

Meeting of the Charlemont Selectboard

June 6, 2022 6pm, Town Hall and Via phone

Present: Marguerite Willis, Dan Girard and Sarah Reynolds in Town Hall

Via phone: Valentine Reid and Bob Handsaker

On a motion by Marguerite Willis and second by Valentine Reid, Dan Girard will be the new chair.

On a Motion by Valentine Reid and Second by Marguerite Willis, Liaison roles will be put on the next agenda so Valentine Reid can review.

Administrator Reynolds reported on the planning meeting at Hawlemont on Wednesday evening, Dan Girard will help with the sound system and the planner will be there at 4:30 pm to set up. The planner gave a review of the ideas he has received ahead of the meeting, it was discussed that one of the ideas was for the town to purchase a property that can be used as parking, a river access and also a place for town residents to have a gathering spot. The building on the property could be used as a "visitor center" or some other resource with pamphlets/town information available as well. Valentine Reid brought up that the town could partner with someone like the DCR if we were to do a visitors' center and that could be a way to staff it.

The succession plan was then discussed Administrator Reynolds brought up sending comments about the report so that the group would know what the board felt to help with future reports. It was brought up that it should be mentioned that the report touches on some ideas that would be workable, but they did not put substance behind the ideas. The facilities position was brought up as an example. The administrator will send some comments to the succession folks.

The Hazard mitigation plan was discussed, the original plan had more than 30 action items, the new consultant and the Administrator had reviewed the action items on Friday and there are now only 25 after the first review.

Bob Handsaker joined for the broadband appointment, the resiliency grant that Colrain applied for, and included Charlemont as one of the 5 towns was awarded. The towns received \$400,000. To increase the resiliency and capacity of the broadband project. The grant must be spent by June 30th of next year.

The selectboard voted on a motion by Marguerite Willis and Second by Dan Girard, (Valentine Reid abstained) to approve the Cost sharing agreement for the resiliency project.

Bob Handsaker then gave a general status update; they are working as fast as they can to get customers hooked up and expect to have most of the work completed this summer that is left.

The selectboard then finished discussing the hazard mitigation items, it was brought up that the broadband infrastructure should be listed in the Hazard mitigation plan as well as brush fires for the forest land that makes up a large part of Charlemont, it was discussed how the Clarksburg fire this past summer certainly could have been a lot more destructive if it made it into the residential areas around it.

The elevator study update was given, it is complete as far as the grant paperwork, the only paperwork that will still come is the cost estimate. Administrator Reynolds will discuss this with Brian Devriese when it is ready.

Administrator Reynolds then asked if the board could open sealed bids on July 25th during their regular meeting at 6:30 for properties that were taken for nonpayment of taxes. Both properties are smaller and do not have houses on them.

The board discussed the woodland partnership meeting, the administrator will contact Jay Healy to see if he plans on attending the meeting June 7th

On a motion by Dan Girard and second by Marguerite Willis it was decided a letter to the one Highway applicant that the town received would be sent.

The board then discussed the committee for the future of Hawlemont. It was decided that the board would have the administrator email John Hoffman and tell him the board feels the school committee should come up with the members for this committee. The committee is working on items that coincide with the new school committee's task. It was also mentioned that the funding for the schools is where the problem is rooted and that they are underfunded as we are aware. The money that Paul Mark may be able to secure is too little to late and hopefully with this rural commission report maybe something can be done to address the funding.

The tall grass at the cemeteries and by the Bissell Bridge was then discussed. Suggestions for addressing the lack of funding and need for help to maintain the cemeteries included possibly asking landscaping companies if they would do it for free advertising (being able to put a sign that states "mowed by and the company" The administrator is to reach out to Bill Harker to as about the Bissell Bridge area, and Bonnie Lee Nugent to ask about the Leavitt cemetery frequency and timing of the mowing.

The administrator will also keep track of the hours spent on seasonal summer work such as the mowing.

The KP Law rates were discussed, it was decided that Valentine Reid would do some price shopping and get back to the board.

The board reviewed the assessors notice of acreage change.

On a motion by Marguerite Willis and second by Dan Girard the warrants and KPlaw invoice were approved

On a motion by Dan Girard and second by Marguerite Willis the Speed Signs and sidewalk maintenance equipment grant was approved for signature

On a motion by Marguerite Willis and second by Dan Girard Patsy Bergeron was appointed to the vacant Board of Registrars position.

Selectboard priorities were then discussed:

- Valentine Reid - priority to keep the towns rural character, but also balance farmers and tourism in town
- Marguerite Willis- Revenue, things like looking at the opportunity zone, allowing for housing play a big part in this

- Dan Girard- Finances, lowering taxes, the elderly is not able to pay taxes that are increasing at these rates. Also mentioned the appearance of Main Street and pursuing grants to help residents restore their properties. Room for expansion in town without losing identity. Hopefully the rec tax goes through, and the Inn can have something done with it.

It was then mentioned for next meeting they would like to talk about the recall committee (from town meeting) and also codifying the bylaws.

On a motion by Dan Girard and second by Marguerite Willis the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm