

**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
OCTOBER 17, 2018**

Selectboard Present: Thomas Cobb (Chair); Steven Neill; Albert St. Pierre

Staff Present: Travis Royce – Administrator  
Keith Weed – Highway Department / Transfer Station Superintendent  
Patrick Connors – Police Chief / Ambulance Department  
Charles Baraly – Fire Chief / Emergency Management Director  
Art Grenier – Recreation Department Director

**CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mr. Cobb called this meeting to order at 6:00 PM and welcomed everyone. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. He advised this meeting is being recorded and asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves for the record. Comments should be addressed to the Chair.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

**Mr. St. Pierre moved to accept the Minutes of the following meetings:**

- **October 3, 2018 – Non-Public Selectboard Workshop;**
- **October 3, 2018 – Regular Selectboard meeting;**
- **October 3, 2018 – Non-Public Selectboard Session**
- **October 11, 2018 – Non-Public Selectboard Workshop.**

**Seconded by Mr. Neill. Mr. Neill noted the following corrections: October 3<sup>rd</sup> regular meeting page 3, first paragraph: for clarification change “Mr. Hassett works about 30 hours a week over 52 weeks” to “If Mr. Hassett worked 52 weeks it would average 30 hours a week”. On page 3, Highway Department, second line, delete “on the Johnson water line” and change to “on the municipal water line”.**

**With three members in favor, the Minutes were approved.**

**SCHOOL RESEARCH COMMITTEE PRESENTATION:** Mr. St. Pierre joined his committee. At the last Town Meeting a Warrant Article was passed to form this committee. Tonight they are suggesting to the Selectboard that this study be carried on. They have a series of Public Hearings scheduled but tonight it is to provide their findings to the Selectboard. He asked the members of the School Research Committee to introduce themselves:

- Trina Dearborn
- Bill Fowle
- Sarah Davis, Secretary
- Rob Tiebout – Has worked with the committee – he is a teacher in the Keene School system and since school started has been unable to attend meetings. They keep him posted.
- Scott Wade – Had worked with the committee but recently stepped off

Copies of the Charlestown, NH, School Research Committee Select Board Presentation, October 17, 2018; copies of the Articles of Agreement Between the Town of Acworth, Alstead, Charlestown, Langdon and Walpole; plus the Updated Adequacy Aid 11-15-17 - 2015-2016

Preliminary Determination of Assessment from taxation for the pre-existing districts Acworth, Alstead, Charlestown, Langdon and Walpole were available to the public.

Mr. St. Pierre provided the “History”

- FMRSD formed in 1966;
- Original charging formula: Average Daily Membership;
- Changed to the current formula in 2003 in hopes of Charlestown paying for what we receive.
- In 2015 there was a study to change the formula; it would have benefitted Charlestown but it got voted down

Mrs. Dearborn presented “Where We Are Now”

- House values continue to drop because our taxes continue to increase;
- Complex, multilayered charging formula;
- 2 out of 7 Board members in the FMRSD COOP; One member is from Charlestown and one member is “at large” but happens to be from Charlestown at this time
- Charlestown pays 44% of FMRSD costs.

Mr. Fowle presented “Where We Want To Be”

#### Simplified Charging System

- 5 Member Charlestown Schoolboard;
- Masters of the education of our students;
- Charlestown voters controlling the cost of education to our town;
- Pre K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade remains in Charlestown – High School students to be tuitioned in to Fall Mountain.

Mr. St. Pierre presented “Cost Comparisons”

- 2018 total cost to Charlestown residents for education: \$12,394,827 as per FMRSD Annual Report 2018 p.28;
- Projected total cost for tuitioning-in plus transportation: \$14,500 as per current contracts with Lempster, Goshen & Unity plus transportation;
- Potential saving: \$5,500 per student at High School level.

