

CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD MEETING
Monday, January 08, 2024
Charlotte Town Hall 159 Ferry Road and via teleconference

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

ADMINISTRATION: Nathaniel Bareham Town Administrator

OTHERS:

In person: Lori York, Tanna Kelton, John Snow, Patrice Machavern, Anne Marie Andriola, Margaret Woodruff, Charles Russell, Maura Wygmans, Julianna Phelps, Devin St. George, Polly Price, Sy Koerner, Nicole Conley, Robert Fletcher, Leyland Papa

Remote: Alexa Lewis, Brett Yates, Carrie Spear, Jonathan Silverman, Junior Lewis, Kim Findlay, Peggy Sharpe, Susanna Kahn

AGENDA ITEMS:

3:30 PM	Maguire Site Visit – 2760 Spear Street
6:30 PM	Adjustments to the Agenda
6:31 PM	Approve Warrants to Pay Bills
6:35 PM	Public Comment
6:40 PM	Maguire Highway Access Permit (HAP-23-08) – 2760 Spear Street
6:50 PM	Updates on the Current Budget Items
7:00 PM	Department Budget Presentations
7:45 PM	Charlotte Volunteer Fire & Rescue Discussion on Capital Requests
8:00 PM	Presentation of Vermont Bond Bank Documents – Possible Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A)
8:20 PM	Liquor License Application – Crust & Cork LLC
8:25 PM	Special Meeting for Discussion of Committee Budget Requests & Finalizing Budget
8:30 PM	Approve Selectboard Meeting Minutes for December 18, 2023 & December 27, 2023
8:35 PM	Selectboard Updates
8:40 PM	Adjournment

Call to Order

James Faulkner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He went on to state that the Maguire site visit at 2760 Spear Street took place at 3:30 p.m. today.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Approve Warrants to Pay Bills

Warrants were signed.

Public Comment

No comments were made.

Maguire Highway Access Permit (HAP-23-08) – 2760 Spear Street

James Faulkner stated that he was present at this site visit as well as Nathaniel Bareham and Junior Lewis. The application includes two curb cuts one on Spear St. which is ready to go and the other on Hinesburg Rd. He went on to state that he suggests that these two permits be separated and submitted as two separate applications. The HAP application is not designed for two permits on the same application. James Faulkner stated that the permit that was looked at is on 2760 Spear Street. In order to comply with the B71 regulations there are two necessary steps to be taken for this HAP which will be to move the telephone pole guide wire and to create a swale. He went on to state that a swale will need to go between the building and the road and will need to go from the north end of the HAP down around the building and will head to the

west of the building by about 50 yards. The applicant is willing to take these measures in order to keep the potential water runoff from the driveway out of the intersection.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by James Faulkner, to approve the HAP application at 2760 Spear Street from applicant Jonathan Maguire with the condition that the telephone guide wire be moved as well as construction of a swale that will go from the north end of the entrance down around the building 50 yards to the west which sets it in the wetland. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (Tenney); Motion Carried.

Updates on the Current Budget Items

Mary Mead gave a presentation on the updates to the current FY25 budget beginning on page 4 under Revenues.

Mary Mead stated that under the category Miscellaneous the Village Wastewater Fees line item is estimated at \$2,000. These fees are from other buildings hooking onto the towns sewer system. She went on to state that the fee schedule is yet to be solidified so this is likely underestimated. To date there is one business that is hooked onto the town sewer system.

Frank Tenney joined the meeting in person.

Mary Mead stated that under Expenses and the category Employee Benefits and the Health Insurance line item there is an estimated amount of \$250,000. This figure was generated by using the existing health plan premiums for the first half of the fiscal year followed by a premium increase by using the same increase in premiums that was seen in the 2024 calendar year along with a \$65,000 estimate for the deductibles.

Mary Mead stated that under the category Town Lands and the Village Wastewater System Maintenance line item there is an estimated \$8,000. Museum Maintenance line item is set at \$1,000 based on past amounts. This is just for their phone line at this time.

Mary Mead stated that under the category Town Garage and the newly added Supplies line item there is an estimated \$2,500. Under the Utilities line item there is an estimated amount of \$18,000. This is based on the December GMP invoice.

Mary Mead stated that under the category Town Hall and the Equipment line item there is an estimated \$15,900. This comes from information given by the Tech Support group.

