

**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 16, 2015**

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

Staff Present: David Edkins – Administrator  
Patrick Connors – Police Chief  
Keith Weed – Highway Superintendent  
Dave Duquette – Water & Wastewater Superintendent  
Charles Baraly – Fire Chief

**CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mr. Neill called the 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.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):**

**Mr. Grenier moved that the minutes of the September 2 regular meeting be approved as submitted. Mrs. Ferland seconded and with all in favor the minutes were approved.**

**Mr. Grenier moved that the minutes of the September 2 special meeting be approved as submitted. Mrs. Ferland seconded and with all in favor the minutes were approved.**

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

**Police Department:** Chief Patrick Connors reported that the new cruiser is being fit out. It will be lettered next week. He reported that on September 23 the cruiser radars will be recertified. On October 5 he will be administering the fitness test for potential part time police officers. As of today, the Department has had 786 calls for service; 5 of these have been fire calls and 18 have involved the Ambulance Department. With the beginning of the school year there is usually an uptick in child abuse cases. There have been 15 investigations and 8 arrests thus far. There have been 4 vehicular crashes. He has been working on personnel evaluations. He expressed disappointment that no one from Charlestown attended the Connecticut Valley Mutual Aid meeting last night. Chief Baraly told him that he was not notified of the meeting. Officer Joe Landry's mother passed away recently. The services will be in Claremont this Saturday. The entire Department plans to attend. The State Police will cover Charlestown during this period. Chief Connors will be out of Town on Friday as his father will be having surgery.

**School Study Committee:** Committee Chairman Tom Cobb stated that they are ready to present their findings. They will be having another meeting next week. They are working on a Warrant

Article to be acted upon at the School District Meeting in the spring. This Article will address School Board membership and representation of the various towns on the School Board.

**Fire Department:** Chief Baraly reported that the mini pumper has been inspected. They will be sending the large truck (Engine 1) to Valley Fire for a recall. They will also be taking it to Whelen to address a light issue. Batteries and the power steering line will be replaced on Engine 3. They are working on getting some quotes for turnout gear. By 2017 he has 8 Scott Air Pak bottles that will need to be replaced. Chief Baraly will be out for the next 4 weeks; two for work and two for training.

In response to a question from Mr. Edkins, Chief Baraly stated that the Building Committee would be meeting tomorrow evening. Mrs. Ferland commented that the CIP Committee has some ideas and would like to help in coming up with a plan. The CIP Committee's next meeting will be on Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Water & Wastewater Department:** Superintendent Dave Duquette reported that they had to deal with a water line break on East Street last week. The work at the Hall's Pond dike is finished. Mr. Duquette was on vacation last week and Rod Rumrill is on vacation this week. Mr. Neill commented that we were supposed to have a Public Hearing on the Hydrant Policy tonight but did not have the necessary numbers in time to post the notice of the hearing. We now have them so we can hold the Hearing at the next meeting. Mrs. Ferland reported that a North Charlestown resident told her that they received the annual water quality report but that it appeared to be for the Charlestown system, not the North Charlestown system which serves his residence. Mr. Duquette replied that there must have been a mistake in stuffing the envelopes that go out with the water bills.

Mr. Edkins asked about the rates that would be leveled against customers with metered hydrants as opposed to unmetered hydrants. Mr. Duquette replied that metered hydrant owners would only be charged for the labor to flush the hydrant and not for the actual water used as that would be reflected in their water meter reading. Unmetered hydrants would be charged for both labor (\$25.00) plus the water usage (\$40.00) for a total of \$65.00. In the event that an owner chose to hire a contractor to do the flushing, they would be charged the \$40.00 for water used in unmetered hydrants or nothing at all for a metered hydrant.

**Highway & Transfer Station Departments:** Superintendent Keith Weed stated that he had nothing to report on the Transfer Station.