(Minutes of meeting on 9/12/18/ Scott Bushway response to question on number of high school students in 2018 – 208 registered in Charlestown in Oct. 1, 2017)

Mr. Fowle presented “State Requirements for Change in the FMRSD”

- The State of New Hampshire Education statutes, Chapter 195:25 and 26 detail the procedure for withdrawal from a school district.

The withdrawing district is required to request the COOP by a majority warrant article vote at a regular or special town meeting to request a study of the feasibility and suitability of the withdrawal of the town from the COOP: To include a withdrawal plan prepared in accordance with RSA 195:26.

- The statutes state: “the withdrawing district shall not be liable for any indebtedness or loss of state aid or other aid contracted after the district has duly notified the remaining districts in the cooperative that a withdrawal study is being requested.”

Mr. Fowle presented “What is the Timeline”

- The warrant article will be included in the Town Meeting in 2019;
- If voted through with a majority vote, notification will be sent to FMRSD COOP by the Select Board immediately following the vote.
- Mr. Fowle explained the process they are looking at to withdraw. If it is voted down the Town has the right to appeal to the State Board of Education; the Town can be defeated anywhere along the process. They want the option to tuition out their students and be reimbursed at the exact rate we pay FMRSD.

Mrs. Dearborn presented “Our Recommendations”

- To recommend to the Select Board that they call for a town wide vote to initiate proceedings under RSA 195.

Mr. St. Pierre advised this concludes their presentation. Their continuing schedule is:

- They made their presentation to the Selectboard at this meeting;
- Regular committee meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays; they started meeting in March and will continue to meet on these dates;
- The November 7<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting is when they would like a response from them;
- They would like to schedule a Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM and on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. Both will be in this Community Room but if not available the Public Hearings will be in the Old Town Hall.

They will then pick this up in January before the Deliberative Session and be ready for a vote at Town Meeting in March 2019.

- There will be Public Hearings on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Sullivan County Board of Commissioners and County Manager Ferland:** County Commissioners Jeff Barrette (Chair), Bennie Nelson, George Hebert, and County Manager Derek Ferland were present. Mr. Barrette said they brought a power-point handout for distribution. They try to visit every few years but it has been quite some time since they visited Charlestown. Some events have been held at their office in Unity. No services have been cut. They are trying to be more visible. Over the last few years they came up with the Strategic Plan. The high cost of electricity is an issue; they have talked to Whelen and Rugers. Trying to attract younger adults to this area is important. Mr. Barrette highlighted some of the issues noted below.

Sullivan County Board of Commissioners:

2018 Road Show – Town of Charlestown on October 17, 2018;

Overview –

- County taxes and apportionment;
- Strategic Plan;
- Regional Economic Profile Project;
- Upcoming Initiatives.

County Taxes –

- FY2019 total budget \$34,757,946 - \$13,273,392 to be raised by taxes;
- Charlestown’s Apportionment \$782,848 – 5.9% of County’s total;

- County tax rate: \$2.84 per \$1,000 of assessed value (down from \$2.97 in FY18).

Amount Raised by Property Taxes FY2018-FY2019;

- Over the past 10 years, property taxes have increased a total of \$2.45%. During this period, inflation has increased 12.1%.

Strategic Plan –

- Sullivan County is developing a strategic plan with three main goals:
  1. Invest in our people  
Training, recognition, wellness, retention.
  - 2.. Be good stewards of our resources  
No FB subsidy, asset management plans, access to lands OPN, CPI
  3. Exercise responsible regional leadership  
Support municipalities when asked, regional economic profits.

These goals guide County’s priorities, actions and investment decisions

Regional Economic Profile –

- Workforce Development Task Force  
Working internships with local schools and businesses;
- Economic Infrastructure Task Force  
Key informant interviews with local businesses;
- Quality of Life / Regional Identity Task Force  
“Love Sullivan” campaign  
Branding consultant  
Highway signage “Welcome to Sullivan County”  
Intro “Welcome to Sullivan County” video created for 2018 NHAC Conference.

