

1 **CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD MEETING**
2 **Monday, January 27, 2025**
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 Lewis Mudge, (remote and in person); Natalie Kanner; Kelly Devine
9

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

12 **OTHERS:**

13
14 **In person:** Deirdre Holmes, Mike Yantachka, Charles Russell, Mary Mead, Moe Harvey, Carrie
15 Spear, Tim Post, Meghan Siket, Meghan Metzler, Jim Hodsons, Tanna Kelton, Scooter
16 MacMillan, Ruth Uphold, Richard Mintze
17

18 **Remote:** Alexa Lewis, Lauren Akselrod, Lindsay Smith, Nancy Faulkner, Paul Plante, Robert
19 Smith, Moe Harvey
20

21 **AGENDA ITEMS:**
22

- 23 6:30 PM Approval of Consent Agenda
24 a) Meeting Minutes for Jan.13, 2025
25 b) Authorization to construct a well at Thompson's Point on 62 North Shore Road
26 6:35 PM Adjustments to the Agenda
27 6:36 PM Approval of Warrants to Pay Bills
28 6:40 PM Review & Finalization of the 2026 Town Meeting Warning and Articles
29 7:00 PM Presentation & Discussion of CVSD's FY26 proposed budget by members of the
30 CVSD School Board
31 7:30 PM Discussion, and possible action, on a Trails Committee request to apply for the
32 Recreational Trails Program Grant
33 7:50 PM Discussion, and possible action, on an Energy Committee request to hire a
34 consultant using MERP grant funds.
35 8:10 PM Selectboard discussion of negotiations with AFSCME Local 93 – Possible
36 executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B)
37 8:30 PM Adjournment
38

39 **Call to Order**

40 James Faulkner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
41

42 **Approval of Consent Agenda**

43 **a) Meeting Minutes for Jan.13, 2025**

44 **b) Authorization to construct a well at Thompson's Point on 62 North Shore Road**

45 James Faulkner stated that he would like to remove the consent agenda item, Authorization to
46 construct a well at Thompson's Point on 62 North Shore Road. The rationale for removing this
47 item is to allow the Selectboard to be further informed on this agenda item and to discuss it.
48

49 **MOTION by James Faulkner, seconded Natalie Kanner, to remove the consent agenda**
50 **item, Authorization to construct a well at Thompson's Point on 62 North Shore Road.**
51 **VOTE: 4 ayes, 1 nay, (Devine); Motion Carried.**
52

53 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded Natalie Kanner, to approve the consent agenda as**
54 **modified. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**
55

56 **Authorization to construct a well at Thompson's Point on 62 North Shore Road**

57 Nathaniel Bareham stated that first he would like to inform the Selectboard that he made a
58 modification to the language of the town's original letter, Permission to Drill On-site Well on a
59 Thompson's Point Leased Lot. This modification was done due to the fact that the referenced 10
60 V.S.A Section 1396 was repealed in 2021. Therefore, the statutory language that was lost in that
61 repeal has been added to the language in the letter for all Well requests on leased property going
62 forward in the town of Charlotte. This added language includes, "Once the well is drilled, please
63 arrange for the well driller to submit to the Town Clerk a report including, but not limited to, the
64 name of the lessee, location, depth, and any other reasonable and appropriate information the
65 Town may request."

66 Mary Mead received confirmation from Nathaniel Bareham that the lessee and their licensed
67 driller must communicate with the Thompson's Point Wastewater System's Operators, Jake and
68 Steve Williams, for authorization of the Well location. She went on to state that it would be
69 good to have that communication on record.
70

71 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to authorize the Town**
72 **Administrator and Selectboard Chair to execute a Permission to Drill an On-site Well on**
73 **Thompson's Point lease lot with Carolyn Conard, Lot number 145, 62 North Shore Rd**
74 **Charlotte, Vermont. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**
75

