

CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD MEETING
October 21, 2024
Charlotte Town Hall and via teleconference
DRAFT

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS: James Faulkner, Chair; Frank Tenney, Vice Chair; Lewis Mudge (absent); Kelly Devine; Natalie Kanner

ADMINISTRATION: Nathaniel Bareham

OTHERS: Scooter MacMillan, Robert Caldwell, Patrice Machavern, Ed Silva, John Snow, Maura Wygmans, Charlie Pughe, Carrie Spear, Alexa Lewis, Jr Lewis, Nina Regan, Lindsay Smith, JD Herlihy

AGENDA ITEMS

6:30 PM Adjustments to the Agenda

6:31 PM Approve Warrants to Pay Bills

6:35 PM Selectboard and Town Administrator Updates

6:40 PM Public Comment

1 6:45 PM Selectboard interview, and possible appointment, of applicants to the Inclusivity Working Group – Possible executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(3)

2 6:50 PM Quarterly Review of CVFRS FY25 Budget Actuals

3 7:05 PM Presentation of the Senior Center's proposed FY26 Budget

7:20 PM Evaluation of two Town Employees – Possible executive session(s) per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

7:40 PM Discussion of the employment of a Town Employee – Possible executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

4 7:55 PM Discussion of a labor relations agreement with the AFSCME Local 93 – Possible executive session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B)

5 8:15 PM Discussion, and possible action, on a Charlotte Public Library request to install information signs at the Library's gardens

6 8:30 PM Committee request for unbudgeted expenditures:

1. Trails Committee request to allocate \$2,000.00 from the Trails Reserve Fund

7 8:35 PM Review of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's Charlotte Villages

Planning Project

8:50 PM Discussion, and possible action on, waiving a Public Records Act fee

8:55 PM Approve Meeting Minutes for September 23, 2024

9:00 PM Adjournment

James Faulkner Called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Adjustments to the Agenda

Senior Center tree issue added to the agenda at 7:05. This will replace the presentation of the Senior Center's proposed FY26 Budget.

Approve Warrants to Pay Bills

Selectboard and Town Administrator Updates

Jim Faulkner said Vermont Bond Bank will be at the Town Garage next Monday at noon with people from the federal government and the USDA to celebrate Charlotte's fossil free, solar, and geothermal beta testing. Charlotte will now serve as a model for other towns nationwide.

Nathaniel Bareham said the Energy Committee requested to give two members of the Selectboard a presentation on their energy savings plan. Jim asked for more information before the two members are delegated.

Kelly Devine commended the organizers of the Tractor Parade.

Public Comment

Alexa Lewis asked about tree planting. Nate said he will call her in the morning with information.

Jr Lewis asked about Ferry Road speeds. He asked to revisit the issue. Jim said he will get it on the agenda in the next meeting.

Selectboard interview, and possible appointment, of applicants to the Inclusivity Working Group – Possible executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(3)

Nina Regan was interviewed. The group will consist of four community members and one selectboard member. Natalie Kanner is serving in this capacity. Nina raised concerned about bias. Natalie said that would be an appropriate question to ask in the first meeting of the group after it is formed. There have been very few applicants. Natalie asked if the Selectboard wanted to reconsider Bill Stuono and Margaret Woodruff. Jim said seeking applicants who do not already have positions in Town governance was still the goal.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Jim Faulkner, to appoint Nina Regan to the Inclusivity Working Group . VOTE: 3 ayes, 0 nays; 1 abstain (Frank Tenney); 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Quarterly Review of CVFRS FY25 Budget Actuals

John Snow said the new Director of Emergency Services and Chief of the department is Richmond resident Jamie Valyou. He's was a chief at the Burlington Fire Department for more than 25 years. He starts November 4th. CVFRS Treasurer Robert Coldwell presented the first quarter financials. John explained the only billable activity is hospital transport. Call volume is the number one determinant of patient revenue. This quarter, call volume is light. This explains why revenue is down. The majority of revenue comes from Medicare and Medicaid. There are an average of 600 calls per year. With staffing problems, not all calls are able to be covered. CVFRS has mutual aid agreements with neighboring services. These agreements are an integral part of how emergency services operate in Vermont. More staff on duty in the station means more calls covered, creating more revenue. Natalie asked for an assessment of other town's services. She said she wanted to know if what CVFRS asks of the town is comparable to what others ask. Jim said comparisons have been done and that CVFRS asks for, and offers, more than other towns. Patrice Machavern clarified that Charlotte, Vergennes, and Shelburne all offer one ambulance and two emergency personnel 24/7. Six paramedics work for CVFRS. Charlotte was the only paramedic service in the area until last year. Shelburne now offers a paramedic service. Historically Charlotte has had paid staff whereas Vergennes and Shelburne were able to operate with volunteers. As the volunteer pool diminishes across the state, more emergency services operate with a paid staff and it is highly competitive since there are a low number of certified EMS workers available, John said.

Senior Center Tree Removal

Estimate presented by Lane Morrison and reviewed by the Selectboard.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to award the Senior Center Tree Removal work to Bartlet Tree Experts for no more than \$1,850 as presented on 10/11/2024. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Discussion of the employment of a Town Employee – Possible executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to enter into executive session per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) for the evaluation of a town employee with the understanding any decision made will be during open session and to invite Nate Bareham into the session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to exit executive sessions per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

No action was taken during executive session.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Frank Tenney, to proceed with an annual review of Town Administrator Nate Bareham and the two members appointed to represent the selectboard in that process will be Natalie Kanner and Jim Faulkner. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Evaluation of two Town Employees – Possible executive session(s) per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to enter into executive session per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) for the evaluation of a town employee with the understanding any decision made will be during open session and to invite Nate Bareham into the session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to exit executive sessions per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

No action was taken during executive session.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to accept the letter of resignation received October 20th from Tracy Brown who is presently serving as Senior Center Coordinator stating her intention to leave the position and acknowledge that the letter included an extensive narrative that could rise to the level of personnel issues. Nate Bareham will investigate further. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to enter into executive session per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) for the evaluation of a town employee with the understanding any decision made will be during open session and to invite Nate Bareham and Charlie Pughe into the session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Jim Faulkner, to exit executive sessions per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

No action was taken during executive session.

Kelly said a plan will be presented at an upcoming Planning Commission meeting in the first week in November regarding how the Selectboard will proceed to meet the immediate planning needs following the departure of Larry Lewack the current Town Planner.

Discussion of a labor relations agreement with the AFSCME Local 93 – Possible executive session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B)

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to enter into executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) for a discussion of a labor relations agreement with the understanding any decision made will be during open session. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

MOTION by Frank Tenney, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to exit executive sessions per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

No action taken.

Kelly Devine referenced the Town received a letter from AFSCME Local 93 requesting the Town enter into negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement, and to provide certain materials in support of those negotiation.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Frank Tenney, to designate Dina Atwood of Stitsel Page and Fletcher, as the designated legal representation in negotiations with the AFSCME Local 93 Union to include Selectboard members Lewis Mudge and Kelly Devine, with support from Town Administrator, Nate Bareham, to represent Town employees; to include that the Selectboard has yet to hear a decision from the library board as to whether they would like to have their employees represented by a member of their board at those negotiations or if they are asking the Selectboard to assume that responsibility on their behalf. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Lindsay Smith from the Library Board of Trustees said a response was submitted to the Selectboard last week. Jim said they were aware of the response and that it didn't address the question. Follow up information will be given to the library board, Nate said.

Discussion, and possible action, on a Charlotte Public Library request to install information signs at the Library's gardens

Rain garden, pollinator garden and food garden signs are slated to be installed. Photos were reviewed. Price and location was reviewed. Margaret Woodruff provided a spreadsheet of information. Volunteers will install the signs.

MOTION by Natalie Kanner, seconded by Frank Tenney, to approve a Charlotte Public Library request to install information signs at the Library's gardens based on the information presented. VOTE: 3 ayes, 1 nays (Jim Faulkner); 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Committee request for unbudgeted expenditures:

1. Trails Committee request to allocate \$2,000.00 from the Trails Reserve Fund

Information presented by Nate was reviewed of flood damage, and funds donated by a resident to repair the trails. Kelly asked for written documentation of what will be needed for trail repair. This is not a purchase, it is a reallocation of funds Natalie explained, therefore, purchasing requirements should not be requested for this. A policy for reallocation of funds is not in place at this time, Natalie said. Frank said the Selectboard asked for a description and still hasn't received one for this work. Natalie said the purchases are below the amount required for the purchasing policy to be enforced here, that the \$2,000 is not all one project. Each purchase is under \$1,000. They are repairing multiple trails. She reiterated that this is simply a request for fund reallocation, not a request to purchase. The \$2,000 was a donation specifically for the Trails Reserve Fund. The Trails Committee is simply asking to have access to those funds to repair sections of the Town Link Trail. All donations go through the reserve fund. The committee is spending money out of their own budget to repair damage to the trails that a donation is tagged to fund. They are asking for access to the donation given to them, Natalie said. The Selectboard is being asked to release their donation from the reserve fund. A procedure for releasing donated funds from the reserve fund to be put into budgets is needed. JD Herlihy said members of the Selectboard are overthinking this issue. The donated funds should be put into the budget they were slated for. JD also said the Selectboard needs clear expectations for volunteers and from the boards. A reallocation of funds request form is needed, Natalie said. And a form for unbudgeted expenses, Frank said. Frank inquired about waivers for volunteers.

MOTION by Jim Faulkner, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to authorize the Trails Committee request to move up to \$2,000.00 from the Trails Reserve Fund for the repair of the Town Link Trail. VOTE: 3 ayes, 1 nays (Frank Tenney); 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

PM Review of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's Charlotte Villages Planning Project

This item will be taken off the agenda. Jim Faulkner stated that the Selectboard would like the Planning Commission to weigh in before any decision is made.

Discussion, and possible action on, waiving a Public Records Act fee

The amount is \$20.58. There was an improper motion made in a Selectboard meeting and Maura Wygmans asked for public records to verify this, Natalie said. She refused to pay. Jim said that is incorrect and that the Town attorney was called. Natalie suggested waiving the fee.

MOTION by Kelly Devine, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to waive the fee for the Public Records request made by Maura Wygmans for \$20.58. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Approve Meeting Minutes for October 7, 2024

No minutes were reviewed.

Kelly Devine noted that Nate had COVID-19 the previous week and commended him for working through it.

Adjournment

MOTION by Jim Faulkner, seconded by Natalie Kanner, to adjourn at 9 pm. VOTE: 4 ayes, 0 nays; 1 absent (Lewis Mudge); Motion Carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lynn Monty, Minute Taker.