Love Sullivan Campaign –

- Capture the best places.

Upcoming Initiatives –

- Electrostatic precipitator install at biomass plant;
- Nursing home renovation design
- Transitional housing study;
- VOCA / VINE Grant for NH-wide project;
- Broadband internet at Unity campus  
Online training programs for staff  
Tablet-based education & training programs for inmates.

They were able to purchase a parcel of land that connects two of their properties. There is now a four mile trail between the nursing home and Marshall Pond.

The Commissioners played a five minute video on “Welcome to Sullivan County”. We have some special things to appreciate in this region. The video includes several pictures of Charlestown; Old Fort #4 is one of them. The Selectboard thanked the Commissioners for their visit and presentation. Mr. Steve Smith noted that this is a great area for historic sites; there is a lot going on in Sullivan County.

**FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION:**

**Payroll:** Three Selectboard members approved and signed the Payroll Check Register and Direct Deposit Register for the period ending October 06, 2018.

**Purchase Orders:** There was a list of 12 purchase orders. This list was available for the public to look at. The Selectboard approved and signed 11 of them. Mr. Royce mentioned there were an addition three purchase orders that were not on the list: 1) Highway Department #85030 to Paton Surveys in the amount of \$942.50; 2) Ambulance Department #85032 to the Valley Regional Hospital in the amount of \$619.87 and 3) Highway Department #85031 to Milton Cat in the amount of \$841.30. The Selectboard questioned #85024 for a new radio for the Police Department. Chief Connors explained the history of the old radio and the need for a new one. It is not good to have a cruiser without a radio. Mr. St. Pierre suggested this be tabled until the end of the meeting; Mr. Cobb and Mr. Neill agreed.

**WARRANTS, ABATEMENTS, ETC:**

**Warrant for the November 6<sup>th</sup> Voting:** The Warrant needs to be signed and posted. Voting will be held at the Charlestown Senior Center from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Mr. St. Pierre read the list of positions being voted on. There are also constitutional amendments.

**Notices of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber:** Three Selectboard members approved and signed the Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for: 1) Chris and Amy Hemingway off Hackett Swamp Road. Two Selectboard members approved and signed the following two Notices of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber; Mr. St. Pierre abstained from signing: 2) Victor and Nancy St. Pierre off Great Country Road; and 3) Victor and Nancy St. Pierre off the Acworth Road. In the future the Selectboard will have Mr. Weed review these Notices of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber prior to approving them. Mr. Royce advised these are State forms.

**Alcoholic Beverage Request:** Three Selectboard members approved and signed two Alcoholic Beverage Requests: 1) Diane Town for an event at the Old Town Hall on November 17, 2018; and 2) Melissa Jellie for an event at the Old Town Hall on December 01, 2018.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD & COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Written reports were submitted by Mr. Dave Duquette and available to the public. Mr. Keith Weed, the Recreation Committee, Fire Chief Baraly and Police Chief Connors will provide reports at this meeting.

**Recreation Committee:** Mr. Art Grenier reported the Fall Festival was a success. The Recreation Committee would like to extend a big Thank You to those who sponsored the event, the Selectboard, all Town departments and other organizations/businesses/volunteers who helped. Soccer is coming to an end. Basketball is ready to go. The pool cover will be put on Tuesday. Mr. Cobb stated that even though it was raining there were a lot of people in Town and they did an excellent job. There were no complaints. All departments were out. The ambulance made masks. Everybody was having a good time. Mr. St. Pierre mentioned the Rotary breakfast on Sunday morning served over 60 people. They also ended up in the “black”. They were pleased to be a part of the event. Mr. St. Pierre thanked Mr. Grenier; it was good leadership.

**Transfer Station:** Mr. Weed had nothing new to report on the Transfer Station.

**Highway Department:** Mr. Keith Weed has a contract for salt from Cargill. It is \$26/ton more than the State pricing. He would like to sign it for back-up salt. If the contract is not signed the Town will not be able to buy salt from them. They already signed a contract with Granite State.

