if a study committee should be formed. Selectboard indicated the study committee should be composed of representatives of the Selectboard, Planning Commission, Energy Committee, Trails Committee and Conservation Commission, and the Road Commissioner. Dean will prompt the boards, committees and commissions to come up with representatives to participate in the study.

MOTION by Carrie Spear, seconded by Frank Tenney, to form a committee to plan future uses of the former flea market site. VOTE: 5 ayes; all in favor; motion carried.

Train station cleanup to be performed by Louise. She asked for clarification on how the Town will work with the State to mow the area and keep it clean and neat. Carrie asked about putting a gate up to ward off the garbage issue. Matt asked if it was feasible to look into a trade for upkeep and the use of a park and ride. Laurie Thompson said The Trails Committee needs an easement across that area as well if anyone enters discussions with the State. This is an important piece of Town Link Trail. Dean to reach out to the State.

Minutes: April 27, 2020; May 11, 2020

Postponed to next meeting.

Selectboard updates**Designate a hiring committee for the Town Planner position**

A combination of Selectboard and Planning Commission members will be involved, Dean said. Rebecca Foster asked if Deirdre Holmes, representing the Energy Committee, could be included. Selectboard members expressed concern about the interviewing group being too large, but indicated that Deirdre could help review applications. The review of applications and interviews will be warned executive sessions. Deadline for applications is May 22. A meeting is set to happen on May 27 or 28 to review the applications.

Overnight closure of road

A 12-hour, mid-week, overnight road closure is being requested by a contractor to install the railroad crossing at Thompson's Point Road, which involves the installation and welding of a large diameter metal conduit. Hugh Lewis, Jr. said a detour at night would be best and that a detour through Lake Road is sufficient. It is going to be an inconvenience either way and this way will be the fastest way to get the job done and the roadway opened up, he said.

Approve warrants to pay bills**Adjournment**

MOTION by James Faulkner, seconded by Louise McCarren, to adjourn. VOTE: 5 ayes; all in favor; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted, Lynn Monty, Recording Secretary.