76 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

77 James Faulkner stated that he would like to make an adjustment to the agenda by adding the
78 agenda item, Public Comment. This was to be included on the agenda and was simply forgotten.
79 All members of the Selectboard concurred with this adjustment.
80

81 **Public Comment**

82 None
83

84 **Approval of Warrants to Pay Bills**

85 Warrants were signed.
86

87 **Review & Finalization of the 2026 Town Meeting Warning and Articles**

88 Nathaniel Bareham stated that there are two items that have changed since the last meeting that
89 need the Selectboard's attention. The first is that the public hearing needs to occur no later than
90 ten days prior to the vote. This requirement is met with the scheduled meeting of February 23,

91 2025. This is a scheduling issue that the Selectboard will want to accomplish this evening. The
92 Selectboard will need to look at and approve or amend if they would like to have a different date
93 and time. The other item the Selectboard will want to discuss is whether or not the Trail's
94 Reserve Fund should be used for maintenance and whether or not it should be a separate Article.
95 He went on to state that the town attorney recommended that the maintenance should be a
96 separate article and therefore it is in the language for the Town Meeting Warning.
97 Mary Mead stated that she would like to know if this that is to potentially allocate \$5,000 as
98 Trails Maintenance makes the rest of the Trails Reserve Fund for construction.
99 Kelly Devine stated that this Article doesn't assume that the rest of the money in the Trails
100 Reserve Fund is specifically for any one thing.
101 Discussion was had regarding this legal advice to make this \$5,000 request a separate Article,
102 Article 5.
103 Mary Mead stated that she would like to know if in the event the town residents vote against the
104 use of the \$5,000 would this amount go back into the town's operating budget. As of right now
105 it is in the budget under the line item, Transfer to Trails which is funds coming from the general
106 fund.
107 Frank Tenney stated no matter the outcome of the vote the \$5,000 goes into the Trails Reserve
108 Fund. If it is voted down then the Selectboard will not be approving the use of the money for
109 maintenance of trails.
110 Kelly Devine stated that the amounts in Article 3 will need adjusting with the \$5,000 to Trails as
111 a separate Article. All concurred.
112 Mary Mead gave clarification that Article 5 isn't asking for \$5,000 to be raised it is simply
113 asking for permission from the tax payer to use it for the use of maintenance of town trails.
114

115 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Frank Tenney, to approve the Warning for the in**
116 **person Town Meeting for the Town of Charlotte on Saturday March 1, 2025, at 9 a.m. and**
117 **in addition, Warn a public hearing on said warrant on Monday, February 24, 2025, at 6**
118 **p.m. The Warrant shall include the following Articles; Article 1: To hear the reports of the**
119 **Town officers and to act upon the same. Article 2: Shall the voters authorize the payment**
120 **of property taxes, with the payment due on or before Friday, November 14, 2025, and to**
121 **have payments made to the Town Treasurer, as provided in 32 VSA § 4773(b)? Article 3:**
122 **Shall the voters approve total fund expenditures, as set forth in the Selectboard's budget, of**
123 **\$4,265,990.00 for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, of which an anticipated sum**
124 **of \$2,531,353 will be raised by taxes and an anticipated sum of \$1,734,637.00 will be raised**
125 **by non-tax revenues? Article 4: Shall the voters approve raising a sum of \$62,000 by**
126 **property taxes, in addition to those monies raised pursuant to Article 3, to be allocated to**
127 **the Trails Reserve Fund? Article 5: Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to use not**
128 **more than \$5,000 from the Charlotte Trails Fund for the purpose of maintaining Town**
129 **recreational trails? Article 6: Shall the voters approve raising a sum of \$40,000 by property**
130 **taxes, in addition to those monies raised pursuant to Article 3, to be allocated to the**
131 **Recreation Capital Fund, for the purpose of developing a new bathhouse at the Charlotte**
132 **Town Beach? Article 7: Shall the Town of Charlotte adopt all budget articles by Australian**
133 **Ballot, as provided in 17 V.S.A. § 2680(c)? Article 8: Shall the Town of Charlotte vote on**
134 **all public questions by Australian Ballot, as provided in 17 V.S.A. § 2680(d)? Article 9: To**
135 **transact any other business proper to come before said meeting? And to have the following**
136 **Articles be voted by Australian Ballot; Article 10: To elect Town Officials. Article 11: Shall**