**Mr. Neill moved to allow Mr. Weed to purchase 50/ton of the more expensive salt. Seconded by Mr. St. Pierre. With two members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Cobb was opposed.**

Mr. Weed submitted a contract and asked the Selectboard to look at it. They got the roadside mower last week; the first round will be done tomorrow. Tomorrow they will be done with the sidewalk projects. The Johnson property job is done for this year. They will have to go back next spring as the ground is so saturated. Mr. Royce will reach out to the Johnsons. The department is short-handed and the rain is killing them. They cannot grade roads in the rain. The next couple of projects are cemetery related.

**Ambulance Department:** Police Chief Connors suggested it might be time for the Selectboard to contact the Springfield Selectboard about the bills for ambulance service. Mr. Royce was asked to contact the Springfield Selectboard to see if they prefer coming to Charlestown or Charlestown is not opposed to going to Springfield for a meeting.

**Police Department:** Police Chief Connors reported they continue with the drug problems. He talked about cancelling the last visit to the firing range as they did not want to go beyond 7:00 PM to disrupt the neighborhood. Relative to the purchase order for the radio he found some money in Government Buildings but feels the fee should come out of the Capital Outlay for cruisers. Mr. Cobb noted there are two signatures on the P.O. Mr. Neill felt next year there should be a separate line in the budget under Capital Outlay for Equipment. Mr. Cobb said there needs to be a break-down for specific items. Chief Connors would like to attend a Finance Committee meeting this year. Let him know when he will be scheduled.

Chief Connors has been working with the other towns and NH State Police in the schools. They have been going over emergency plans; mass casualty situations. They did the schools in Charlestown and are working with Walpole. They will go to the High School. All Police departments will respond if there is an event in any of the schools. Mr. St. Pierre invited the public to attend the Rotary meeting tomorrow night to listen to Chief Connors. Dinner is at 6:30 PM and the Chief will do his presentation a little after 7:00 PM. They usually adjourn about 8:00 PM.

**Fire Department:** Fire Chief Baraly reported that their call volume has been down this year. E-1 pump truck passed the inspection. The Fire Department Truck Committee is working on specs and talking to vendors. The Building Needs group is working on figures for this building. Both the Fire Department and Ambulance Department have been working on training together; it is cross-training on equipment, etc to be able to help each other out when needed.

**State Representative:** Mr. Cobb asked if their State Representative, Mr. Steven Smith, had any topics he wanted to present. Mr. Smith handed in his “Final Report of the Committee to Study Education Funding and the Cost of an Opportunity for an Adequate Education”. He explained the proposed changes to ease the property tax burden in Charlestown. Charlestown is eligible for \$2,500 rather than \$1,800 per child adequacy payments because of the tax burden. It is a stable formula based on real numbers. This replaces the stabilization grants. He is asking the Board to go over the numbers to make sure they are accurate. Above the \$2,500 there is another number; an increase from the base adequacy of \$3,636 to \$3,897.

**School Board:** Mr. Cobb asked if the School Board representative would like to discuss any issues. Mr. Harrington said they are getting ready to work on the budget. On Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> they will spend a full day going over everything. Due to a member, Andrew Collins, stepping down they voted in Rebecca Sethi from Walpole.

Mr. Neill mentioned that over a year ago when the Selectboard was at a School Board meeting they asked why they did not get copies of the School Board Minutes. They never have seen them. Getting real phone calls is almost impossible. Mr. Herrington has talked with the Superintendent to make sure there is better communication. He is willing to work with the Selectboard. Mr. Cobb said they went to their meeting, sat at their table but then were slandered for the things that went on in that room. Everything was their fault. That is where their frustrations lie.

