

**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
SELECTBOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 4, 2015**

Selectboard Present: Steven Neill (Chair); Art Grenier; Brenda Ferland

Staff Present: David Edkins – Administrator
Keith Weed – Highway Superintendent
David Duquette – Water and Wastewater Department Superintendent
Patrick Connors – Police Chief
Craig Fairbank – Recreation Department Director
Mark LaFlam – Fire Department – Assistant Chief
Jessica Dennis – Office Manager
Joan Kuncik – Town Treasurer
Kelly Stoddart – Town Clerk/Tax Collector

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Neill called this Selectboard meeting to order at 6:30 PM and welcomed everyone. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mr. Neill advised that meetings are tape recorded and asked that anyone wishing to speak identify themselves for the record. Comments need to be directed to the Selectboard.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

Mr. Grenier moved to approve the Minutes of the regular Selectboard meeting of October 21, 2015, as written. Mrs. Ferland seconded the motion. With all in favor, the Minutes were approved.

Mr. Grenier moved to approve the Minutes of the Non-Public Selectboard session of October 21, 2015, as written. Mrs. Ferland seconded the motion. With all in favor, the Minutes were approved.

Mr. Grenier moved to approve the Minutes of the Selectboard Workshop Meeting of October 21, 2015, as written. Mrs. Ferland seconded the motion. With all in favor, the Minutes were approved.

Mr. Grenier moved to approve the Minutes of the Selectboard Workshop of October 27, 2015, as written. Mrs. Ferland seconded the motion. With all in favor, the Minutes were approved.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Transfer Station: Mr. Weed had nothing new to report at the Transfer Station. Mr. Edkins sent Mr. Boyer an email with the information he had in regards to the Cassella contract but we did not have anything after 2010. Mr. Weed gave him the approximate totals for last year. Waste Management is looking for the Town's business.

Highway Department: Mr. Weed rented a box from Ray-Tech for pot hole patching. They are working on the pole barn. Cheshire Turnpike was paved today. They are in pretty good shape with the trucks for winter; plows and other equipment are being worked on. The line painting is almost finished. Fall street sweeping was done today.

Recreation Department: Mr. Fairbank advised that basketball sign-ups are happening now. Patch Park has been winterized and is closed; the portable toilets were removed. People are still using the Frisbee golf. The committee is talking about Winter Carnival. The Recreation Committee would like the Selectboard to approve a softball tournament in July. Ms. Chaffee will come into the meeting shortly to talk about that.

Fire Department: In the absence of Fire Chief Baraly, Miss Dennis reported that the Fire Department had a heating oil leak in their building that was substantial and they need to do some clean-up and repairs. Mr. Mark LaFlam, Assistant Fire Chief, advised that yesterday morning when one of the firefighters discovered the oil spill he called him. He explained how the heating system is set up in the Fire Station. Apparently the shut-off valve failed. The furnace repair person has ordered a part but there will not be any heat in the building for about a week. The furnace is about 20 years old. Miss Dennis said the insurance company will not pay for a pollution clean-up but this needs to be addressed even if there is no reimbursement. Mr. LaFlam noted that tomorrow night instead of a drill he would like the members to take pictures of the damaged areas as it cannot be left the way it is. Mr. Grenier asked if this occurred in the section where they planned on doing renovations. Mr. LaFlam said it is all part of that area. They have to dispose of all their educational material. Mrs. Ferland noted that they can have a professional hazardous clean-up company come in to clean it so they can at least assess the damage. The Selectboard may have to go to the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) to ask how they can fix it and stay within this budget. Miss Dennis mentioned there is a grant that might be available through the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. She has not had a chance to look into that. Mr. Tom Cobb mentioned that Serv Pro in Keene does a nice clean-up job. They have a product that “eats up” the fuel oil. Miss Dennis will call Serv Pro in the morning.

