

1 **CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING**

2 **January 16, 2024**

3 **Charlotte Town Hall and via teleconference**

4 **DRAFT**

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

6  
7 **SELECTBOARD MEMBERS:** James Faulkner, Chair; Frank Tenney, Vice Chair; Louise  
8 McCarren; Lewis Mudge; Kelly Devine

9  
10 **ADMINISTRATION:** Nate Bareham

11  
12 **OTHERS:** Charles Russell, Lane Morrison, Patrice Machavern, Nicole Conley, Margaret  
13 Woodruff, Peggy Sharpe, Jessie Bradley, Lori York, Liberty Darr

14  
15 **AGENDA ITEMS**

16 7:00 PM Adjustments to the Agenda

17 7:01 PM Presentation of Committee Budget Requests

18 7:25 PM Presentation and Discussion of Improvement & Repair Fund Requests

19 7:30 PM Presentation of Updates to FY-2025 Budget

20 8:30 PM Selectboard Discussion of FY-2025 Budget

21 8:45 PM Discussion on Personnel – Possible Executive Session 17 V.S.A. §§ 313 (a)(1)(A),  
22 (a)(3)

23 8:46 PM Selectboard Updates

24 8:50 PM Adjournment

25  
26 *James Faulkner Called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.*

27  
28 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

29 None.

30  
31 **Presentation of Committee Budget Requests**

32 Maggie Citeralla, Chair of the Conservation Commission, presented an updated proposed budget.  
33 The total is \$1,850. More outreach is planned for this year. Expert speakers will be invited to do  
34 walks and talks in Town.

35  
36 Kate Kelly from the Lewis Creek Association briefed the Selectboard on water testing and  
37 invasive species removal. This proposed budget is level funded at \$2,700.

38  
39 Kate Lampton, for the Conservation Fund, presented. An additional \$25,000 is requested for the  
40 fund. A number of smaller amounts will be requested rather than a large amount in a single year  
41 moving forward. When upcoming projects are estimated to cost around \$355,000, having the  
42 Town provide smaller incremental grants is more sustainable. The current balance of the fund is  
43 estimated to be between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

44

45

46

47 **Presentation and Discussion of Improvement & Repair Fund Requests**

48 Two major updates are a request for an additional \$10,000 for an oil tank replacement at the  
49 Senior Center, and a \$3,000 grant from Shelburne that the Senior Center received to offset their  
50 program expense costs. The oil tank is currently underground and needs to be installed above  
51 ground. Nate Bareham reviewed adjustments to the budget line by line.

52  
53 Budget adjustments for various projects were made. The increase requested for highway  
54 treatment was removed, reducing it to a 0% change. The capital infrastructure costs were  
55 removed. A \$3,000 increase in park maintenance on the townlands was reduced to \$1,600.  
56 Hardware from each department's budget was placed under the tech group's budget, with an  
57 estimated cost of \$15,900. The total improvement and repair funds were set at \$67,000, with  
58 options to allocate \$25,000 for the Senior Center roof and \$10,000 for the placement of an oil  
59 tank.

60  
61 Lane Morrison said funding is needed to repair the roof and the oil tank at the Senior Center.  
62 There will be \$10,000 set aside for the tank, and \$5,000 for the roof, using funds already  
63 allocated in the Capital Reserve Fund. The state of other assets in Town was discussed, such as  
64 the library and fire department. Establishing a committee to oversee these assets was suggested.  
65 The idea of setting aside a percentage of the Town's asset value each year for maintenance was  
66 proposed.

67  
68 **Presentation of Updates to FY-2025 Budget**

69 Patrice Machavern provided updates and the appropriation request for FY 25 for CVFRS. The  
70 total request is \$989,087.

71  
72 Nicole Conley shared quotes for Recreation Department projects estimated at \$10,000 and  
73 \$15,000. Utilizing funds from the Recreation Capital Fund for these projects was discussed.  
74 Discussions took place on repairs and potential grants for projects such as septic tank and stair  
75 replacements. Big picture thinking will include a Bath House upgrade, Nicole said. The beach in  
76 a source of significant revenue. About 77% of Recreation Department expenses are covered by  
77 their revenues, Nate said.

78  
79 **Selectboard Discussion of FY-2025 Budget**

80  
81 Town Revenue and Expenses were reviewed by analyzing a graph created by Nate. Margaret  
82 Woodruff said the library has received grant funding in the past and anticipate applying for more  
83 grants to offset costs.