Mr. St. Pierre advised the School Superintendent’s office responded well with their School Research Committee. Mr. Jim Fenn, Business Manager, was good to work with; they got responses. Mr. St. Pierre pointed out that Mr. John Streeter and Mr. Gabe St. Pierre, former School Board members, are present at this meeting. The district is too big and bias to work together. They tried to have better communication but there are road-blocks district-wide. Mr. Harrington does not believe it is not workable; he is willing to try.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**School Research Committee:** Mr. St. Pierre mentioned that Sarah Davis has been putting the School Research Committee minutes on the website. She will be documenting the questions/ answers/ comments made at this meeting. When the School Research Committee holds the next Public Hearing they will answer /discuss questions brought up at this meeting. Mr. St. Pierre noted they are collecting information at this time.

The meeting was opened for Public Comment for the School Research Committee. The members will be documenting the discussion.

Mr. Cobb thanked everyone for coming. It was a great discussion. He appreciates the energy.

**SELECTBOARD COMMENT:** There was no Selectboard Comment.

**ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE:**

**Town Office:** Mr. Royce reported that Dead River came to the Town office to look at the tanks for the generator. They talked about the appropriate location for the tanks. There was a consensus to put the tank in as discussed but to have it done as soon as possible.

**Southwestern Community Services:** Mr. Neill felt there might be a purchase order because the Town already made a payment this year Transportation Program. Their fiscal year is opposite to the Towns. They make three trips a day five days a week.

**Police Department:** A quote was received from Charland Technology, Inc. Chief Connors explained this is for the hardware and server.

**Mr. Cobb moved to move forward with the contract for Charland Technology, Inc. for the Police Department. Seconded by Mr. St. Pierre. With three members in favor, the motion was approved.**

**Charlestown Municipal Landfill:** An email was received from Wilcox & Barton, Inc. relative to their offering to provide a competitive option for the Landfill. Mr. Neill felt the Town is satisfied with the current company doing the monitoring. They take care of everything. Mr. Cobb and Mr. St. Pierre agreed.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Depot Street:** Mr. St. Pierre of St. Pierre, Inc. asked if they had sent in all their bills. Mr. Royce said there was a question about the format. Mr. Neill had no problem with the bill however it shows a balance of \$40,588.00+ to finish rather than this amount is the saving. The auditors will think the Town still owes this amount. A revised statement was received today.

**Mr. Cobb moved to accept the continuation sheet dated October 16, 2018 for the total project cost of \$114,934.60 of the Depot Street drainage project. Seconded by Mr. Neill. With Mr. Cobb and Mr. Neill in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. St. Pierre abstained from the vote.**

Mr. Neill had a question because Mr. Hildebrand of DuBois & King had concerns about that basin not having enough depth. It could be reinforced/have bracing. Overtime it will depend on how much the heavy trucks run over it. Mr. Royce was supposed to have plans from the engineer yesterday but they did not come in; the engineer was going on vacation today.

**Schedule Budget Meetings:** There was a consensus to have their first Budget Workshop on Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 PM in the Selectboard building. They will not attend the first Finance Committee meeting on October 29<sup>th</sup> as it is an organizational meeting. The Selectboard will have a budget workshop on Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. They will plan on meeting every Monday evening through mid-January 2019.

**November Selectboard Meetings:** The Selectboard will meet on Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. There will not be a meeting on Wednesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> as it is the night before Thanksgiving Day.



**FMRSD Meeting:** There will be a School Board meeting on Monday, November 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at the FMR High School.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**NH Municipal Conference:** Mr. Royce will be attending the NH Municipal Conference on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Tree Committee Planting Plan for Town Offices:** This will be continued until the next meeting. Mr. Ilves was at the meeting but left.

**Charlestown Town Forest Regulations:** Mr. Neill advised the Conservation Commission met last Monday night. They will attend the next meeting to talk about these regulations.

**Forest Hill Cemetery Road Repair Quotes:** The Cemetery Trustees received two quotes and recommended acceptance of the Normand R. Beaudry quote.