137 **the voters authorize the Town to submit to the General Assembly of the State of Vermont a**
138 **proposal to adopt a municipal charter which contains the following sections: Section 1:**
139 **Corporate Existence, Section 2: General Provisions, Section 3: Routine Adoption of Land**
140 **Use Bylaws, Section 4: Separability, Section 5: Amendment? The official copy of the**
141 **Charter proposal, in its entirety, is on file and available for public inspection at the**
142 **Charlotte Town Clerk's Office, 159 Ferry Road in said Town, during regular office hours,**
143 **Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Copies thereof are available to members of the**
144 **public upon request. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

145
146 **Presentation & Discussion of CVSD's FY26 proposed budget by members of the CVSD**
147 **School Board**

148 Meghan Metzler, Chair of the Charlotte School Board and Meghan Siket, a Charlotte School
149 Board Representative presented on CVSD's FY26 proposed budget. This power point
150 presentation is in tonight's meeting packet titled CVSD Budget Summary for the Charlotte
151 Selectboard.

152 Meghan Metzler stated that they have been working on the budget with the current
153 Superintendent since July. There are many challenges and it's Act 127 tax redistribution that
154 caused the tax increase last year to be 18% in the town of Charlotte. Due to Act 850 there is a
155 declining tax discount. CVSD lost 17% of tax capacity. She went on to state that the way that
156 the students were counted changed and was negatively impacted by 17 cents. The Legislature
157 states that they will give CVSD 17 cents for FY25 and it will decrease by 20% each year. This
158 means for FY26, there is a decrease to 15 cents for the tax discount. Meghan Metzler stated that
159 enrollment has decreased by 250 students in the past couple of years and is expected to decrease
160 further. This is simply due to the fact that there are much larger Senior classes in comparison to
161 the Kindergarten classes. The other two challenges are continuing increases in benefit costs,
162 especially healthcare and Education Fund sustainability. The Governor has a new education
163 proposal that came out last week but more information is needed on this. It is safe to say that it
164 will significantly impact all public school districts in Vermont.

165 Meghan Metzler shared the slides on the multi-year approach.

166 Meghan Metzler stated that the FY25 budget was \$101,801,185 and the FY26 budget is
167 \$102,724,062. This .9% increase is due to increasing salaries, health insurance and other
168 benefits. To offset these expenses there have been personnel reductions and decreases in tuition
169 and professional services. Health insurance is expected to increase by 1.4 million dollars. This
170 is determined for the school district at the state level and therefore isn't something that CVSD
171 has any control over. She went on to state the personnel reduction consists of a total of 38.85
172 personnel. Last year this number was 42 in order to meet the budget. This has been incredibly
173 difficult for the school board, the administration, the teachers and the students.

174 Meghan Metzler stated it should be know that the board has taken other avenues to try and
175 resolve the issue such as giving approved for an early retirement incentive early in the school
176 year.

177 Meghan Metzler stated that the main factor that determines our tax rate at the town level is our
178 cost per weighted pupil. Based on what happened with Act 127 students in each town are
179 weighted based on different levels of need. Those that need more resources legislature weighs
180 them more heavily. She went on to state that there are 3600 students but after applying the
181 weighted student amounts it comes to a 5,685 Weighted Student Count. CVSD is the largest
182 district in the state but there are other districts that have way more weighted pupils because of

183 the different make up of the student body. What determines the tax rate for the town of Charlotte
184 is dependent on Net Ed. spending per weighted people. Net Ed spending is defined as the
185 amount of money that we are going to take from the education fund and overall. The per pupil
186 spending increase is 3.3% for FY26.

187 Meghan Metzler stated that the Governor's plan will not have any effect on FY26 and will not
188 come into play until FY27. With that being said many things could change between now and
189 June.

190 Meghan Metzler stated that it is expected that taxes will decrease in all the CVSD towns
191 anywhere from 2.2% in Charlotte to 4.9% in Hinesburg. The tax rate is determined by the CLA,
192 Common Level of Appraisal. The state looks at towns like Charlotte which has been reappraised
193 more recently than Hinesburg or Shelburne. The state determines the CLA by looking at all of
194 the Grand list values in the town of Hinesburg and then they'll compare that to recent home sales
195 in the town of Hinesburg. The CLA is meant to help the tax rate be more equalized. She went
196 on to state that Charlotte's tax rate is higher than the other towns because the state calculated that
197 Charlotte's home values/fair market value increased by 12% year over year and the other town's
198 home values/fair market values increased by approximately 8% year over year.

199 Meghan Metzler stated that the CVSD budget is voted for by Australian ballot. It will not be
200 voted off the floor.

201 Discussion was had regarding personnel reduction by position. This is provided in a detailed list
202 within the power point that is available in tonight's meeting packet.

203 Scooter MacMillan asked if the Governor's proposal to go to five school districts will mean
204 that CVSD will be absorbed into another school district and there would no longer be a
205 superintendent?

206 Meghan Metzler stated that from what she understands there would be one school district that
207 would cover Chittenden County, Franklin County and Grand Isle, which is approximately
208 34,000 students. There would be one board made up of part time paid school board members.

209

210 **Discussion, and possible action, on a Trails Committee request to apply for the Recreation** 211 **Trails Program Grant**

212 Jack Pilla stated that the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant is a grant that Nathaniel
213 Bareham made the Trails Committee aware of back in the Spring but they weren't able to begin
214 work on it until this past October. It's a grant for both the building of trails and trail maintenance
215 but it's awarded based on a point system and they give more points for doing trail maintenance
216 than they do for the building of trails. The final application is due by January 31st which is this
217 coming Friday. Unfortunately, there was a delay with the preapplication because it got hung up
218 in the server not getting submitted and therefore once it was submitted the whole process was
219 delayed. The Trails Committee didn't get word that they had been approved until last week
220 giving them little time to complete the final application process. He went on to state that the way
221 the program works is it's a reimbursement program and a matching funds program which makes
222 it a little more complicated. This grant would be used for trail maintenance of the Town Link
223 Trail from Mt Philo Rd and all the way to co-housing. It would include resurfacing, adding
224 gravel, leveling and getting things back to where they should be.

225 In the end the program cost is about \$50,000 and of that the grant would reimburse \$40,000. The
226 Trails Committee needs to put in \$10,000 and volunteer efforts can count as this \$10,000 of
227 which most of it will be and easily with all the volunteer work. The challenging part is that there
228 is a need to put all of the \$50,000 up front before there is any reimbursement. The labor needs

229 to be done prior as well. The Trails Committee will know for certain if its been approved or not
230 by the end of March. The work can't start until July 15, 2025, at the earliest.

231
232 Lewis Mudge arrived at the meeting in person at 7:35 p.m.

233
234 Jack Pilla stated that the Trails Committee is requesting from the Selectboard the use of \$40,000
235 from the Trails Reserve Fund to do this work on the Town Link Trail. Once the work is done the
236 grant will reimburse these funds.

237 Discussion was had regarding the project budget and the RTP project work.

238 Lewis Mudge received confirmation that there is a waiver that is signed by the volunteers.

239 Jack Pilla stated that he will have the final application finished by the end of day this Wednesday
240 and submitted to Nathaniel Bareham who will make sure it gets to everyone and not hung up in
241 the server like the pre application was.