Fire and Police Departments: Police Chief Pat Connors advised that they have an opportunity to utilize a repeater site on the top of Mt. Ascutney for the Fire Department for \$8,750.00 that includes the rent which is \$2,500.00. It is too good of an opportunity to pass up. He would like to see us move into it as of January 1st, 2016. The existing private company is interested in donating their equipment. For a repeater site Mt. Ascutney is about the best in a 100 mile radius. It will enable them to have good fire and safety dispatch. Finding enough money in the Police and Fire Department budgets could be challenging. Mr. LaFlam pointed out that the Fire Department budget has some money that could be used. Chief Connors mentioned that R & R Communications needs a solid commitment because there are a lot of people who would like to be up there. Mrs. Ferland felt they need to jump on this offer and find funds in the bottom line of this year’s budget. Mr. Grenier asked if this would cover all the dead areas. Chief Connors feels this will cover all of Charlestown; it shoots right down the valley. There was a consensus of the Selectboard to move forward with this as it is too good to pass up.

Police Department: Police Chief Pat Connors reported that Ms. Vanessa Wilson, Prosecutor, is leaving this position as of January 1st, 2016. She touched base with some of her colleagues and found a replacement, Attorney Hodgeman, who works in Claremont. There would be other attorneys in the same firm who would assist, if needed. Mr. Neill asked if she would be willing to provide the service for the amount of money that is allocated. Chief Connors said around the same amount but he would budget for \$20,000.00 next year. Following a discussion Chief Connors was asked to contact Attorney Hodgeman for a copy of the contract that the Selectboard will review prior to meeting with her during a Workshop session.

Chief Connors is having computer issues. The server is still good but he needs a new fire wall. The department is participating in a fundraiser called the “Beard United” event. Sheriff Simonds would like to raise money for the Sullivan County United Way. It is a good cause; it ends in February 2016.

Town Treasurer: Mrs. Joan Kuncik took out a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) last month and thought it would cover the Town until tax bills went out but now they are delayed so she will have to borrow another \$750,000.00. Mascoma Bank will not write two TANs for us but they recommended the Town have a line of credit. They will roll the original \$750,000.00 borrowed last month with the new \$750,000.00 she has to borrow and that will be their line of credit for this year. It has to be paid by January; hopefully they will have enough money coming in to pay it. In January the bank will write a line of credit based on taxes received during the year in accordance with the budget. About five years ago she had to borrow two times a year but now they are up to four times a year. Mrs. Ferland pointed out that they have to pay the school district monthly plus the bills from the State and County when they come in. Mrs. Kuncik prefers to work with the Mascoma Bank. The Selectboard signed the paperwork for the line of credit.

Fall Mountain Regional School District Study Committee: Mr. Tom Cobb reported that they are working on some Warrant Articles. In discussions they decided to go to the School Board meeting to ask if there is a way they can level fund their budget. The Town works hard to do this. They would like to invite the Selectboard to go with them. It is frustrating. Mr. Edkins mentioned they are negotiating a new teachers’ contract. Their next School Board meeting is on Monday, November 23rd at 6:30 PM at the High School. Mr. Cobb can request the Committee be on that Agenda. Mr. Neill noted that this conflicts with the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Cobb asked if at least two members could attend. Following a discussion, there was a consensus to have Mrs. Ferland and Mr. Grenier attend the School Board meeting and Mr. Neill will represent the Selectboard at the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Edkins mentioned that if the Committee cannot convince the School Board to put an Article on the Warrant the deadline for submitting petitioned Warrant Articles is Tuesday, January 12th, 2016.

Town Representatives: Mr. Neill acknowledged that the Town’s two representatives are present: Rep. Steve Smith and Rep. Tom Laware. Rep. Laware reported that they attended a meeting yesterday in Newport at the Senior Center. There are things that need to be done about the congregate meals. They tried many different solutions but the bottom line is they have to do something by February 1st, 2016, with another establishment or start a program from scratch in Charlestown. Something needs to be done quickly. Mrs. Ferland clarified that February 1st,

