

1 **CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
2 **Monday, February 12, 2024**  
3 **Charlotte Town Hall 159 Ferry Road and via teleconference**  
4 **DRAFT**

5 *Draft minutes are subject to correction by the Charlotte Selectboard.*  
6

7 **SELECTBOARD MEMBERS:** *In person:* James Faulkner, Chair; Frank Tenney, Vice Chair;  
8 Kelly Devine; Lewis Mudge, (remote and in person); Louise McCarren (remote)  
9

10 **ADMINISTRATION:** Nathaniel Bareham Town Administrator  
11

12 **OTHERS:**

13 **In person:** Scooter MacMillan, Brandon Tieso, Damaris Herlihy, JD Herlihy, Adam Dantzschler,  
14 Jack Pilla, Lane Morrison, Mike Dorsy, Robin Reid, Peter Joslin, Tanna Kelton, Charlie Pughe,  
15 Alexa Lewis, Jim Hyde, Gerald Bouchard, Bill Stuono, Carrie Spear, Kyra Wegman  
16

17 **Remote:** Alex Buntin, C Sloan, Chea Evans, Doug Paton, Janet Morrison, Junior Lewis, Juliann  
18 Phelps, Lori York, Moe Harvey, Natalie Kanner, Paige Reynolds, Paul Plante, Peggy Sharpe,  
19 Susan Crockenberg, Vince Crockenberg, Susan Hyde, Susan Smith, Claudia Mucklow  
20

21 **AGENDA ITEMS:**  
22

- 23 **6:30 PM** Adjustments to the Agenda  
24 **6:31 PM** Approve Warrants to Pay Bills  
25 **6:35 PM** Selectboard's Updates  
26 **6:45 PM** Town Administrator's Updates  
27 **6:50 PM** Public Comment  
28 **6:55 PM** Discussion of Traffic Calming & Road Signs on Ferry Road  
29 **7:10 PM** Request for Proposal – Town Lands Brush Hogging  
30 **7:20 PM** Request for Proposal – Town Lands Mowing  
31 **7:30 PM** Request for Proposal – Town Cemetery Mowing  
32 **7:40 PM** Public Hearing on the Petitioned-for Charter for Town Manager  
33 **8:40 PM** Approve Meeting Minutes: - January 8th, 2024 - January 16th, 2024 -  
34 January 22nd, 2024 - January 29th, 2024  
35 **8:45 PM** Adjournment  
36

37 **Call to Order**

38 James Faulkner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.  
39

40 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

41 None.  
42

43 **Approve Warrants to Pay Bills**

44 Warrants were signed.  
45

**46 Selectboard's Updates**

47 James Faulkner stated that on February 19, 2024, the solar panels will be installed on the Town  
48 Garage roof. This is happening sooner than expected, which is a positive development. He went  
49 on to state that the sooner they are installed the sooner the town can begin to save money.  
50 Starting tonight the Town Administrator will have an agenda item entitled Town Administrator's  
51 Updates where Nathaniel Bareham will report on the projects he has been working on.

**53 Town Administrator's Updates**

54 Nathaniel Bareham stated that Karina Warshaw will be stepping down as the Emergency  
55 Management Coordinator. In the near future he will take part in a meeting with Karina Warshaw  
56 and Chris Davis to discuss the process going forward. This is a stipend position.

**58 Public Comment**

59 None.

**61 Discussion of Traffic Calming & Road Signs on Ferry Road**

62 James Faulkner stated that Jack Pilla submitted a report regarding his survey on traffic calming  
63 on Ferry Rd.

64 Jack Pilla stated that since the trail was created by the old Health Center and ending on Ferry Rd  
65 there has been increased pedestrian traffic. Signage is the most financially efficient way to help  
66 with safety in this area at this time. He went on to state that he submitted a survey to residents  
67 asking if they support adding signage to Ferry Rd between Greenbush Rd and the RR tracks to  
68 increase drivers awareness to pedestrians and 83 people responded. Jack Pilla reviewed his  
69 submitted report of this survey which is available in tonight's meeting packet.

70 Discussion was had regarding white and yellow road signs. It was clarified that the yellow road  
71 signs are recommendations and don't require a road study.

72 Jack Pilla stated that he proposed that the first sign, which would be the "CAUTION WATCH  
73 FOR CHILDREN, JOGGERS, BICYCLISTS, PEDESTRIANS" would go below the existing  
74 speed limit sign coming down the hill. The second sign, which is "DO NOT PASS", is proposed  
75 to be placed just below Sunset Rd since that's where motorists tend to pass. The third sign,  
76 which is "BLIND DRIVEWAY", is proposed to be placed in the area just before Lynrick Acres  
77 Rd. The fourth sign, which is "25 MPH" is proposed to be placed further down from there.

