

**Town of Charlton
Saratoga County
Town Board Meeting**

April 12, 2010

The Regular meeting of the Town Board of Charlton, Saratoga County, New York was held at the Charlton Town Hall and called to order by Supervisor Grattidge at 7:30pm.

Present: Councilman Gardner, Councilman Lippiello, Councilman Salisbury, Councilman Verola, Supervisor Grattidge, Town Clerk Brenda Mills, Attorney VanVranken.

Supervisor Grattidge lead the pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Verola to accept the minutes of the Town Board Meeting held on March 8, 2010.

VOTE: All Ayes, No Nays. *CARRIED*

A motion was made by Councilman Salisbury and seconded by Councilman Lippiello to accept the minutes of the Town Board Agenda Meeting held on March 29, 2010.

VOTE: All Ayes, No Nays. *CARRIED*

APPROVAL OF ABSTRACT

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Gardner to accept General Fund claim numbers 1241-1272 as set forth in Abstract #107 in the amount of \$54,492.12.

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays *CARRIED*

TOWN CLERKS REPORT

The Town Clerk reported taking in \$277.75 for the month of March. \$176.01 was paid to the Supervisor and \$101.74 was paid to other Governmental Agencies.

A motion was made by Councilman Gardner and seconded by Councilman Lippiello to accept the Town Clerk's report.

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays *CARRIED*

The Town Clerk informed the Board that there is a problem with both the incoming and outgoing mailboxes. The mail is getting wet when there is inclement weather.

SUPERVISORS REPORT

For the month of March I attended 13 Town meetings and 12 County meetings.
Some of the highlights of the month:

- Continued the planning for Party in the Park Family Day and Explore Charlton
- Attended a meeting of Sundae on the Farm that will be held in Charlton
- Attended a demonstration of new accounting software for the Supervisors Office
- Attended a seminar on E-Banking from Ballston National Bank
- Went to Albany to lobby our State Legislators on behalf of the Town and the County
- Attended the “No Food No Farm” rally in Albany sponsored by AFT
- Attended a meeting of the NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force on NYS Agriculture
- Attended a meeting of CEG in Malta at the Global Foundries site
- Attended the Saratoga County Farm Bureau Rural Urban Dinner

	<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>
<u>General</u>	13,084.64	87,490.72
<u>Highway</u>	74,281.91	52,217.74
<u>Water Dist. 1</u>	140.39	5,337.11
<u>Water Dist. 2</u>	0.00	143.78
<u>Town Hall Project</u>		
H-Fund	17.10	4,797.05

The Supervisor said that he has authorized an Internal Transfer from A-1220.411 Supervisor–Other to A-1220.404 Supervisor –Conferences/Mileage in the amount of \$200.

Supervisor Grattidge said that a request was made by an organization to borrow the Town’s outdoor stage. After discussion by the Board, the decision was made that the stage should not be lent because of the difficulty moving it and the fact that it is not waterproof.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Brush Pickup will be April 26-30th

The Town will be having the Bulk Item Pickup May 3-7th.

There will be a meeting with HVAC Contractor on Wednesday April 14th at 12:00 noon.

The Supervisor has set up Accounting Software demonstrations for the Town Board, as well as the Technology Advisory Board, the Finance Committee and interested personnel. The demonstration with BAS accounting software will be on Wednesday April 21st at 7:00pm and the demonstration with Williamson software will be on Thursday April 22 at 2:00pm

DEPARTMENT & COMMITTEE REPORTS

HIGHWAY- General Operations:

- Install 4 ton weight limit signs on town roads
- Patch holes around town on paved and dirt roads
- Clean ditches on various roads around town to keep water off pavement
- Fix washouts on shoulders where water was flowing on road surface
- Clear plugged culverts (beavers)
- Sweep up sand
- Clean up plow damage
- Cut and chip brush in right of ways on Division St and Maple Ave

Equipment Repair:

- Removed plows trucks
- Replace misc. light bulbs
- Service equipment

Miscellaneous Items:

- Attended paving class put on by Cornell local roads

ZONING - The Department issued 7 new permits and 12 C/O's for the month of March.

PLANNING – The Planning Board met March 15, held one Public Hearing, deliberated on 5 subdivision applications and 1 lot line adjustment. The Planning Board would like to set up a meeting with the Town Board to discuss open space.