2016 date is the expiration of the license with the State. If they come up with something they might be able to continue. However, how are they going to be able to hire an Executive Director, who will not get paid, but will have to get employees and make sure they are trained by then? They need to be sure there are food deliveries; it is a full time job. Several people are interested in continuing the program but do not have the time or energy to accept this responsibility. She has a big file with information but feels she has exhausted all the means to keep this program going. Rep. Smith contacted all the members of the Delegation but he was not sure he could get enough of them to support and sign a letter to get them some weight toward finding a solution. He continues to talk to Representatives about this issue. He asked Senator Jerry Little to find out exactly how this group gets their money and what they have to do to get it; is there any leverage to apply. However he is not sure what will develop by doing this. Mrs. Ferland pointed out that funding is there but we do not know how to get it. We cannot hire an Executive Director and put them on the Town's payroll as it has to be a separate organization. Mr. Neill thanked them for all their time and efforts. Rep. Laware is available if there is anything the Town would like him to do. Rep. Smith said they want to work out a solution but have not figured out what to do.

Recreation Committee: Ms. Patty Chaffee, member, said they would like to ask the Selectboard if Charlestown could be a possible location for the New England Regional State Softball Tournament in the summer of 2016. They have been asked to host the youth teams; it would be July 13th through the 17th. The Recreation Committee voted to take this on. It is a great opportunity for the community as it brings a lot of people here. Teams are coming from Massachusetts, northern New Hampshire and seacoast area. They could be looking at 20 teams in Town over the four day week-end. It would be advantageous for all the businesses in Town. There is some cost associated with it but they are hoping to raise the majority of funds through concessions, T-shirt sales, etc. There is a contract that they are asking the Selectboard to approve and sign. Responding to a question from Mr. Neill, Ms. Chaffee explained that they are not looking for any financial obligation at this point but they will be looking for \$1,600.00 up-front. Ms. Chaffee talked to Mr. Gordon Dansereau, Athletic Director at the FM High School, as one requirement is dealing umpires. He is willing to take that on for a small amount of money so they know they have some help. He offered the High School fields if needed. Mr. Grenier is in favor of it; it will be good economically for the Town, the Recreation Department and for the morale and boost of the youth playing. Mrs. Ferland had no objections but asked Ms. Chaffee to leave the contract with them for their review. Ms. Chaffee noted that the Commissioner would like an answer soon as there are other interested towns. Responding to a question from Mr. Neill, Ms. Chaffee said some funds might come from their Programs and Supplies line but that would be used for Babe Ruth Softball anyway.

Town Clerk / Tax Collector: Mrs. Kelly Stoddart wanted to address a few issues. They received a letter from the Selectboard dated October 22nd regarding the new building. A number of residents had asked when they were going to be moving into the new building. She thought they had a plan until she received the letter. They currently have about 500 square feet of working space but the new plans show they need to fit into 392 square feet which will cramp them into a smaller space. She feels the Selectboard should have discussed this with her, in person, because they need to work together. She referred to her letter when she replied back to the Selectboard asking that they not proceed to move this winter but encumber the monies they

have so they can budget more and move in the spring. The original premise as to why people voted for this building purchase was to put the Town Clerk/Tax Collectors office over there first. Mr. Jeff Lessels gave her a letter to hand in to the Selectboard; he states that is the reason why he voted for this. Winter is coming; they did not realize some of the costs for the ADA improvements to make them compliant. They want to be sure their records are maintained in an efficient manner. It is difficult to do that as they are now in the basement office. Mascoma Bank has offered them quite a few fire-proof cabinets so they can really make sure their records are preserved for at least 100 years. They listened to the Deliberative Session tape when they discussed at length putting the TC/TX over there first to make it the most viable work space for them and then work toward bringing the other groups in. She asked for the Selectboard's thoughts on that and some resolutions to work together toward that. The original plans were discussed. Mrs. Ferland explained the original plan with the wall going down the middle of the building did not work for the other departments. They then asked Mr. Travis Royce to put it on a CAD system and he sent back two proposals. He suggested not putting the wall down the middle but said if they reconstruct the wall in another area it would give them almost the same square footage as if they went down the middle of the building, with the changes they would have the lobby area back and the Selectboard felt this was the best use of the building; they worked toward his recommendation. The TC/TX would occupy the left half. They had a workshop and decided to take another look. Mr. Royce's plan came out better for a couple of reasons: it gave us back the lobby area for public documents and the bullet proof window would go in. The sidewalk on the side would not be acceptable so it would be eliminated and they would come in off the ramp area; they had to have two doors so many feet apart to meet the ADA requirements. It also put in an office for Mr. Edkins who had no space with the other plan. An administrative office was totally eliminated for Planning Board and Zoning Board. One room would be a common break room for everyone. They knew they would not be able to put everything over there; they would still have to utilize the Bakery Building and the archive room in the Library Building. Mrs. Stoddart pointed out that in the original plans they were to have about 640 square feet; it is impossible for them to be in a smaller footprint. She is not sure there is a need for Mr. Edkins and the Selectboard to be in the same building. She has to have many documents under her control at all times. Miss Dennis pointed out that the plan Mr. Royce sent back was about the same square footage with the wall adjusted. She does not know if it makes sense for them to move without Mr. Edkins as they work together a lot. Mrs. Clark asked if anyone came to talk to them about how much space they need; vital records have to be with them in addition to other files and equipment. She asked who was at the Workshop when this was discussed. Mrs. Ferland explained there is no Agenda on a Workshop; they do any number of issues that come up. Mrs. Clark would like to know how they (TX/TX) went from being in the building over there to two little rooms and the Selectboard Office personnel get the rest of the building. Mr. Neill explained that some of that lobby area is joint; that is the difference in the square footage. Mrs. Clark asked how they will put everything they have into 392 square feet. There was discussion pertaining to the changes. Mr. Neill explained that nothing has been set in stone as far as moving forward with any plan. Mrs. Deborah Rose mentioned that when they saw the first plan she felt they came up with a pretty good plan. The customers would come in and there would be a natural flow for them to go to the big windows, it would be secure and private. They sometimes have a line-up of people. When she saw this new plan it does look a lot smaller so there might be something wrong with the dimensions and footprint. How do they control that flow with a big open area? Mrs. Clark noted that they still have \$26,000.00+ left for this project.

It is on the tape that the TC/TX office would go into the building first and then bring in the other departments. She would like to wait until after Town Meeting before moving forward. Don't push them into something that is a smaller area where there is no growth. In the past she had always been asked to talk over issues that came up; she never received a letter. Mr. Neill summarized that at this point there needs to be another Workshop to go over all this again. When they schedule that they will let the TC/TX office know. Mr. Edkins pointed out that they cannot encumber these funds so they need a plan before the end of the year.

Town Moderator: Mr. Albert St. Pierre, Town Moderator, is concerned with the traffic flow around this building during voting. There is a Primary coming up on February 9th. The Deliberative Session is February 3rd. February 4th is the Fall Mountain Regional School District Deliberative Session. Mr. Neill explained that they ran the traffic pattern a couple of times before on voting days and it worked pretty well. Mrs. Ferland noted that they usually try to have an officer in the area. Mr. Edkins said something needs to be done with the parking lot outside his office as people pull in and then because there is no signage they exit the wrong way. Mr. Weed has signage and will put them up. Mr. St. Pierre pointed out that there is a law that there be a certain amount of space where there can be no politicking. They could determine to have it 50 or 100 feet away from the polling location for Town Meeting. It is something to consider. The Moderator cannot make that decision. They cannot have people on both sides of the entryway.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Mrs. Stoddart advised that their hours have been going great. Her team has been phenomenal; she wanted to congratulate them on that. Our residents are happy with how things are. They will be doing water bills next week.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Josh Perry from JP Trucking was present. He was wondering what they did with the winter sand bid and asked if they have a list of contractors they notify of up-coming projects. Mr. Neill said any contracts, like mowing and winter sand for example, are published in the newspaper. In the past previous contractors that have expressed an interest in that type of work are given a notice. Mr. Putnam asked that it be put on the Town's website as not everybody checks the newspapers every day. Mr. Weed said there was only one bid for winter sand.

SELECTBOARD COMMENT:

There were no Selectboard Comments at this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Personnel Policy: Mr. Edkins reminded the Selectboard that this needs to be taken care of.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION – Payroll, Purchase Orders, Manifests, Contracts, Warrants, Abatements, etc.:

Purchase Orders: The Selectboard approved and signed the following purchase orders: 1) Town Clerk/Tax Collector –BMSI Business Management- \$975.00; 2) Water and Wastewater Department –Owens Leasing Co.- \$1,055.00; 3) Fire Department –Collision Pro- \$1,000.00; 4) Water and Wastewater Department –Ferguson Waterworks- \$957.50; 5) Transfer Station –Pete's Tire Barn- \$689.09; and 6) Police Department –Adamson Industries- \$1,035.00.

Uniforms: Miss Dennis was able to get the uniform rental company to change the contract from five years to three years. Mr. Neill signed the new contract.

Accounts Payable: The Selectboard approved and signed the Accounts Payable Void Check Register dated November 4, 2015. They also signed the Accounts Payable Check Register and Payment Manifest dated October 29, 2015.

Agreement: Mr. Neill and Mr. Grenier approved and signed an Agreement between the Town of Charlestown and the Anglican Church of the Good Shepard. They had a previous discussion about drilling some holes for posts to protect the fence. Mr. Weed has drilled the holes. Mrs. Ferland did not sign this Agreement.

Tax Warrants: Miss Dennis advised that Mrs. Clark has retired therefore they have to resubmit all taxes that are still due to the new Tax Collector. Mrs. Clark's books were audited this week. The document indicates the remaining balances that will be resubmitted to Mrs. Stoddart so she can collect them. Mr. Edkins noted that there are both Property Taxes plus outstanding Water and Sewer amounts.

Boiler Inspections: Mr. Edkins advised that they had boiler inspections on October 29th. The boiler at the Ambulance Barn has a pressure relief valve that is not properly installed. So they got written up on that. Miss Dennis wrote a letter in response telling them she contacted the Town's boiler people but they are not able to get here until December 7th. They have boiler inspections every other year in all the facilities where there are boilers.

Sullivan County: The Sullivan County Treasurer sent a bill to the Town. We owe \$789,801.00. Payment is due by December 17th. Mr. Edkins pointed out that of all the Towns in the county, Charlestown is the only one that did not get a reduction.

Mowing Bids: A Request for Proposals for mowing was advertised. The mandatory pre-bid meeting is November 11th at 10:00 AM and bids are due on November 18th.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Birthday Card: For the record Mr. Neill stated that the Selectboard signed a card in honor of Barbara Adam Piletz in honor of her 100th birthday on November 7th.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S REPORT:

Mr. Edkins had already discussed items on his report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Conservation Commission – Brenda Ferland: Mrs. Ferland was unable to attend the last meeting.

Heritage Commission – Art Grenier: Mr. Grenier reported that they met on October 27th. They went over the bench situation and talked about their proposed budget.

Recreation Committee – Art Grenier: Mr. Grenier advised that they met last night. Basketball sign-ups are being done. They talked about the softball tournament. Evaluations were done with the Director and that will be given to Miss Dennis.

CIP Committee – Brenda Ferland: Mrs. Ferland reported that they met on October 22nd. They looked over the request from Mr. Duquette; they will have him in to talk about that. Police Chief Pat Connors came in and talked about his budget. No other meetings are scheduled at this time.

Planning Board – Steve Neill, (Art Grenier, Alt): Mr. Neill advised that they met last night. They continued the Public Hearing on the radio station on Northwest Street; the applicant was not present. They continued the Public Hearing on J & H Property Holdings' auto repair business on Old Claremont Road.

