

Minutes of the Charlemont Selectboard

August 23, 2022

Recreation Earmark Funds Public Meeting at the Charlemont Fairgrounds

Present: Dan Girard, Marguerite Willis, and Valentine Reid

Guest: Marcia Tucci, Bill Coli, Mary Ellen Banks, Phil Banks, Patrick Banks, Jon Schaefer, Wesley Janssen, Bill Harker, Thomas Shields, Bella Levavi, and Sarah Reynolds

Dan Girard opened the meeting at 6:30 pm

The meeting opened with a discussion of the recreation Infrastructure Earmark. It was discussed as to the allowable uses, and projects that were considered

The project that jumped to the top was the purchase of the Willis property in the center of town. The reason that this was considered a good fit was that the property could be used for many things including:

- Parking
- River access
- Bandstand
- Visitor Center in the house
- Historical Society in the house also a possibility
- Place for local artist/businesses to display and or sell their products
- Solar panels could be installed over the parking for revenue
- A town pool on the property was also brought up as a possibility

It was discussed that all of the uses could be laid out in a study that could be completed on the property

The property purchase will depend on what happens with the court case it is currently incorporated in and if the heir wants to sell it. The other factor that would be worked through is the condition of the House on the property.

The goal would be to have the property at the very least be revenue neutral.

The fairgrounds were then discussed and the thought of what to do with any money that would be left from the Willis property purchase. It was mentioned that insulating and putting some work into the exhibit hall could help with the rental of the fairgrounds, and it also could be used as a command center in an emergency. It was also discussed that camping on the fairgrounds could help it produce more income and RV spots would be a great asset. Melding the camping with the other fairgrounds activities was brought up because if done incorrectly it makes for an awkward situation.

Community gardens were mentioned, but the property at the fairgrounds does not have good soil, perhaps at the Willis property if that happens, it was mentioned that this really seems like something that would be best done through Hawlemont because they already have the gardens and beds, but no one upkeeps them in the summer.

A walking path to the fairgrounds was brought up because of the safety of walking up 8A to access the fairgrounds, perhaps the town could reach out to the federated church.

The possibility of Grants to help with these projects was brought up it was explained that there are Parc Grants and community facilities grants that could be pursued.

It was also discussed that with the Willis property it would be nice if something could happen with the Charlemont Inn, If the case moves and the town is able to be involved it was asked if the Selectboard would consider that and it was suggested that the board try and take an aggressive stance on the Inns court case.

The idea of having things to do that were not recreation activities for those who come to town with the recreation seekers was also briefly discussed, it was pointed out that some families had members who may be more interested in exploring downtown if it had something to offer.

On a motion by Dan Girard and second by Marguerite Willis the meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm