

**CHARLEMONT SELECTBOARD**  
**NOTICE OF MEETING**  
**Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, 6:00 pm**  
**Via Conference call and in person, Town Hall Meeting Room**

**Members in attendance:** Jared Bellows, Valentine Reid, Bill Harker

**Others in Attendance:** Jay Pelletier, Ben Duga, Kyle Sweeney, Karl Zimmerman, Kristie Faufaw, Mike Sisum, Anna Cronin, Bruce Lindsay, Liesel Nygard, Thorne Palmer, Sarah Reynolds, Star Atkeson.

**Val called the meeting to order at 6:05**

**Appointments:**

6:00 pm: Job Descriptions – Town Administrator, Assessors Clerk

Add all other duties as assigned and add educational requirement to Assessors' Clerk job description. Sarah will get the name of the required course.

Administrator's job description. Val thought some of the wording should be changed, especially around the supervision aspect of the job. Should have both "direct supervisor" of employees and "indirect supervision" of committee and department members like Blandford's job description. Sarah will put edits in to the 2 job descriptions and send it back to them.

6:15pm: Jason Pelletier and Karl Zimmerman- RE: new Police officer appointment

Chief Pelletier came to ask the Select Board to appoint Chicopee resident and Hamden County Sheriff's department employee, Karl Zimmerman, who is Bridge Certified, to the Charlemont Police Force. The Board interviewed Karl Zimmerman and were satisfied with his answers to pointed questions.

Jared Bellows is very happy with the Charlemont police officers who were trained in patrolling in Charlemont. He is happy for Charlemont to continue training new hires on how it works in Western mass.

**Bill Harker made a motion to accept and appoint Karl Zimmerman to The Charlemont Police Department. Valentine Reid seconded it. Jared Bellows abstained. All voting were in favor.**

6:30 pm- Alcohol License Hearing – Haven of East Holdings LLC / DBA: Dirt Church Brewing Co. located at 31 Main Street Charlemont

Valentine Reid read the Hearing Notice for the Alcohol pouring license. Val and Sarah went over all the details required for the hearing and made sure they were in order. There was no substantial comment from abutters and no one from the public was present for the hearing. They chatted about the food options and everyone was excited about the new business.

**Bill Harker motioned to approve the alcohol pouring License. Valentine Reid seconded the motion. All in Favor.**

**Valentine Reid motioned to close the Alcohol pouring License for Haven of East Holding LLC. Jared Bellows seconded it. All in favor.**

**Administrator reports:**

1) Budget requests for FY 25

All budget requests are in. Sarah is waiting for the FRCOG assessment and insurance assessment. The Select Board will need to decide what to recommend for the employee cost of living allowance (COLA). The

Board wants the current and updated wage and salary survey to be able to compare each position and how it compares with the county. Sarah will email them the information. They will discuss it at the next meeting.

Bill would like to look into getting a town department mechanic to save the town money on vehicle maintenance costs. He got clarification on how that could be budgeted. It could be added to the HWY salary line item or contracted services line and subtracted out of the maintenance line.

2) Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority Loan Fund Report for Charlemont

The Board viewed the report for the loan fund. It is being used by Charlemont residents.

3) Hawley Request for a February meeting about possible MBI application for broadband service.

They will offer Hawley February 12<sup>th</sup> to meet regarding connecting their new Broadband to Charlemont's system.

4) Representative Blais Meeting February 20th at 5 pm.

Natalie Blais will come on Tuesday February 20<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM, to go over Charlemont's priorities.

5) District Local Technical Assistance Request Forms from Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

This is due back to FRCOG on January 31<sup>st</sup>. the Select Board will read through the options at home and get back to Sarah with their top 3 choices.

6) Abandoned Housing Committee Request

FRCOG has asked that towns re-form The Abandoned and Derelict Housing Committee. Previously the committee had been made up of Fire Chief, Town Administrator, Select Board member, Planning Board member, board of Health member. They would like a list of houses that could be addressed for renovation. Val has an interest in housing and would like to be on the committee.

**Jared Bellows made a motion for Valentine Reid to act as Select Board representative. Valentine Reid seconded the motion. All in favor.**

7) South River Road Bridge Gil Engineering Proposal review and vote.

**Valentine Reid motioned to accept the Gill Engineering Proposal. Jared Bellows seconded. All in favor.**

**Liaison reports:**

1) Town Clerk Hiring Committee – Recommendation from initial round of applicants.

Jared Bellows, Select Board representative on the hiring committee reported that the committee strongly recommended Thorne Palmer. The second recommendation was Elizabeth VanInderstine.

Val would like to have a 30-minute conversation with both candidates. Sarah will reach out to the candidates to make appointments.

2) Police Succession Follow up and vote on policy from Police Chief for second in command.