Mary Mead stated that under the category Intergovernmental Taxes and Dues and the County Tax line item, the budgeted amount has increased from \$44,000 to \$45,854 with updated information from their budget received on this date.

Mary Mead stated that under the category Debt Service and the Solar Panel Bond line item, the payment is \$31,689. This is the updated schedule that came for the Bond Bank for this project.

Discussion was had regarding next steps for budget planning and it was highlighted that there will be a tax rate increase this year due to the capital projects that have occurred for the town of Charlotte including the Town Garage and the Solar Project.

Department Budget Presentations

Nicole Conley reviewed the Charlotte Recreation budget information giving justification to the increases. She read from the Charlotte Recreation Budget Information 2024-25 and the FY24-25 Budget Break Down documents in the packet and posted on the town website.

Discussion was had regarding Nicole's presentation.

Nicole Conley confirmed that the Recreation Commission is expecting the Town Beach Revenue to increase. Last year there was a budgeted amount of \$37,000 for the beach and this year the budgeted amount is \$44,000. For revenue it was \$61,009 which actually came to \$73,000 totaling \$117,000 for the Recreation Department.

Margaret Woodruff stated that the Town Library originally had a budget with a 1.47% decrease but following renegotiations with the custodial contract the budget is now a 0 balance budget.

She presented the Charlotte Library Draft Budget Memo: Fiscal Year 2024-25 and the Charlotte Library Draft Budget that shows the changes that have been made from past years and the efforts made to keep costs consistent from year to year.

John Snow, president of the CVFRS Board, stated that it's important to note a few things starting with the fact that last year the town of Charlotte discontinued the CVFRS Capital Reserve Fund that had been in use for over 20 years for CVFRS. For FY25 there is a \$22,500 capital need which represents the Thermal Imaging camera and firefighter protective gear. John Snow stated that this is included in the operating budget despite this being part of the Capital Reserve fund in the past. The main item driving the increase in the budget is the personnel expenses, which is 93.6% of the budget increase. He went on to state that the hopes are that there is an existing balance in the Fire & Rescue Capital Reserve fund that could be used for the \$22,500 capital need. There is a 4.7% increase in the proposal for appropriation if the \$22,500 has to come out of the operating budget vs. the Fire & Rescue Capital Reserve fund. If it could come out of the Fire & Rescue Capital Reserve fund the increase would only be 2.4%. He reviewed the CVFRS Budget Trends - Preliminary FY25 document as seen in the packet.

Kelly Devine stated that Mary Mead reports that the Fire & Rescue Capital Reserve fund is at an amount of \$20,583. Kelly Devine was given confirmation that of the \$1.019 million expense request, \$936,000 is delegated for payroll and payroll related expenses.

John Snow stated that the workmen's compensation decreased due to Patrice Machavern's negotiations with a new vendor.

Charlotte Volunteer Fire & Rescue Discussion on Capital Requests

John Snow presented the CVFRS slideshow which is included in the packet. He stated it's time to replace the 2014 ambulance and CVFRS asks the Selectboard to put a warned item on the Town Meeting agenda for the town of Charlotte to vote at the March 2024 Town Meeting to approve bond funding not to exceed \$365,000 for the purchase of this replacement ambulance via Australian ballot.

John Snow went on to state that CVFRS runs two ambulances, as a primary and a backup. Each ambulance has a useful life of ten years and the first five years the new ambulance is run as the primary ambulance and the older one of the two is run as back up for the last five years of its use and so on. John Snow stated that the ten year life time use is a product of research and conforms with the national and local standards for ambulance use. The 2014 ambulance is having maintenance issues which is to be expected due to the age of the ambulance. He went on to state that due to supply issues, it will take 2.5-3.5 years to get the ambulance from the date of order and payment is made on day of delivery. Following RFPs, it has been determined that Braun will be the vendor of choice. CVFRS did look into reusing some of the different subsystems of the 2014 ambulance included in the RFP, to reduce the cost of the new ambulance. This reduced the cost to \$356,000 but the ambulance will still need a video system installed.

Patrice Machavern stated that CVFRS doesn't typically do averages of calls per day because there is such variance. Last calendar year there were 600 calls so that would equate to 2 calls per day but there are days that there have been 7 calls in a day.