78 James Faulkner stated that Jack Pilla would need to submit these locations in writing with a map  
79 showing specifically where the proposed locations are for the requested signage.

80 Kelly Devine stated that she would like Nathaniel Bareham to look into what the Selectboard is  
81 capable of implementing without a traffic study so the board can be informed for this request as  
82 well as other locations in the town that are in need of traffic calming measures.

83 Damaris Herlihy stated that you cannot get to the center of town safely from the boardwalk trail.  
84 A speed study that was done a few years ago showed that every 1.5 hours a motorist traveled  
85 down Ferry Rd at a speed of 70 MPH and over. She went on to state that with the boardwalk  
86 there now and increased pedestrian traffic she's in favor of reducing the speed to 25 MPH in that  
87 area.

88 James Faulkner stated that the town has a speed cart that could be placed at the location for  
89 starters.

90 Damaris Herlihy stated that she spoke with the Chittenden County Sheriff and he was very kind  
91 and asked for specific locations to monitor and timing as well as what types of vehicles to be on

92 the look out for. She plans to collaborate with neighbors and provide this information to  
93 Nathaniel Bareham who will communicate with the Chittenden County Sheriff.  
94 Mike Dorsey stated that he lives off from Ferry Rd and the motorists speeds are worse than what  
95 the survey portrays. Reviewing the steps taken for Bean Rd may be of helpful guidance with this  
96 process.

97 Charles Russell stated that the Bean Rd study was done and recommended steps were taken with  
98 the use of a grant and there should be something in the town files regarding this information.

99 J.D. Herlihy stated that there are past traffic studies and he wonders if they could still be in the  
100 time frame of usefulness for this process that would eliminate the need for further studies to  
101 accomplish this.

102 Nathaniel Bareham confirmed that he will look into the timeline requirements of traffic studies.

103 Jack Pilla stated that the cost of the four signs and hardware excluding the posts comes to an  
104 estimated \$369.64.

105 James Faulkner stated the size of the signs and posts would be determined by Junior Lewis. This  
106 will be discussed again at the next Selectboard meeting on February 26, 2024.

107

#### 108 **Request for Proposal**

109 James Faulkner stated that the process for the RFPs has been modified with the use of mapping  
110 software which has been completed by Nathaniel Bareham.

111 Nathaniel Bareham stated that he used software to modify and update the RFP process for town  
112 lands by using more up to date and accurate maps.

113

#### 114 **Request for Proposal – Town Lands Brush Hogging**

115 Nathaniel Bareham presented the maps and stated that there were new areas that he would like to  
116 see added in efforts to better brush hog areas in certain locations on the north end of Lanes Lane,  
117 the north end of Thompson's Point Rd and the east side of Flat Rock Rd

118 Adam Dantzschler stated he has done the brush hogging for the town of Charlotte for 6 years. He  
119 went on to state that he recommends doing the areas in blue at least every 3 years as there is new  
120 growth that occurs. The areas that are blue and double lined on the map is what Junior Lewis  
121 does and it's recommended to have this done twice a year due to the heavy growth and the  
122 amount of poison parsnip that is growing heavily in that area. Adam Dantzschler stated that it's  
123 in the town's best interest to keep the fields used for haying as large as possible by brush  
124 hogging. The red outlined areas have historically been brush hogged and will continue to be  
125 brush hogged. There are areas that are highlighted in yellow that may need attention as well,  
126 such as the baseball fields and the trails.

127 Nathaneil Bareham stated that the Town Garage will be an hourly rate since the grounds are still  
128 under construction and therefore a set rate can't yet be determined. This will be finalized and  
129 presented for vote at the next Selectboard meeting.

130

#### 131 **Request for Proposal – Town Lands Mowing**

132 Nathaniel Bareham stated that it was recommended by Sue Smith that the pruning at the Town  
133 Beach be removed and she would be willing to do this task. He went on to state that Patrice  
134 Machavern requested that language be added to the mowing RFPs that would include movement  
135 of chairs and picnic tables during mowing and replacement to original locations.

136

137 Lewis Mudge arrived at the meeting in person.

138

139 Nathaneil Bareham stated that there was an additional request by Bill Regan stating that the  
140 Trails Committee would like mowing along the east side of the ice rink so the trail that is there  
141 can be accessed.

