

CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD MEETING
Monday, July 14, 2025
Charlotte Town Hall 159 Ferry Road and via teleconference

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS: *In person:* Lee Krohn, Chair; Frank Tenney, Vice Chair; Lewis Mudge; Natalie Kanner, (remote); J.D. Herlihy (absent)

ADMINISTRATION: Nathaniel Bareham Town Administrator

OTHERS:

In person: Scooter MacMillan,

Remote: Carrie Spear, Hugh Lewis, Jr., Paul Plante. Thyleen Tenney, Mike Yantachka, Mary Mead, Wolfger Schneider,

AGENDA ITEMS:

- 7:00 PM Approval of Consent Agenda
 - a. Meeting Minutes for June 23rd, 2025
- 7:05 PM Adjustments to the Agenda
- 7:10 PM Public Comment for items not on the Agenda
- 7:15 PM Selectboard & Town Administrator's Updates
- 7:20 PM Discussion, and possible action, on approving the installation of a fence at 643 Church Hill Road
- 7:30 PM Discussion, and possible action, on approving a Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee donation to Sustainable Charlotte
- 7:40 PM Discussion, and possible action, on amending the Charlotte Highway Access Permit Policy
- 8:10 PM Discussion, and possible action, on amending the Charlotte Purchasing Policy
- 8:40 PM Charlotte Board of Sewage Disposal Commissioners:
 - a. Discussion, and possible action, on approving Annual Sewer Use Rates
- 8:45 PM Appointment of an Interim Zoning Administrator – Proposed Executive Session likely per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)
- 8:50 PM Signing of Warrants
- 9:00 PM Adjournment

Call to Order

Lee Krohn called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda a. Meeting Minutes for June 23rd, 2025

MOTION by Frank Tenny, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to approve the consent agenda for July 14th as presented. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Public Comment for items not on the Agenda

None

Selectboard & Town Administrator's Updates

Nathaniel Bareham stated that the town's new Recreation Director, Gary Rogers, officially began working in this role today.

Nathaniel Bareham stated that a request was put in for repaving the entrance to town hall. The cost of this will be looked into and will be added to a future agenda.

Frank Tenney stated that Mr. Dunbar owns the road and not the town.

Nathaniel Bareham stated that he will look into this further.

Frank Tenney stated that there has been a lot of discussion amongst the DRB and PC regarding transfer of development rights and maps. There is also ongoing discussions about the town's Land Use Regulations and things are moving forward. The hopes are that the PC will be ready to move forward relatively soon.

Lewis Mudge stated that there was a union meeting last week and he had wanted an executive session this evening to fill all in but Nathaniel Bareham will fill members in individually.

Natalie Kanner stated that the Recreation Commission has put out a survey to the community related to the beach usage and town residents hopes for the new bath house project.

Lee Krohn stated that in addition to the new Recreation Director, the town has hired a new Town Planner that will be starting next month. Also CVFRS has hired a new Business and Operations Manager and she will have a month or two of overlap with Patrice MacHavern which will make for a smooth transition.

Lee Krohn stated that both the Beach Party and the Music on Green were well attended and successful.

Discussion, and possible action, on approving the installation of a fence at 643 Church Hill Road

Nathaniel Bareham stated that the two owners reached out looking to install a spilt level fence. He and Hugh Lewis Jr. had gone out and reviewed the site for the factors required by the town's Land Use Regulations. It doesn't seem that it will have any impact on driver visibility or any impact on other town services. This will be less than six feet in height and therefore doesn't require a permit. The recommendation is that the Selectboard approve this as presented and Hugh Lewis Jr. agrees with this recommendation.

Frank Tenney stated that the Selectboard wasn't involved in the site visit but he knows the house and area well and is fine with it.

Nathaniel Bareham stated that he and Hugh Lewis Jr. will do the final inspection once it's

completed.

MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Frank Tenney, to approve the installation of a split-rail fence at 643 Church Hill Road, conditioned on final inspection by the Road Commissioner and the Town Administrator. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

Discussion, and possible action, on approving a Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee donation to Sustainable Charlotte

Lee Krohn stated that this is related to the Window Dressing Program where volunteers create storm windows for folks who might not otherwise have the means. The CECAC had done a lot of this type of work in the past but has found that this other entity could do it faster, cheaper and better which is why they're suggesting this donation to this other private entity which is in their budget from last fiscal year.

Natalie Kanner stated that it was presented to the Selectboard as a donation but it seems that it is helping to finance a collaboration to support the installation of these products to Charlotte residents. The CECAC was able to secure an invoice from Sustainable Charlotte. A donation wouldn't have an invoice so this could be more of an expense. Committees and commissioners can't make donations on behalf of the committee but they do have permission to pay expenses. Donations have to come from the Selectboard but the question is, is this actually a donation or an expense? If it is a donation does the Selectboard want to override the fact that the Selectboard didn't approve donations for Sustainable Charlotte in the budget cycle and allow this donation to go through?