On the Highway Department he reported that they have backed up all of the new paving work done this year as well as finishing the driveway approaches. They have cold patched all of the recessed manhole covers on Old Claremont Road. He reported that they finally got a boom mower so they are cutting roadside brush. They had loamed and seeded the sidewalk work they had done on Main Street but a heavy rain that evening washed away some of the work so they will have to go back and correct that. They have also been working on some wash-outs that occurred with the heavy rains. They have been grading some of the dirt roads that were damaged by the rain. The Department has one truck left to inspect. Requests for sand bids are out. He thinks we need to re-advertise for help. The previous ads yielded only two applications. Many

other surrounding towns are also looking for help. It was agreed that we would re-advertise in the Valley News and Rutland Herald. There was apparently some damage to a sewer line near the intersection of Paris Avenue and East Street. This could have been the result of a culvert replacement in that area but it is not certain. The Highway Department did repair the damage but there was also damage inside the house that the line serves. It was agreed that the Town would reimburse the owner for the damage and tally this cost along with the cost of the repair work and submit it to our insurance carrier.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Nancy Houghton asked why so many ambulance calls are being answered by out-of-Town services. Mr. Neill said that there really isn't a good answer to this. He noted that a representative of the Ambulance Service is supposed to attend at least one Selectboard meeting per month but that is not happening.

Mrs. Houghton also questioned the most recent appointment to the Finance Committee noting that as a Town employee that person would be voting on budget items affecting her own department. Mr. Neill replied that there is no statutory provision preventing a Town employee from serving on the Finance Committee. This person actually ran for the position last spring and lost by just 3 votes so it seemed to be a logical choice. Mr. Neill also pointed out that as a Town employee she could possibly bring some insight to the Committee as to how things actually work.

Mrs. Houghton also asked about the status of the vote counting machine. Mrs. Ferland replied that the vendor was going to let the Town use it for the Primary election to try it out. It was noted that there would be a large number of elections in 2016.

Charles Baraly noted that the Town received a bill from Southwest Fire Mutual Aid for re-programming North Walpole's radios. It was noted that during the Transition to in-house dispatching the Town offered to assist in reprogramming other Towns' radios through R&R Communications, not Southwest Mutual Aid. Mr. Neill recommended that the bill be returned as that is not what we agreed to.

**SELECTBOARD COMMENT:**

Mr. Grenier raised the issue of parking on what used to be the grass area in front of 52/54 Main Street. The State has a prescriptive right-of-way extending 33 feet either side of the centerline of Main Street/Route 12. However the State does not own that property. The Town owns an 8 rod (132 feet or 66 feet either side of centerline) right-of-way that was established by the original lotting plan of the Town. So the Town actually owns the land under the State right-of-way along with an additional 33 feet beyond the State's right of way. The State will send a letter to the adjacent landowner stating that the State does not want parking in its right-of-way but the State also wants a letter from the Town stating that the Town does not want parking on its land. In response to a question from Mrs. Ferland it was noted that there are 4 apartments in the adjacent building. It was noted that there is plenty of room for a parking lot behind the building. Mr. Grenier noted that the biggest problem with the current situation is that it requires vehicles to back out into the State right-of-way. Mr. Grenier also noted that the property does have two state driveway permits, one on each side of the building. Mr. Edkins pointed out that the Town

Beautification Coalition wants to install a lamp post in the “green area” in front of the house. It was agreed that the Selectboard will arrange a meeting with the owner of the building before sending a letter to the state.

Mrs. Ferland commented that she attended a meeting of the Sullivan County Finance Committee regarding designation additional funds from the County’s fund balance to reduce the County portion of the tax rate. They decided to add another \$650,000 to go along with the \$250,000 that that has already been dedicated to the tax rate reduction. Mrs. Ferland doubts that the full \$650,000 will be the final number; she feels that it will be considerably less. Mr. Edkins noted that he had forwarded an email to the Board this afternoon containing a Notice of a Public Hearing that has been scheduled on this issue.

Mrs. Ferland also reported that she has been working on a solution to the potential closing of the Sullivan Nutrition congregate meals and Meals on Wheels program. She tried to contact the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) about the issue but has not had much success in reaching the appropriate agency within DHHS. Mr. Edkins asked if she had tried to contact Brenda Burns at the Sullivan Nutrition program to find out where their funding comes from. Mrs. Ferland responded that she plans to contact Ms. Burns and follow up further on this matter. She is trying to get information to determine whether the Town could run such a program although she acknowledged that the Town does not want to add to its payroll to do this. Perhaps one of the churches might want to take it on. In response to a question from Mr. Edkins, Mrs. Ferland stated that the Charlestown Senior Center is not interested in taking it on.