84  
85 Cost comparisons across various departments, with a focus on personnel and benefit expenses  
86 were reviewed. Figures are subject to change. A complete report to be presented in a future  
87 meeting will be prepared. Health and HRA Benefits can be separate items for each department in  
88 the budget, Nate said. Kelly Devine mentioned the \$40,000 of anticipated benefit savings that  
89 she and Lewis Mudge had been working on and where that will be reflected was indicated.  
90 Revising the policy on the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) was discussed.

91

92 Kelly asked why the Senior Center doesn't generate revenue like the Recreation Department has  
93 done. Implementing a membership fee for non-residents was suggested. The Senior Center  
94 primarily serves residents from surrounding towns. Kelly said 60% of Senior Center patrons are  
95 from surrounding towns. These folks are not taxpayers, but the \$3,000 annual grant from  
96 Shelburne is much appreciated, she said. Louise emphasized the Senior Center is a community  
97 resource.

98  
99 Lane said the original charter stated the Senior Center was for Charlotte and surrounding  
100 communities. He said membership data indicates that 30% are from Charlotte and 30% are from  
101 Shelburne, and the remainder are from surrounding towns. He is opposed to implementing a fee.  
102 Jessie Bradley is also opposed to charging a fee. She said many Wake Robin residents paid taxes  
103 in Charlotte for decades. Exploring grant opportunities was suggested by Lane. There is financial  
104 support received for the Senior Center from a 501 c 3 in the amount of about \$20,000 annually.  
105 The anticipated budget for the upcoming year was discussed. Lori York said the Senior Center  
106 provides social services and is not transactional. Volunteers from Age Well, AARP, and more,  
107 are partners, which creates a situation where the Senior Center cannot charge for the  
108 programming. Volunteers from surrounding towns, who run important programming, are  
109 dedicated to the Senior Center. Charging fees is not a clear cut solution, especially for those folks  
110 dropping on once a month for a hot meal. Kelly asked why non-profits are not charged to run  
111 programming inside the Senior Center. Lori said they are not charged by any facility or church  
112 statewide. Alternative revenue generation strategies will be explored. Lewis asked for  
113 documentation on what the 501(c)(3) has contributed to the Senior Center. Nate asked if the  
114 501(c)(3) could share their Form 990s. Lane said he would check with the Treasurer and get  
115 those documents for the Selectboard.

116  
117 The Town's practice of making donations was discussed. Donations stopped due to budget  
118 constraints and lack of transparency in the process. A formalized process for requesting  
119 donations has been implemented. Nate explained the line items carried forward.

120  
121 Kelly said she would like to see the CVFRS Budget voted on by Australian Ballot. She explained  
122 that if Town Employee Benefit Packages are being scrutinized, so should the other big ticket  
123 items in the budget such as CVFRS, The Senior Center, and The Library. Frank Tenney said the  
124 budget needs to be voted on as a whole. CVFRS cannot be voted on separately, he said.

125  
126 The Town Meeting date scheduled during school vacation might not have a great turnout, Kelly  
127 said. Hearing from the voters on the budget is paramount. The Selectboard should find a way to  
128 have this vote with a large Town Meeting Day vote, she said. She asked to have the CVFRS  
129 budget voted on separately and to have the legality of it investigated.

130  
131 Peggy Sharpe asked about donations for the Food Shelf. She requested \$1,000. Lewis asked that  
132 it be added to the budget. Kelly asked for a formal email to be sent to Nate from Peggy for this  
133 request.

134  
135 The budget was agreed upon and a vote will take place at a future meeting after numbers are  
136 solidified.

137

138 **Discussion on Personnel – Possible Executive Session 17 V.S.A. §§ 313 (a)(1)(A), (a)(3)**  
139  
140 **MOTION by James Faulkner, seconded by Kelly Devine, to enter into Executive Session 17**  
141 **V.S.A. §§ 313 (a)(1)(A), (a)(3), to include Nate Bareham. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent**  
142 **(Louise McCarren); Motion Carried.**  
143  
144 **MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Kelly Devine, to exit Executive Session 17 V.S.A.**  
145 **§§ 313 (a)(1)(A), (a)(3). VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Louise McCarren); Motion**  
146 **Carried.**  
147  
148 **MOTION by James Faulkner, seconded by Kelly Devine, to accept John Kerr's**  
149 **resignation. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Louise McCarren); Motion Carried.**  
150  
151 **Adjournment**  
152  
153 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to adjourn at 10 pm. VOTE: 5**  
154 **ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**  
155  
156 **Minutes respectfully submitted by Lynn Monty, Minute Taker.**