Frank Tenney stated that this seems more like a donation than an expense. The topic of donations has been talked about at length in the past regarding those that donate to specific departments and for specific projects and the desire to be earmarked for such.

Mike Yantachka stated that he is a member of the CECAC and of Sustainable Charlotte. CECAC runs a Weatherization program every fall where materials are purchased and are given out to people from Charlotte to help weatherize their homes. One of the items that is given out is plastic sheeting to cover windows to help retain the heat in the house. This plastic sheeting is a one-time use and a better way to insulate windows has been found. Sustainable Charlotte has been partnering with an entity called Window Dressers. Window Dressers is an entity that has the same goal of helping people to insulate their windows. He went on to state that they do this by creating custom inserts for each window that is to be sealed. These custom inserts are removable and can be stored to use the following year. It provides an air barrier and it's much better than a single layer of plastic over the window. CECAC considers this as a contribution specifically for Window Dressers to provide these inserts to residents of Charlotte. The inserts are costly, costing somewhere between \$40 to \$50 dollars to build and most people that have them inserted are expected to contribute toward it. There is an arrangement that can be made in order to get it donated to them if they can't afford it. He went on to state that CECAC didn't intend for this to be considered a donation but rather an expense and the committee asked if an invoice would work to reframe it. The Window Dresser Program is something that occurs in late October and early November when the window inserts are created in a community build. The delivery of the inserts is done when the build is finished.

Mary Mead stated that she brought this to the attention of the Selectboard because there is a process for nonprofits requesting a donation and it seemed that the Energy Committee was

basically, making a donation to Sustainable Charlotte. The town of Charlotte has a process and a policy for nonprofits requesting a donation and it's at budget time.

Discussion was had regarding this being an expense or a donation.

Mike Yantachka stated that it should be clarified that Sustainable Charlotte didn't request a donation from CECAC. CECAC decided as a committee that the money that they had for weatherization for Charlotte residents would be better spent by partnering with Sustainable Charlotte, which is a 501c3 and is tax exempt. The idea is that this money would be targeted towards Charlotte residents that couldn't otherwise afford the Window Dressers window inserts.

Natalie Kanner stated that she is the one that suggested this be submitted as an expense when discussing this topic with a member of the CECAC. The town's committee shouldn't be making donations because the monies that they are given are for operating expenses and if those monies aren't necessary to operate that committee then the money should go back to the taxpayers. With that being said this is an effort that really does directly go toward the mission of the CECAC.

Frank Tenney's idea may be a good one of establishing some sort of a grant. We do allow our committees to set up grants and scholarships for community members.

Further discussion was had regarding the opinions of proper process and the opinions of this being a CECAC weatherization expense and not a donation.

Wolfger Schneider stated that one of the purposes of the Energy Committee is to reduce fossil fuel consumption, to be more efficient not only for town properties but for residents within the town. This is one of those efforts to do that. Sustainable Charlotte has acted in the past, for other parties that have gotten grants. They have managed those grants to then pay contractors as was necessary. It should be remembered that this is an attempt to help the town to be a little bit more energy efficient and for the people that really need it.

Lee Krohn stated that another complication is that this request is for money of last Fiscal year to be spent in the next Fiscal year. The concept is wonderful but the timing may be off.

Frank Tenney stated that the grant idea is a possibility but not for this current request. The committee didn't allocate funds for a grant in their budget.

Nathaniel Barham stated that the grant idea is something that is worth looking into and if a grant fund is going to be created established policies and procedures would be needed regarding how to review grant applications and determine what criteria applicants need to meet to be eligible. When funds are given to a nonprofit or any entity the town would want to make sure that there are very clear established guidelines so that the funds that are being provided are done in a way that is fair and there's a process that's been put in place to make sure that those funds are being allocated properly. As far as contracting for this there is a separate process that the town has for such. There needs to be W9s in place, certificates of insurance or non-employee work agreements. Generally speaking, contracts have historically gone to the Selectboard for review and approval.

Lee Krohn stated that the Selectboard consensus is that there is no action taken.

Discussion, and possible action, on amending the Charlotte Highway Access Permit Policy

Nathaniel Bareham stated that there was some discussions at previous Selectboard meetings regarding possible amendments to the Town's Highway Access Permit Policy. He has worked with the current ZA, Aaron Brown, to come up with a draft copy of the Highway Access Permit Policy. They did a review of what neighboring town's are implementing. There is a general sense that the Selectboard is looking to try and streamline some of these processes. This is a possible amendment that would allow for administrative approval for permits for requested

highway accesses that effect two or fewer lots. This is a way to take some of the workload off the Selectboard member's plates and would provide the Road Commissioner and the Town Administrator with some administrative authority to review routine highway access permit applications and administratively approve them without necessarily taking up Selectboard time. This does include an update to the application which not only encompasses highway access permits but also work within the town's right of way.