242
243 **MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Kelly Devine, to approve the Trails Committee**
244 **request to apply for the Recreational Trails Program Grant that requires a 20% match on**
245 **the part of the town of Charlotte and with the condition that the final application gets**
246 **approval by the Chair and the Town Administrator. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion**
247 **Carried.**

248
249 **Discussion, and possible action, on an Energy Committee request to hire a consultant using**
250 **MERP grant funds.**

251 Deirdre Holmes stated that the Energy Committee has been working on a proposal for a very
252 time sensitive opportunity to expand on the solar array on the town garage in order to meet the
253 Town Plan energy goals and capture significant savings for the town for future energy costs.

254 The Energy Committee would like to have an Energy Consultant check their work and refine
255 their proposal. She went on to say that a very qualified Energy Consultant, Tim Post was found
256 who's interested in this work and agreeable to work within their small budget.

257 Discussion was had regarding where it specifies that MERP grant funds can be used for the
258 hiring of an Energy Consultant.

259 Nathaniel Bareham stated that he was given verbal confirmation from the MERP grant
260 Administrator that the hiring of an Energy Consultant is a qualifying expense for MERP grant
261 funds. He will get further confirmation of this for the Selectboard if they desire.

262 Jim Hodsons stated that the language of the contract with the Energy Consultant highlights and
263 acknowledges that there is a \$4000 cap. Therefore, any extra work done by the Energy
264 Consultant would be a loss for the Energy Consultant and not a cost to the town of Charlotte.

265 James Faulkner received confirmation from Jim Hodsons that the town of Charlotte has no
266 obligation to continue onto phase two following the completion of phase one.

267 Nathaniel Bareham stated that the fact that the Energy Committee had four interviews with
268 different contractors that this would suffice for the rule of needing at least three bids/quotes.

269 Jim Hodsons stated that the first phase is a study/analysis phase and if it revealed an approved
270 plan and the finances were agreeable there would be a second phase where the Energy
271 Committee would work to implement it.

272 James Faulkner stated that it needs to be clear that the Selectboard's approval will need to be
273 granted before anything further is implemented.

274 Jim Hodsons concurred with this directive.

275 Tim Post stated that he is a Consultant for Energy Matters and his experience includes over a
276 decade of renewable energy implementation. He went on to state that the scope of this work is
277 likely to be as much as 80-120 hours. He has decided that he will give a grant to the town of
278 Charlotte for his work for anything that goes above the contracted 40 hours of work.

279 Kelly Devine received confirmation that the additional hours that exceed the contracted 40 hours,
280 the Energy Committee members are committed to donate their time as well.

281 Further discussion was had clarifying that the project can't proceed past phase one without
282 Selectboard approval.

283 Deirdre Holmes stated that the Energy Committee has already received approval for the grant.

284 Jim Hodsons presented on the Charlotte Energy Modernization power point titled Charlotte
285 Greenification power point within tonight's meeting packet attachment.

286 Jim Hodsons stated that the Energy Committee looked at the Town Plan goals for energy. They
287 also took into consideration what's going on in the world in general and the changing legislation.
288 This collective information got them on their current path to put something together to
289 potentially act on. Act 179 was passed in Vermont and this took away the ability to do virtual
290 net metering which is what allows for an array on one parcel to generate energy for another.

291 He went on to state that with virtual net metering going away the Energy Committee applied for
292 CPGs, Certificates of Public Good, in order to be grandfathered in and received 5 CPGs on five
293 of the seven town properties. So, the town can do limited projects under the old virtual net
294 metering laws if desired. The town reserves the right for about a year and we are already six
295 months into that so there's a bit of a time crunch. There are federal incentives.

296 James Faulkner received confirmation that the Town Garage solar system has been
297 grandfathered.

298 Jim Hodsons stated that hiring an Energy Consultant will also allow for clarification of the
299 Federal/State Incentives. The Energy Committee figured out that the town of Charlotte needs
300 somewhere around 45-60 kilowatts of energy. It is estimated that there would be somewhere
301 around \$120,000-150,000 in savings over the next twenty years. The more that is done at the
302 start the higher the financial benefit in the long run.