142

143 **Request for Proposal – Town Cemetery Mowing**

144 Nathaniel Bareham stated that the RFP for the cemetery mowing is unchanged.

145

146 Nathaniel Bareham reviewed all of the town lands with the use of the updated map software.

147 Action on these town lands RFPs will take place at the next Selectboard meeting.

148

149 **Approve Meeting Minutes: - January 8th, 2024 - January 16th, 2024 - January 22nd, 2024,**  
150 **January 29th, 2024**

151

152 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Frank Tenney, to approve the Selectboard meeting**  
153 **minutes for January 08<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

154

155 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by James Faulkner, to take a ten minute recess at this**  
156 **time and to reconvene at 7:37pm. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

157

158 **MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to come out of recess. VOTE: 5**  
159 **ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

160

161 **Public Hearing on the Petitioned-for Charter for Town Manager**

162 James Faulkner stated that this is the third time that the town has had an opportunity to come  
163 together to discuss this topic of Town Manager. With the petition for Town Manager the  
164 Selectboard was prompted to look for ways to become more efficient which included adding  
165 duties to the Town Administrator's job description. He went on to state that the timing of this  
166 was difficult with Dean Bloch retiring as Charlotte's Town Administrator and Nathaniel  
167 Bareham being a new hire. The Selectboard made sure to take some time to be sure that  
168 Nathaniel Bareham was capable of handling these potential increased duties and they were happy  
169 to find that he indeed is capable. James Faulkner stated that there is a list that has been put  
170 together to add to the Town Administrator duties which will require an update to the Town  
171 Administrator's job description. A great example of Nathaniel Bareham's capability and  
172 motivation most recently is the updated RFPS for the town lands that he has done to make the  
173 RFP process more efficient. He went on to state that another example of Nathaniel Bareham  
174 capabilities has been seen with the work he has done on the town budget, collaborating with  
175 Mary Mead to find areas to save money and this included the challenge area of the employee  
176 benefits expenses.

177 Lewis Mudge concurred with James Faulkner and added by stating the Blue Cross Blue Shield of  
178 Vermont presentation for employees was facilitated by Nathaniel Bareham and that had never  
179 taken place prior.

180 James Faulkner stated that there has been discussion regarding CVFRS transitioning to a  
181 regional group and Nathaniel Bareham has already taken the initiative of meeting with the Town  
182 Manager in Shelburne to start talking about this process.

183 James Faulkner stated that Mary Mead did an excellent job in assisting the Selectboard with the  
184 budget process this year and it's extremely appreciated by all. He went on to state that the  
185 Selectboard is confident that Nathaniel Bareham is capable of completing the updated job  
186 description to include additional responsibilities.

187 Louise McCarren also concurred with James Faulkner and Lewis Mudge, stating Nathaniel  
188 Bareham and Mary Mead work and collaborate well together.

189 Kelly Devine stated that she is hopeful that further areas will be identified that will fit into the  
190 scope of the Town Administrator's job description vs the Selectboard.

191 Frank Tenney cautioned on not overloading the Town Administrator.

192 Kelly Devine stated that concurrently the Selectboard needs to be looking at the other town  
193 employee's job descriptions to assure their time is well used and that they are supporting the  
194 Town Administrator adequately.

195 Frank Tenney stated that with these changes in the Town Administrator's job description there  
196 will also be a correlated need for policies and ordinances to be amended in order to transfer the  
197 authority over to the Town Administrator.

198 Kelly Devine concurred stating it will be work but not necessarily a lot of work.

199 Tanna Kelton stated that Claudia Mucklow wrote a post in Front Porch Forum where she had  
200 researched towns of similar sizes to Charlotte to see if they had a Town Administrator or a Town  
201 Manger. From this information she gathered it was the larger towns that had Town Managers  
202 and many of these towns had Town Manager Assistants and some had Town Administrators as  
203 well. Tanna Kelton went on to state that Charlotte is a small town and doesn't require a Town  
204 Manager. A Town Manager would result in a huge expense to the town.

205 Robin Reid stated that she's not in favor of a Town Manager.

206 Bill Stuono stated that he is not in favor of a Town Manager and he is just now reading the  
207 Charter for Town Manager policy and passionately feels that this should be made more readily  
208 available for town residents to broaden their understanding of the Town Manager role. It should  
209 be published in all the papers. He went on to state that with no official formal process if  
210 someone were to disagree with a Town Manager's decision their voice wouldn't be heard. He  
211 went on to state that a Town Manager Assistant would most definitely be needed which is  
212 another stress on the budget. An important consideration is should the Town Manager be a town  
213 resident as that's a typical requirement. It's not uncommon for a Town Manager and residents  
214 and or the Town Manager and the Selectboard to not get along.