John Snow stated that transports make up about 50% of the calls and transports are the only services that are billable. Recently VT Medicaid has changed some of their policies and because of this billing non-transports is under review by the CVFRS board and plans are being made to bill for non-transports as well. He went on to state if the Government isn't going to pay then it's pointless to bill as payment won't be received. John Snow went on to state that ambulance services should be regionalized. The agencies work very collaboratively. John Snow went on to state that to his knowledge it's not a requirement to have two ambulances but it's best practice as a licensed ambulance provider to be ready to go when needed which requires a back up ambulance. All of the surrounding agencies have two or more ambulances. Discussion was had regarding planning for an informational meeting to occur prior to Town meeting along with the warning etc.

Approve Selectboard Meeting Minutes for December 18, 2023 & December 27, 2023

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Kelly Devine, to approve the Selectboard meeting

minutes of December 18, 2023, as may be amended. VOTE: 3 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent (McCarren & Mudge); Motion Carried

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Frank Tenney, to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of Wednesday, December 27, 2023. VOTE: 3 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent (McCarren & Mudge); Motion Carried

Lewis Mudge joined the meeting in person.

Special Meeting for Discussion of Committee Budget Requests & Finalizing Budget

Discussion was had regarding scheduling a Special Selectboard meeting for discussion of Committee Budget requests and finalizing the FY25 budget. Plans were made for the Special meeting to take place on Tuesday January 16, 2024, at 7 p.m.

Discussion was had regarding the set date for Town Meeting being Saturday March 02, 2024, and the disadvantage of the date being on the Saturday over the week of the Charlotte school's winter vacation, due to the potential of many residents being out of town. All concurred that although unfortunate, at this point in time it's best to proceed and leave it as scheduled.

Presentation of Vermont Bond Bank Documents – Possible Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A)

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Kelly Devine, to go into Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss contracts with an invitation to Nathaniel Bareham and Attorney, Robert Fletcher, to attend. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Kelly Devine, to exit out of Executive Session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Frank Tenney, to adopt the Resolution and Certificate as submitted relative to the town of Charlotte's loan agreement with the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank to take the actions there in. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.

Liquor License Application – Crust & Cork LLC

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Lewis Mudge, to recess as the Selectboard and convene as the Liquor Control Board. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.

Leyland Papa, sole owner of Stones Throw Pizza stated that it's his hopes to reopen on Tuesday January 30th following the health inspection which is scheduled to take place on January 24th. He went on to state that he is leasing the premises.

Discussion was had regarding his contact information.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Kelly Devine, to approve the application ID# 34858 for a second class liquor license - Crust & Cork LLC as presented, to be signed by the Chair. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Kelly Devine, to adjourn as the Liquor Control Board and reconvene as the Selectboard. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCarren); Motion Carried.

Selectboard Updates

Kelly Devine stated that with the fact that many Charlotte residents had re-evaluations of their properties that resulted in substantial increases to the value of their properties, and with the projected town tax increase on top of the state tax increase she has some concerns.

Discussion was had regarding the town budget. Concerns were expressed regarding the Trails Committee requests and CVFRS request for a \$365,000 bond.

Patrice Machavern stated to correct the record there are two people staffed 24/7 at the CVFRS and not four.

Lewis Mudge asked when the new ambulance would be delivered.

Patrice Machavern stated that the new ambulance will be a 2025 truck which would be delivered sometime in 2026 due to the supply change.

Discussion was had on past research to compare what other town's are spending on Fire & Rescue as well as the benefit of separating the CVFRS bond vote via Australian ballot to see where the town stands on that individual issue.

Discussion was had on the benefits of separating the Town Departments in general.

James Faulkner stated that it's advantageous to make clearer to the town residents where the expenses are coming from and supplying pie graphs per department deems helpful. When reading the budget, it's difficult for the average tax payer to understand.

Kelly Devine stated that the Recreation Department has done a great job with revenue and they offer programs that residents value.

Discussion was had regarding potential projected revenue to help with the budget increase.

Kelly Devine stated that some budgeted revenue could be charging for memberships for the Senior Center. Two thirds of the people that use the Senior Center aren't residents of Charlotte. Further discussion was had regarding tax payer's concerns over the CVFRS budget.

Lewis Mudge stated that he needs at least another week to wrap up the project of concluding where the Selectboard stands in regard with the Town Manager and Town Administrator debate. Due to the open meeting law this is taking additional time.

Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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