303 Discussion was had regarding needing to get not only the Selectboard's approval but the tax
304 payer's approval as well with the implementation of any plans that involve the installation of
305 solar arrays.

306 Tim Post stated that the granted CPGs, Certificates of Public Good, expire July 31, 2025. They
307 can be extended one more year but you have to have a concrete reason to be granted this
308 extension. As an example, not having the materials available to finish the project would be a
309 concrete reason but not having made a town wide decision on the project isn't a concrete
310 rationale for an extension.

311 Carrie Spear stated that she would like to know what town lands are going to be assessed for this.
312 She went on to state that it seems as though the town buildings have been getting updated
313 weatherization for a long time now and it's not clear what else could possibly need to be done.

314 Jim Hodsons stated that the five town properties of the seven that the Energy Committee applied
315 for are; the Town Hall property, the Fire & Rescue property, the Senior Center property, the
316 Greenbush property and Thompson Point. These properties would be specifically for solar
317 arrays. If the weatherization is already done then it's done and in that case the focus would be on
318 the heating and cooling being electric. Purchasing and installing heat pumps is a potential
319 money savings option.

320 Carrie Spear asked about the longevity of the solar panels and recycling.

321 Tim Post stated that solar panels actually last 50-100 years and not 20 years. They degrade at
322 .4% per year, which is less than 1% every two years. After 50 years they are still operating at
323 80% capacity. Therefore at 100 years they're operating at 45-47%. Currently there is no market
324 for recycling panels but there is a market for replacing older panels for newer panels. At the age
325 of 15 to 20 years.

326 Carrie Spear stated that she would recommend not doing anything for the next year due to the
327 new administration in the White House.

328 Jim Hodsons stated that waiting a year would be fiscally irresponsible and it wouldn't be in
329 alignment with what is in the Town Plan due to the fact that the virtual net metering will be gone
330 and the rate changes for credit will be in effect once the Certificate of Public Good expire,
331 which is July 31, 2025.

332 Further discussion was had regarding the contract needing language on independent contractor
333 status and how to move forward with contingencies being included if a motion were to be made
334 this evening. Kelly Devine shared her legal document with the necessary language to potentially
335 be used and to be reviewed by the Town Attorney.

336

337 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to approve a scope of work**
338 **consulting agreement between GreenEdge Energy Solutions, LLC of South Burlington and**
339 **the town of Charlotte for a contract not to exceed \$4,000, that would be funded by a**
340 **Municipal Energy Resiliency Program grant which has already been received contingent**
341 **upon the addition of standard contract language created by the town, pending approval by**
342 **the Town Administrator and Selectboard Chair and any additional legal review or other**
343 **documents as required. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

344

345 **MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by James Faulkner, to recess for five minutes to allow**
346 **Kelly Devine, Lewis Mudge and Nathaniel Bareham to confer prior to the executive**
347 **session. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

348

349 **Selectboard discussion of negotiations with AFSCME Local 93 – Possible executive session**
350 **per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B)**

351

352 **MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Kelly Devine, to find that these discussions of a**
353 **pending labor relations agreement with AFSCME Local 93, would place the public body at**
354 **a substantial disadvantage. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

355

356 **MOTION by Lewis Mudge, seconded by Kelly Devine, to enter into executive session**
357 **pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) for the discussion of a pending labor relations**
358 **agreement with AFSCME Local 93. I further invite Town Administrator, Nathaniel**
359 **Bareham, into this session. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

360

361 **MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to exit out of executive session.**
362 **VOTE: 5 ayes, 0 nays; Motion Carried.**

363

364 Kelly Devine stated that no action was taken during the executive session.

365

366 **Adjournment**

367

368 **MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to adjourn. VOTE: 5 ayes, 0**
369 **nays; Motion Carried.**

370

371 The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

372

373 Minutes respectfully submitted by Brooke Milo, Minute Taker.

374 Edits by Nathaniel Bareham.

DRAFT