CONSTABLES – For the month of March, there were 30 patrols, and the Constables handled 22 complaints, 15 911 calls, 1 EID call, 2 accidents and issued 26 tickets.

COMMUNICATIONS – Chairwoman Lovie Bourne said that the Committee will be meeting April 15th, and would like to work on changes for the Town's website. She stated that the website is not user friendly, and gave the example where if a resident tried to search Zoning Ordinance, old memos would come up, but not the information that is being searched for. She stated that 3 responses have already been received from the Newsletter insert. Councilman Lippiello said that much time and effort is being dedicated by the Communications Committee, and he asked the Board if they would support making the website more user friendly. No response was given.

LIBRARY – Jean Botta from the Town of Ballston Community Library gave a report. Report is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY – They have completed their recommendations for the new server and hardware for the Town's network.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL – The date for the annual roadside clean-up and tree distribution has been set for May 1st. The clean-up will be from 8am to noon, and the tree distribution from noon to 1pm.

SENIORS – Marv Schorr stated that the Seniors have received 2 complete computers from the General Electric's Elfun Society. Mr. Schorr also requested permission from the Board to allow Seniors to park in the Town Hall parking lot when they go on bus trips on June 15th, August 17th, and October 15th.

A *motion* was made by Councilman Gardner and seconded by Councilman Lippiello to permit the Seniors to use the Town Hall parking lot for the three bus trip dates specified.

VOTE: All Ayes, No Nays, APPROVED.

Supervisor Grattidge said that the Town of Milton is planning to sponsor the Hazardous Waste Collection in August. In past years, the State has reimbursed the Town 50% of the cost. There is a possibility this year that the reimbursement may be cancelled or be slowed in arriving. There were approximately 80 Town of Charlton residents that participated 2 years ago and the cost to the Town was around \$2,800. The Board supported going ahead with the Collection Day.

PARKS – The Highway Department repaired the bridge in Mill Pond Park. There have been recent complaints of people parking cars on the Tennis Courts in Elmer Smith Park. The Little League has started preparing the baseball fields in Elmer Smith Park. They are donating a new home plate to the Town.

HISTORIAN – Laura Linder said that the 19th annual "Flags on Veterans Graves" event will be on May 8th. They will start at Jeremiah Smith cemetery at 9:15am. On May 19th there will be a sampler of period homes. She is currently making a quilt square with the Town of Charlton emblem that will be made into a large quilt with other New York State municipalities.

MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Verola to accept the proposal as submitted by Dave Kenyon to maintain the landscaping at the Town Hall for \$25 weekly.

Roll call vote: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye *Approved*

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Verola that Resolution No. 70 – A

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF THE TOWN OF CHARLTON INSURANCE COMPANY DEDUCTIBLE SUM ON ACCOUNT OF THE CAROLYN BASCOM CLAIM AGAINST THE TOWN be approved.

Roll call vote: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye *Approved*

A motion was made by Councilman Lippiello and seconded by Councilman Gardner that Resolution No. 71 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE IN THE RATE TO BE CHARGED WATER DISTRICT CUSTOMERS be approved.

Discussion: Councilman Salisbury said that he looked at the actual expenses of the Water Department and if you deduct the extraordinary expenses, the expenses do not exceed the revenue. Councilman Verola said that if you take out the extraordinary expenses, the Town still has enough money left in Fund Balances to cover the expenses. She would like more time to review the information. Councilman Gardner said that there is about 600 thousand dollars in reserves, therefore he can not support an increase. Councilman Salisbury said that he doesn't see how the \$6,500 that would be raised by an increase would make much of a difference anyways. Supervisor Grattidge said that there is a large expense coming up and talk of putting on a new roof. When you have a 50 year old system, extraordinary expenses are becoming ordinary. The Water District is estimated to be worth four million dollars, and the State recommends having a 10% reserve. The painting of the water tower will take most of the reserve fund.

Roll call vote: Councilman Gardner: Nay, Councilman Lippiello: Aye, Councilman Salisbury: Nay, Councilman Verola: Nay, Supervisor Grattidge: Aye *Defeated*

A motion was made by Councilman Gardner and seconded by Councilman Verola that Resolution No. 72 – A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE UNAUTHORIZED ESTABLISHMENT OF A FACEBOOK PAGE AND ACCESS PASSWORD FOR THE TOWN OF CHARLTON IN SARATOGA COUNTY, NEW YORK be approved.