Discussion was had regarding the definition of what a routine highway access permit application actually is and concerns of neighbors not being notified if it's not on an agenda. Nathaniel Bareham stated that this amendment wouldn't effect the B71 standards that are followed during this process. The Road Commissioner and the Town Administrator can still put any application forward to the Selectboard if they feel like it's necessary. If there is a concern about a highway access permit that can still be brought forward to the Selectboard.

Frank Tenney stated that he would like to see it in writing, the specific circumstances of when a HAP application would have to go before the Selectboard.

Lee Krohn stated that it has been stated by Lewis Mudge that 90% of the time HAP applications sail through. Putting these items on the agenda gives the impression that it is of great importance and needs to be discussed. It is a delicate balance always of efficiency, effectiveness and human energy.

Discussion was had and the Selectboard majority felt further work on this is necessary.

Frank Tenney stated that work and HAP shouldn't be on a single form.

Nathaniel Bareham stated that he is happy to sit down with Frank Tenney to address any specific questions of concerns about the draft that has been presented. Redline edits are welcomed as well.

Discussion, and possible action, on amending the Charlotte Purchasing Policy

Nathaniel Bareham stated that the town saw an increase in emergency expenses that came through over the past year between the pump station and the town hall's wastewater system going down for a time where there was actually no working toilets, emergency expenses on the Holmes Creek covered bridge and a variety of other expenses that happened as a result of the flooding. A semi comprehensive review of other neighboring town's policies was done. He went on to state that under the emergency purchase line there is new language that would allow other officials in town to make emergency purchases upon confirmation with either the Chair or Vice Chair of the Selectboard. This would allow for some flexibility and would make it so that an emergency meeting wouldn't have to occur in order to cover expenses that would be more routine to maintain public services. This change would also include the requirement that a notice be provided to the Selectboard within twenty four hours of any emergency purchases made.

Lee Krohn stated that having been involved in quite an array of emergency management responses he had suggested that some language could be added to the town's policy to allow for purchasing of needed supplies to be executed without the need to wait on approval via an emergency meeting. One suggestion might be to add a phrase of notice to the Chair or Vice Chair or as soon as possible.

MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Frank Tenney, to amend the Town of Charlotte's Purchasing Policy as presented. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

Charlotte Board of Sewage Disposal Commissioners:

MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Lee Krohn, to recess as the Charlotte Selectboard and reconvene as the Charlotte Board of Sewage Disposal Commissioners. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

a. Discussion, and possible action, on approving Annual Sewer Use Rates

Lee Krohn stated that with not yet adopting rates the town is losing revenue that it would otherwise be gaining. It can always be updated or amended if new information is received in the future but it's worth considering.

Nathaniel Bareham stated that the West Village wastewater system isn't metered; it is based on approved allocation. It is required under the Sewer Allocation Ordinance that a sewer rate be set. The recommendation is to approve this fee structure as a preliminary step and following this the annual sewer use rates could be amended as seen fit.

Scooter MacMillan asked how many users have been using the system for free and for how long. Nathaniel Bareham stated that it is one commercial user that has been using the sewer system without charge for two years.

Lewis Mudge stated that the Selectboard has been very deliberate about not letting private residences hook up to the sewer system but rather commercial entities in order to promote commercial businesses in the village.

Frank Tenney concurred.

Nathaniel Bareham stated that under the ordinance the Charlotte Board of Sewage Disposal Commissioners is required to set fees annually.

Frank Tenney concurred.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to adopt the wastewater fee schedule for the Charlotte West Village Wastewater system as presented in the Selectboard's meeting packet for July 14th, 2025. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Lee Krohn, to adjourn as the Charlotte Board of Sewage Disposal Commissioners and reconvene as the Charlotte Selectboard. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

Appointment of an Interim Zoning Administrator – Proposed Executive Session likely per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Frank Tenney, to enter into executive session to discuss the possible appointment of an interim Zoning Administrator, per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). I further invite Town Administrator, Nathaniel Bareham into this session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to exit out of executive session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Lee Krohn, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to appoint Rebecca Kaplin as the

town's interim Zoning Administrator effective upon Aaron Brown's departure in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4448(a) effective July 16, 2025. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

Signing of Warrants

Warrants were signed.

Adjournment

MOTION by Lewis Mude, seconded by Frank Tenney, to adjourn. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Herlihy); Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brooke Milo, Minute Taker.

Edits by Nathaniel Bareham.