**Mr. St. Pierre moved to accept the recommendation of the Cemetery Trustees to hire Normand R. Beaudry to do the Forest Hill Cemetery Road Repair. Seconded by Mr. Neill. With three members in favor, the motion was approved.**

**EX-OFFICIO COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Conservation Commission:** Mr. Neill reported the CC met last Monday night. The Town has some trails that start behind the Police Station and they cross the Bacon property therefore the Town abates their property taxes. The property is now for sale; the Town has the Right-of-First-Refusal. The CC is not that interested in buying it. They do not want to make an offer but after an offer is made they might reconsider. The State Dam Bureau came over to look at the dam because it is partially breached. The question is what would the liability be if the Town bought the property. The Dam Bureau sent a report; this dam does not follow their regulations. It is likely there will be no liability. At this time this is an FYI. On November 3<sup>rd</sup> three members are going to the NH Conservation meeting and on November 27<sup>th</sup> they will check the LCHIP properties to be sure there are no violations. Adopt A Highway on October 9<sup>th</sup> generated 65 bags of trash and had 26 volunteers that included the ROTC. This was done in a couple of hours on the south end of Town. .

**CEDA:** The Selectboard was asked to remove CEDA from this roster.

**Planning Board:** Mr. Cobb advised the PB met last night. It was a long meeting. The PB members approved a Sign Permit for the Sugar River Mennonite Fellowship on Route 12. They were asked to put a light limit on the sign. This passed by a 4-to-3 vote. They will have to turn their light off at 11:00 PM even though tow trucks dropping off vehicles during the early morning hours will have difficulty finding this location in the dark. The Developmental Services of Sullivan County / Campbell House LLC came in as a minor Site Plan. Their application was accepted as complete. A majority of the PB members wanted them to come back for a second meeting. The 45-foot turning radius for emergency services was a concern. The applicant will contact the Fire Chief for his opinion. They did receive the Special Exception from the Zoning Board earlier that evening. The former operators, Pathways, continued to maintain the property

and kept services current even though the building was not being used. Valley Regional is buying the former medical building from Griffin. The use is not changing. The PB members approved this with no application. A Preliminary Consultation for St. Pierre, Inc. was presented. PB members had no comments.

**Heritage Commission:** Mr. Cobb has not received a meeting notice.

**Recreation Committee:** Mr. Grenier provided a report earlier in this meeting.

**School Research Committee:** The School Research Committee made a presentation earlier in this meeting.

**Building Needs:** Mr. St. Pierre advised they had a meeting last Monday night. A study is being done to check the lighting in all the Town buildings. Mrs. Deb Daignault noted they do not need any money; it is an energy efficient study. Liberty Utilities will be involved. Mr. St. Pierre asked Mr. Cobb and Mr. Neill to support what Mrs. Daignault is doing. She will do a study on electric, propane and oil. Mr. Cobb said there is some money in the budget for this. They will be meeting again on November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Fire Station at 7:00 PM. Mr. St. Pierre stated they want to look to see if they could develop a plan to fix some buildings and look at the possibility of a Bond vote in March 2019.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Ambulance Department:** Mrs. Daignault left off paperwork with Miss Dennis to open an account with Tactical Gear.com. Everything they purchase would be less. Mr. Cobb advised they will have to check with Chief Connors for his approval.

**NON-PUBLIC SELECTBOARD SESSION:**

**Mr. St. Pierre moved to enter into a Non-Public Selectboard Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II to discuss (c) Reputations. Mr. Neill seconded and, on a roll call vote with three members in favor, the motion was approved at 10:12 PM.**

The regular Selectboard meeting resumed at 11:10

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Mr. St. Pierre moved to adjourn this Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Mr. Neill. With three members in favor the meeting was adjourned at 11:10**

Respectfully submitted,  
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Thomas O. Cobb, Chair

Steven A. Neill

Albert St. Pierre

**(Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the November 7, 2018, Selectboard meeting.)