215 Lewis Mudge received confirmation that it's difficult to remove a Town Manager from his/her  
216 role.

217 Bill Stuono stated that another important consideration is that if a Town Manager were to be  
218 voted in Nathaniel Bareham's position would be eliminated and replaced with a new position of  
219 Town Manager. This would require that the job be posted to the general public. He went on to  
220 state that the Legislature will likely have issue with a citizen's petitioned Charter that doesn't  
221 have Selectboard approval. Bill Stuono urged all to consider giving Nathaniel Bareham a chance  
222 to settle into his role before considering any changes since he has only been in his role as Town  
223 Administrator for three months.

224 Damaris Herlihy stated that she's not in favor of a Town Manager in the small town of Charlotte.  
225 Currently the Town Administrator functions as an extension of the Selectboard with lots of  
226 support and collaboration of each other. She went on to state that following reading the Charter  
227 it seems as though there would be far more control by one person vs the collaboration of the six.  
228 As a town resident working with all five members of the Selectboard and the Town

229 Administrator as well is most advantageous and beneficial by means of being heard and getting  
230 things accomplished.

231 Kyra Wegman stated that she doesn't want to change the town's system of government and  
232 therefore is not in favor of a Town Manager.

233 Chea Evans stated that she is speaking neutrally in efforts to inform the public, when the  
234 Legislature considers Town Charters anyone that wants to give testimony will have a chance to  
235 be heard but typically the legislative body will honor what the voters have decided upon. A  
236 Town Manager job description exists in state statute. She went on to state that the Charter  
237 process in quick and uncomplicated.

238 Alex Bunten stated that he isn't in favor of the change to a Town Manager for the reasons that  
239 have been stated already by others this evening.

240 Charlie Pughe stated that Nathaniel Bareham is going to do great in his role as Town  
241 Administrator and along with a capable Selectboard the town will be in good hands. He went on  
242 to urge the towns people to elect members for the Selectboard that are going to be most  
243 successful in what they do.

244 Claudia Mucklow stated that she did research and it's premature to have a Town Manager in the  
245 town of Charlotte.

246 Emily Raab stated that she wonders where the money would come from to hire a Town Manager.

247 Lewis Mudge stated that a Town Manager is going to get paid more than a Town Administrator  
248 and often do bring in more staff. The past comparison that was done between the Town  
249 Administrator salary and the Town Manager was done with a senior Town Administrator's  
250 salary and we now have a new less experienced Town Administrator with a consequent smaller  
251 salary. He went on to state that VLCT reported that most Town Managers bring in more staff on  
252 average. It seems irresponsible to consider this when the task of reducing town employee benefit  
253 expenses is on the horizon.

254 Kelly Devine stated that it's important to note that there are projects on the Selectboard agenda  
255 which includes getting an inventory of all the town assets both the lands and the buildings. With  
256 this list the plan is to work with Nathaniel Bareham to construct a Capital plan so that the budget  
257 can allow for plans to improve and or repair those town buildings and lands. She went on to  
258 state that she and Lewis Mudge are tasked with updating employee benefits. This will include  
259 streamlining benefits but also adding wellness features. The regionalization of the CVFRS is a  
260 big topic. If the voters approve the Town Manager roles it will need to go through a process of  
261 legislature and following this the Selectboard will complete the planning to move forward but it  
262 will delay other works on the Selectboard's agenda.

263 Lewis Mudge and Kelly Devine concurred the process of hiring a Town Manager would be time  
264 consuming.

265 Emily Raab stated that she is not in favor of a Town Manager.

266 Peggy Sharpe stated that she would like to clarify that the Selectboard would have the authority  
267 over any additional hires to assist a Town Manager. The Town Manager wouldn't have the sole  
268 authority to hire several new support staff positions and it's important to note that.

269 Lewis Mudge stated that VLCT did say administrator support staff are common in tandem with a  
270 Town Manager position and although the Selectboard would have the final say he himself would  
271 be in favor of enabling the Town Manager to do his job as he is with all roles.

272 Lane Morrison stated that he feels with the proposed Charter Nathaniel Bareham would grow  
273 into a Town Manager role vs hiring someone new and if there is a need for additional staff due to  
274 more work that would happen regardless of a Town Manager title or a Town Administrator title.