Discussion: Supervisor Grattidge said that at the Agenda Meeting October 26, 2009, Councilman Gardner reported that he had attended a Meet the Candidates event, and an important issue on resident's minds was better communications from the Town Government. When the Board was working on the Organizational Resolution he asked Councilman Lippiello to set up a Communications Committee. The Supervisor said that he realizes that this particular issue has hit a nerve with some of the Board members. He apologized if they felt that they were blindsided by the page being set up, and said it certainly was not the intention to blindside anyone or cause the tension that it seems to be causing. Supervisor Grattidge asked Town Attorney Van Vranken to share his findings with the Board. Attorney Van Vranken said he has already given his opinion to the Board. Supervisor Grattidge said that he talked to the Town's insurance carrier, and they stated that because the Town did not put up the page and does not control the site, there should not be any liability to the Town. The Supervisor said that he asked Mr. Ellms to consider putting a disclaimer on his Facebook page, and he did do that about a week ago. The disclaimer stated that the Facebook page has no connection to the Town Board or with any public employees of the Town of Charlton, and the Town of Charlton did not authorize this fan page. Supervisor Grattidge listed several entities that have Facebook pages, including the Town's insurance carrier, the Town of Malta, District Attorney Jim Murphy. Supervisor Grattidge had offered to have a meeting with the Town Board, but Councilman Salisbury was out of town. He felt that this is something that the Communications Committee can handle and look into, and feels that this has been an overreaction by the Board. Councilman Gardner read an excerpt from the March 29th minutes, which said that the Supervisor stated that Chip Ellms had arranged to have the Facebook page written free of charge for the Town. Supervisor Grattidge said that the Facebook page is in Mr. Ellm's name and he set up the account. Councilman Verola said that she has a copy of a Facebook page that on the bottom states "welcome to the Town of Charlton, Saratoga County, official website, includes local government information" and on the left are Mafia Wars and other vulgar advertisements. She stated that if this is the kind of things that people are seeing on Facebook, then it is totally inappropriate and appalling. Councilman Lippiello said that the Town is looking at other ways of opening up communication, and the intent of the Facebook page is to post information about events in Charlton, it is just another way of getting out the information. Councilman Lippiello said that the intent was that it would be a Town owned site, however, the paperwork was sent to Mr. Ellms and apparently he was anxious to have the site in his control. Councilman Lippiello said that the Town does not have control over the name, Town of Charlton, anyone can chose the name that they want. Councilman Salisbury said that whatever Committee approved this never gave this information to the Town Board. Lovie Bourne said that the Communications Committee had no knowledge ahead of time about the Facebook page and had nothing to do with setting it up. Councilman Lippiello said that the page that Councilman Verola shared is not a page that anyone would want to have associated with the Town. However, that was not the Facebook page, it was a copy of the person's search engine that printed it,

and that took them to Facebook through their system. Supervisor Grattidge said that those inappropriate ads were from the person's search engine and are not on the Facebook page. Councilman Verola said that she received it from John Kelly. Councilman Lippiello asked the Board to hold off on removing the site and pass the issue to the Communications Committee to look at it and make a recommendation.

Roll call vote: Councilman Gardner: Aye, Councilman Lippiello: Nay, Councilman Salisbury: Aye, Councilman Verola: Aye, Supervisor Grattidge: Nay *APPROVED*

COUNCILMAN REPORTS

Councilman Lippiello said that he has received several comments from residents who have been very happy with the new format of the Newsletter. It was very, very well done and a special thanks to Penny Heritage who did such an excellent job of putting it together.

Councilman Verola said that the Judges have obtained a grant for new furniture for their offices and will make their old furniture available to departments that might need it.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Dave Pohl said that the weather is getting warmer and he wanted to remind the Board that kids are hanging out in the parks. He said that a resident in his neighborhood built a fort on his property and allows the kids to hang out in it.

Suzanne Voight said that someone drove a car in Milltown Park and left large ruts that need to be filled in. Mike Emerich stated that the Highway Department fixed some holes this morning. A suggestion was made that maybe a sign be put up that indicates where the end of the Town property is.

Suzanne Voight asked if the Town Board wanted the Charlton Garden Club to put flowers at the Community Center. Supervisor Grattidge said absolutely.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Mills
Town Clerk