Mr. Neill reported that he, Dave Edkins and Keith Weed attended the NHMA Seminar on NH road law last Friday. It was very interesting and very well attended. We came back with two copies of the new manual. The seminar covered many areas which the Town has dealt with and for the most part we have handled these issues correctly. All in all it was a very worthwhile meeting. Mr. Tom Cobb asked if there has been any further discussion on the issue of ATV use of Class VI roads. Mr. Neill replied that we had only attended the Seminar last Friday and have not yet had the opportunity since then to address the issue. Discussion ensued concerning this issue, during which it was pointed out that the Town has no authority to prevent registered vehicles from using Class VI roads. They are public rights-of-way that the public has a right to use. Nor does the Town have the right regulate the use of vehicles on private property; it is up to the land owner to control the use of vehicles on their property.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Mr. Neill asked if the letter had gone out to the owner of a tax deeded property on Ox Brook Road. Mr. Edkins replied that it had not yet gone out but he expects to get it out soon. Mr. Neill reported that he had heard that one of the former owners had died and he does not know the whereabouts of the other.

Mr. Edkins reminded the Board that the Governor’s Advisory Council on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) will be holding a Public Hearing on the Draft Ten Year Transportation Plan on Friday September 18 at 3:00 PM in the Town Hall. The Route 12 project south of the Route 12-A overpass is safely on the Plan and the state is now in the process of acquiring the

necessary right-of-way. In addition, the section of Route 12 between the overpass and Almar Street has been added to the Plan although it is quite far out on the Plan.

**FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION:**

**Payroll:** The Selectboard signed the Payroll Check Register and District Deposit Register dated September 15, 2015.

**Purchase Orders:** The Selectboard approved and signed the following purchase orders: 1) Highway Department – Cold River Materials – \$654.06 2) Highway Department – Ferguson Water Works – \$702.00 3) Highway Department – United Construction \$9,305.48 4) Highway Department – Cold River Materials - \$1,359.45 5) Highway Department – St. Pierre, Inc. – \$673.40 6) Highway Department – Charlestown Cornerstone - \$2,205.00 (Mr. Neill did not sign this PO) 7) Transfer Station – Clean Burn – \$624.90 8) Water Department – Allen Engineering - \$507.00 9) Water Department – Charlestown Cornerstone - \$630.00 (Mr. Neill did not sign this PO) 10) Fire Department – R&K Towing – \$516.22 11) Water/Wastewater Department – Astex Tire & Auto - \$540.00.

The Board acknowledged and initialed the monthly bill from the Town Attorney.

**Accounts Payable:** The Selectboard approved and signed the Accounts Payable Check Register and Payment Manifest dated September 9, 2015.

**Intent to Cut:** The Board signed an Intent to Cut on Bible Hill Road for Harvey & Christina Hill.

**APPOINTMENTS, PERMITS, LICENSES & RESOLUTIONS:**

The Board signed a letter to the NH Department of Safety designating Kelly Stoddart as the Municipal Agent for the Town.

The Board signed a Permit for Charles Baraly to serve alcoholic beverages at the Fire Station.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

The Board acknowledged a letter from the owner of property at 38 West Street which had previously been listed as a multi-family dwelling. Mr. Duquette reported that this property is now a single family dwelling.

The Board acknowledged a letter from James R. St. Jean Auctioneers announcing the upcoming State Surplus Auction on Saturday October 17 and offering the Town an opportunity to enter any of its surplus equipment or vehicles into the auction. Mr. Neill noted that the Town does have several items to enter into the auction.

Mrs. Ferland noted that the Town has only received one response to the call for volunteers to serve on the Fall Mountain Food Shelf Advisory Board being formed by the Langdon and Alstead Selectboards. Mr. Edkins reported that he had passed that along to the Langdon and Alstead Boards.

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The Board acknowledged a letter from Sullivan County informing them that a Community & Economic Development Field Specialist has been hired.

The Board acknowledged a letter from Carmella Tsetsi requesting that the Town consider discontinuing the use of the annual Inventory of Taxable Property form. After a brief discussion on the value of the form versus the time, effort and expense it takes to use it, the Board decided to continue using the form.

The Board signed the Charlestown Investment Policy as requested by the Trustees of Trust Funds.