CORRESPONDENCE (Continued):

Letter: Mr. Neill mentioned receipt of a letter from a concerned citizen on the new salt shed. Mr. Edkins read the letter from Ms. Sandy Andrus into the record. She questioned if it was a decision that was voted on by the Selectboard or if the Highway Department was able to make that decision alone. Mr. Grenier spoke on the height of the building. It meets all the set-backs. Mr. Weed is doing a great job putting it together. Mr. Weed noted that they cannot tear down the other buildings as they are on railroad property. This was the only spot they had other than building it a mile away. Mr. Neill said this structure was voted on at Town Meeting and it went before the Planning Board. Mr. Edkins was asked to respond to this letter.

OLD BUSINESS (Continued):

Benches: Miss Dennis pointed out that at the last meeting there was discussion about the benches and the letter that was to go to the church. She questioned if Mr. Edkins was supposed to write a letter or if she was supposed to do it. Mr. Edkins was supposed to write the letter but wanted to give the Selectboard one more chance to consider it before he writes the letter. Mr. Aare Ilves did some research and pointed out that the Town's right-of-way extends 6-to-8 feet beyond the sidewalk and he was commenting that perhaps the benches do not need to be moved from their current locations because they are on public property. Mr. Grenier said this was discussed during the Heritage Commission meeting and it was his understanding that the benches are on the Town's right-of-way. Mr. Edkins noted that they would not have to worry about grounds maintenance because they would be on the other side of the sidewalk but still on public property. Mr. Grenier mentioned that a representative from the church was at their meeting and they would like to keep the bench where it is. Mr. Weed will look at the locations to be sure the benches will not hinder snow plowing.

NON-PUBLIC SELECTBOARD SESSION:

Mrs. Ferland moved to enter into a Non-Public Selectboard Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II to discuss (a) Personnel, (c) Reputations and (e) Pending Claims or Litigation. Mr. Grenier seconded the motion and, on a roll call vote with all in favor, the motion was approved at 8:53 PM.

The regular Selectboard meeting resumed at 10:10 PM.

Tax Rate: Miss Dennis reported that the tax rate is up to \$32.95. If they level fund the Town portion it brings the fund balance down to 4.73%. The DRA likes towns to keep it at 5% or over. Next year they have to think about the revaluation. The way sales are right now it looks like values will be going down. Last year they did not use any fund balance to reduce the tax rate. There was a consensus to take money from the fund balance to keep the Town tax rate the same as last year. Miss Dennis will notify the DRA tomorrow. She believes the number will be final by Friday.

TC/TX: Mr. Edkins had a draft copy of the letter he prepared to reply to Mrs. Clark's right-to-know request. He asked the Selectboard to look it over and let him know if it is okay. He made copies of minutes from several meetings. Tapes will be made available if she wants to listen to them as this office does not have the capability of making duplicates of tapes.

Workshop Meetings: Workshop sessions are scheduled as follows:

- November 10th – Highway & Transfer Station with Mr. Weed
- November 12th – Police Department and tentatively Mr. Edkins and Miss Dennis to talk about buildings.

Finance Committee: The Finance Committee will have their organizational meeting next Monday. Mr. Neill did not feel Mr. Edkins or Mrs. Borden need to attend. Mr. Edkins was asked to contact Mr. Thibodeau to tell him that the Selectboard do not plan to attend. One of the members can take the minutes for this meeting.

Office Manager: Miss Dennis will be at the NHMA Conference in Manchester on Thursday, November 19th and Friday, November 20th.

Main Street: Mr. Edkins has a plan that was discussed with Mr. Griffin Dussault for 52 and 54 Main Street. They are going to pave two 20-foot driveways with 10-foot flares in as far as the sidewalk and put in a continuous 9-foot wide asphalt strip adjacent to the sidewalk for the full width of the property and restore the remainder of that area to grass. Mr. Neill said they do not want to drain water into those old building cellars. This will be done in the next spring season.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Grenier moved to adjourn this meeting. Mrs. Ferland seconded the motion. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 10:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Approved,

Steven A. Neill, Chair

Art A. Grenier

Brenda L. Ferland

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the November 18, 2015, Selectboard meeting.)