Jay submitted a draft of what he will post in the station regarding Ben Duga taking over while he is away. There does not need to be a new policy, The 2IC and chain of command is enough. There is no vote required.

The Select Board would like to know the Chain of Command in the Charlemont Police Force. Officer Ben Duga will send it in an email to the SelectBoard.

**Agenda items:**

**1) East Oxbow Bridge Project, Selectboard Determination on Tree Removal and Trimming within the project layout.**

An engineer for the East Oxbow Bridge project asked about tree hearings. Which had not been done previously. Sarah talked to the attorney about it. In general, there does not need to be a hearing for trees which are outside of the layout. If trees are within the public way layout, the attorney advised Select Board to make a motion in a public meeting with the intent to be written, with the following specific language:

**Valentine Reid motioned, in regards to the East Oxbow Bridge proposal, that trimming or removal is required on any trees in the public way layout which obstruct, endanger, hinder and incommode travelers in the completion of the road improvement project. Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in favor.**

**3) Employee handbook changes to the conflict-of-interest law/ethics training links.**

Interim Town Clerk Thorne Palmer explained that there was a change in the employee handbook. There are new links for Ethics Training. It hadn't been changed in the handbook. Thorne proposed to change it and put it online.

**Valentine Reid motioned to accept the changes as submitted by interim town Clerk. Jared Bellows seconded. All in favor.**

**4) Early Voting request from the Interim Town Clerk**

Thorne asked whether the Select Board would approve absentee voting for local town elections. They spoke about the cost in hours and postage. Thorne estimated that it will be \$50.

Thorne requested the Board to approve early, in-person voting for the March 5<sup>th</sup> presidential primary. There is an early voting grant to pay for the extra hours for poll workers.

**Valentine Reid made a motion to approve early, in person voting for the March 5<sup>th</sup> presidential primary**

**1) Saturday, Feb 24 1-5 PM, 2) Tuesday Feb 27<sup>th</sup> 9-12 PM, 3) Thursday Feb 29<sup>th</sup> 4-7 PM, for a total of 10 hours for the week. Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in Favor.**

**Approve/sign/approve and sign:**

**1) Vendor Warrants 2429,2423 and Payroll Warrants 2427,2428**

**Valentine Reid motioned to approve and sign payroll and vendor warrants. Jared Bellows seconded. All in favor.**

**2) Minutes from January 8, 2024**

**Valentine Reid motioned to accept the January 8<sup>th</sup> minutes as written. Bill Harker seconded it. All in Favor.**

**3) Mass Cultural Council Grant FY24 \$11,000**

**Valentine Reid motioned to accept the Mass Cultural Grant. Bill Harker seconded it. All in favor.**

**Regular meeting was adjourned to enter executive session at 7:45 PM**

Enter into executive session under exemption #7, to review confidential information on the Ambulance Billing reports and information related to The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Also, for reason #1 to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

\* To the extent known at the time of posting

The next scheduled meeting will be held on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Documents reviewed in meeting:

- Vendor Warrants 2429,2423
- Payroll Warrants 2427,2428
- SelectBoard Agenda for January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024
- Minutes 1/8/2024
- Email dated 1/4/2024 From Thorne Palmer to SelectBoard re: Early voting for next available SelectBoard meeting.
- Memo To: All Department Personnel From: Chief of Police Subject: Reiteration of Chain of Command Structure
- Fee Proposal dated 12/1/24 from Gill Engineering for South River Road over Albee Brook Deck replacement Design.
- Email dated 1/3/2024 from Jonathan Eichman to Sarah Reynolds re: Tree Hearing for East Oxbow Bridge project.
- Email dated 1/3/2024 from Sarah Reynolds to Jonathan Eichman re: Tree hearing question for East Oxbow bridge project. Included are emails correspondence with MassDOT from Carol Rogers, Chris Wall and Shahpar Negah.
- Email dated 1/12/2024 from Thorne Palmer to SelectBoard re: Employee handbook changes. Regarding conflict-of-interest link changes.
- 01/12/2024 Changes to the Employee handbook Conflict of Interest Training
- Assessment notice from FCSO Regional Dog Shelter dated 1/16/2024.
- Assessment notice from FCSO Regional Dog Shelter dated 1/11/2024.
- Town Administrator Job description
- Letter dated 1/5/2024 to SelectBoard from Franklin County regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority re: summary of Community Development Block Grant housing.
- Email dated 1/8/2024 from Tinky Weisblat requesting an appointment for the Hawley Select Board with the Charlemont Select Board regarding Broadband.
- FRCOG 2024 District Local Technical Assistance Request Form
- Email dated 1/11/2024 from Mass Cultural Council re: Grant approval.
- Flyer from Mass Historical Commission re: MPPF Grant Program
- Pouring License application hard Copy for Haven of the East Holdings, LLC