275 If this were to be voted in then it would be roughly 6 months down the road and Nathaniel  
276 Bareham could be the person to take on this role with all of his experience he's attaining now as  
277 Town Administrator. He went on to state that VLCT stated that the median pay for a Town  
278 Manager is \$98,000 and therefore bringing in a less experienced Town Manager is going to be  
279 less than the median. Currently the Town Administrator salary is set at \$80,000 so the transition  
280 to a Town Manager would be as small as a 10% increase. Lane Morrison stated that  
281 regionalizing Fire and Rescue or the west or east villages would call for more work to be done  
282 and therefore more hires but that's independent of the decision between a Town Manager or a  
283 Town Administrator. A Town Manager is not a barrier to the Selectboard. All Selectboards are  
284 required to have public comment. He went on to state that the VLCT report shows that there are  
285 40 Town Managers in the state of Vermont and 18 of them have a smaller population than the  
286 town of Charlotte. There are 25 Town Administrators in the state of Vermont and only 3 have a  
287 population larger than Charlotte.

288 Peter Joslin stated that he is in favor of a transition to a Town Manager in order to be ready for  
289 the future. The Charlotte Town Plan has three chapters that were amended in 2019 and will be  
290 amended again by 2027 with the big village planning that is in process currently. He went on to  
291 state that chapter one of the Town Plan concludes with an implementation table that consists of  
292 roughly 73 actionable strategies to reach the stated goals of Charlotte tomorrow. The  
293 Selectboard is responsible for roughly 34 of these strategies or they share it with another entity.  
294 Peter Joslin went on to state that this implementation table should be a reference point for the  
295 town in order to gage how the town is making progress toward the future. Charlotte has many  
296 policy issues and the way to accomplish these actionable strategies is by hiring a Town Manager  
297 to free up the Selectboard so they can address these issues.

298 Brandon Tieso stated that he has spoken to many other town residents and the consensus has  
299 been against a transition to a Town Manager due to not seeing the need for such. The future that  
300 Charlotte needs is maintaining the character of the town with its current form of government.

301 Vince Crockenberg stated that he's in favor of a Town Manager government which will provide  
302 a balance for the town of Charlotte. He feels this way largely because of his experiences  
303 working within the town on long range planning and development. He went on to state that an  
304 illustration of the need for this town government change is the west village wastewater planning  
305 which began in 2004. There were 2 citizen advisory task forces and he served on the first task  
306 force. The 2019 committee members report being unaware of the information or location of the  
307 2 citizen task force reports. A Town Manager would enable reorganization of the town  
308 government to allow for the time for the day to day matters that come before the Selectboard and  
309 could also allow the time and resources to move forward on crucially important community wide  
310 matters in an efficient and effective way.

311 Charles Russell stated that he's in favor of a Town Manager for many reasons. A Town  
312 Manager would make it feasible for a young working individual to be a part of the Selectboard as  
313 it would make for a decreased time commitment. He went on to state that last year there were 39  
314 Selectboard meetings which equates to 3¼ meetings per month. The Town Manager would be  
315 doing a lot of the work that is done during these Selectboard meetings. Charles Russell stated  
316 that some of the issues require a Town Administrator to work with the Selectboard and then  
317 again attend the Selectboard meeting to help facilitate completion of a task because the  
318 Selectboard needs to discuss the issue as a whole and vote. Therefore, the town is paying the  
319 Town Administrator for more time than is needed on issues in general. He went on to state that

320 he does appreciate the efforts the Selectboard has put into looking at adding to the Town  
321 Administrator's responsibilities to free up more of the Selectboard's time.  
322 Kelly Devine stated that many are speaking for the Selectboard members by stating being a  
323 member of the Selectboard is too much of a time commitment. Despite working a very busy full  
324 time job she doesn't feel working on the Selectboard is too much. She would like the town to  
325 give the Selectboard some time to work on the big projects that they're currently working on.  
326 She went on to state that a Town Manager may be appropriate down the road but now is not the  
327 time. Due to significantly changing the position's duties from a Town Administrator to a Town  
328 Manager the process of new hire would have to be taken, which would take time away from the  
329 projects at hand.  
330 Frank Tenney concurred with Kelly Devine stating that he feels both working full time and being  
331 a Selectboard member is not too much. Evidence of this is the fact that he attends on his own  
332 volition most of the PC and DRB meetings, attending roughly 80% of the meetings in general.  
333 He went on to state that he feels the town is not ready for a Town Manager at this point in time.

334

**335 Adjournment**

336

337 **MOTION by James Faulkner, seconded by Louis Mudge, to adjourn. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0**  
338 **nays 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.**

339

340 The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

341

342 Minutes respectfully submitted by Brooke Milo, Minute Taker. Edits by Nathaniel Bareham.