The Board signed a letter to the Heritage/Historic District Commission regarding the placement of benches on Main Street and the general responsibilities and authority of the Commission.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S REPORT:**

Mr. Edkins said that all of the items on his list have been covered previously in this meeting.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**CIP Committee:** Mrs. Ferland reported that the CIP Committee met last week however none of the members had been sworn in so they could not conduct any official business including the election of officers. The Committee did discuss the fire station and what should be done with that building. They will invite the Fire Department's Building Committee to meet with them to determine what the CIP Committee can do help their efforts. The CIP Committee will also reach out to department heads to submit their priorities for capital improvements and equipment needs over the next five years. Mr. Neill commented that he believes that the statutes provide for a six year plan rather than five. The Committee will meet every other Thursday for a while. The next meeting is scheduled for September 24 at 6:00 PM.

**Conservation Commission:** Mrs. Ferland reported that the Commission has not yet met this month.

**Recreation Committee:** Mr. Grenier reported that the Rec Committee met last night and finalized their budget for the remainder of this year and scheduled another meeting in mid-October to begin preparing their proposed 2016 budget. Their next regular will be held on the first Tuesday in October.

**Heritage/Historic District Commission:** Mr. Grenier stated that the Commission's next meeting is scheduled for September 22.

**CEDA:** Mr. Neill reported that the next CEDA meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 PM at Whelen.

**Planning Board:** Mr. Neill reported that the Planning Board met last night. They reviewed an application for a low power FM radio station with a 70 foot transmission tower on Northwest Street. He noted that the application was deemed to be incomplete and that a site visit has been scheduled for 6:15 PM on October 6 before the next regular meeting. There were a number of

unanswered questions that the Board needs further information on. One of the major questions is the safety of the tower and its potential “fall zone”. There is also a question as to whether the guy wire anchors encroach on the public right-of-way. There was also concern over whether an electrical permit was ever issued. The Board accepted as complete and gave final approval to a 46’ X 48’ addition to the Walpole Cabinet facility.

Mr. Neill stated that he would like to schedule some workshop meetings to do personnel evaluations of department heads. It was agreed that the first workshop be scheduled for Tuesday the 29<sup>th</sup>. The Board scheduled meetings with Dave Duquette at 4:00 PM; Keith Weed at 5:00 PM and Patrick Connors at 6:00 PM.

Chief Baraly commented that he had recently been contacted by the Fall Mountain Transportation Department who would like to know if they can put a repeater on the Town’s communication tower. Pat Connors will check with R&R Communications to see if this can be done without interfering with the Town’s emergency communications. It was also agreed that any such work must be done by R&R Communications to avoid any conflicts with other radio services vendors.

Dave Duquette reported that he had been contacted by Peg Chabot about a leak in the water line at the Twin Maples Mobile Home Park. They would like to replace the line adjacent to the boundary line with the Pine Crest Cemetery driveway. The problem is that this boundary line is not straight and in some cases the mobile homes encroach on this boundary. He has discussed this with Vickie Sargent and she has no problem with this. Mr. Neill suggested that the Board review the boundary line issue. The easiest way would be to run the new waterline along the fence but this would involve encroachment on to Town property. The Board agreed that they would schedule a meeting on site to include the interested parties to review this matter.

**Mr. Grenier moved to enter into a Nonpublic Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II to discuss (c) Reputations. Mrs. Ferland seconded the motion and, on a roll call vote with all in favor, the motion was approved at 8:35 PM.**

**The Board returned to regular session at 9:10 PM.**

**Recreation Department Budget:** Mr. Grenier reviewed the adjustments that the Rec Committee had made to its 2015 budget in order to absorb the over expenditure of certain lines especially in the pool budget. He noted that the pool over expenditure totaled \$3,682.81 and pointed out other lines which will remain unspent in order to make up the difference so that the bottom line is not over spent. Mr. Neill asked what will be done regarding a pool director next year as the current Director’s performance was unacceptable this year. Mr. Grenier noted that a meeting will be scheduled in the near future to address this issue.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Mrs. Ferland moved to adjourn this meeting. Seconded by Mr. Grenier. With all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 PM.**

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Respectfully submitted,  
David Edkins Administrator

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 October 7, 2015, Selectboard meeting.)