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TOWN OF CHARLTON
Minutes of Special Selectmen's Meeting
March 7, 2017 @ 6:30pm
Town Hall – Senior Center
All Boards & Committee Meeting

Present from the Board of Selectmen: Chairman – Joseph J. Szafarowicz and Vice-Chairman – John P. McGrath. Also present– Town Administrator - Robin L. Craver. Absent - Clerk – David M. Singer and Members – Cynthia B. Cooper and Frederick C. Swensen

Chairman Szafarowicz opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and for volunteering for what they do for the town.

Present from other committees: Heath Drury-Boote – Chair of the Cultural Council, Dan Charette – Police Department, Ross Lemansky – Planning Board, Russ Jennings – Municipal Building Committee, Dick Vaughan – TV Charlton and Board of Assessors, Stefan Sage – Chair of the Library Trustees, Kathleen Walker – facilitator of Charlton Candidates Night, Chip-In, Recycling Committee, Earth Fest Committee, Chairman of the Old Home Day Committee and the Fay Mountain Farm Committee, Jerry Doble – Finance Committee and Ann Sellew – Animal Control Officer and Animal Inspector.

Chairman Szafarowicz started off the discussion stating that he spoke with the Town Clerk and the day to pick up nomination papers is quickly approaching. There are a lot of positions currently unfilled. He asked Mrs. Sellew to start off the discussions.

Ann Sellew – Animal Control Officer/Animal Inspector – she does all phases of animal control work which includes picking up animals, housing them, complaints from people, licenses with the assistance of the Town Clerk. This year the Animal Inspector services has been added to Animal Control duties. For that, she does barn and kennel inspections. She also does the quarantines. Mrs. Craver stated that she does a great job. Chairman Szafarowicz asked if the new structure of adding the positions together, does she feel like its working and Mrs. Sellew said yes. She also said that she received a 2016 Ford Transit van which was donated by Casella.

Chairman Szafarowicz stated that Mrs. Craver and Chief Charette have to leave for another meeting and asked if they could give a brief description of what they have been doing. Mrs. Craver stated that this has been a great meeting for boards to share what they are doing. She said that some things the Selectmen are doing, town meeting is coming up in May and are accepting articles at this time. Budgets are due. Several projects are coming on such as the waterline with Exxon and with that comes new roads. She is in the process of putting together an application to eliminate the water betterments. They have been working on getting water to another contaminated area in town near the landfill. In order to get that waterline in, they need to have enough people to hook up. There has been some reorganization in the town hall. We have hired an HR Director. She is happy to introduce Dan Charette who is our interim police chief. He will be helping with the process of an assessment center as well as with the Human Resource Director. Police Chief Charette said it's been a pleasure being here. He commended Mrs. Sellew for what she does. Barn Inspections alone, she has to go out and make sure the barns are in order to take care of the animals. He appreciates the support and opportunity to work with everyone. Mrs. Craver said that over the next couple

of months, the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee will be discussing budgets. If anyone has any questions, they can come and see her and she will go over it with them. Mr. Sage said he saw the article about the five million and five million and at the end of it, someone had made a comment about why should the state DEP contribute to fixing the problem using tax payers money when it was caused by a facility. He asked if that was going to be brought up in conversations in the future. As a taxpayer, he can understand the concern. Mrs. Craver stated that she would never speak for the DEP but there are some mitigating factors in this. One is that the landfill is owned by a town, a municipality, two is that they have not been able to show 100% that it is the landfill and another thing to consider is a landfill although is Southbridge has been a benefit to the state. She appreciated that DEP has stepped up to the plate to help. Mr. Sage asked if it would be transparent on who has to take care of what? Mrs. Craver stated she would think so. They wouldn't receive a betterment and their wells will be decommissioned for them. Mrs. Craver and Chief Charette had to leave the meeting.

Jerry Doble – Finance Committee Chairman said the committee works with the budget provided to them by the Town Administrator. Right now, we are in pretty good shape. The first meeting is the 15th. Ms. Walker said there's been a lot of concern over the past few years that the budget process should start sooner like in November/December. It's been brought forward a number of times. Mr. Doble said this year there has been a problem with getting free cash certified. Ms. Walker asked what happened this year? Mr. McGrath said that we have a new Accountant. Since the state had the early retirement buy out, a lot of people in the state have left and also DOR's rules changed. It's been difficult to get info over to DOR and receive info from DOR. Chairman Szafarowicz stated that the numbers are constantly changing. Ms. Walker thanked them for the explanation. Mr. McGrath stated that the Finance Committee is the one committee that takes the biggest hit regarding the budget. It's a thankless job and kudos to them. Mr. Doble stated that there are a few openings on Finance and if anyone is listening, they'd be happy to hear from them.

Mr. Vaughan said he had to leave to attend another meeting but wanted to leave his cards. One of the items on the agenda is transparency. He said in working with TV Charlton, it is amazing to him the number of people that watch the meetings. He said he would love to work with the departments especially the Finance Committee, to meet with him and do an interview. This helps let the residents know what's going on in town. He worked for another town before and was amazed at the people that came to town meeting unprepared. They didn't have correct information. He stated as far as the Assessors, they are doing fine. They are known as the revenue officers of the town. He said whatever Fin Com votes, they have to make sure the town has the money for it. Once town meeting is done and they have the number, they set the tax rate to make sure it's met. Mr. Sage said that not every one that attends town meeting comes unprepared. He studies the budget very carefully, when he presents something and there's a need for a vote. He has managed to save the town some money. Mr. Vaughan commended him for this.

John McGrath stated that the Fire Station Building Committee has been reorganized and meeting every Thursday at 4pm. This is a very important under taking for the site and whether to do just a fire station or a public safety building. The Board of Assessors has met with the Selectmen on the Millennium tax issue. There is a new owner there.

Kathleen Walker – Candidates Night will be on April 24 and anyone that is running for office is invited. Steve Coleman is the moderator for it. Chip-In is the food bank in the back of the town hall. Every third Saturday of the month, boxes are made up and given to residents that are in need. The Recycling Committee has been discussing littering. They went to the Board of Health to discuss it because their committee is formed by the Board of Health. They told them they had \$500 dollars and wanted to buy some anti-littering signs, and Matt Gagner, Chairman of the Board of Health at that time matched it so the committee had \$1,000. They went to the Highway and asked if they could get the signs would the

Highway put them up and he said yes. For Earth Day, roads are listed on the big map that will be at the Library. The Selectmen have each taken roads. She said the committee also heard that Chief Charette is possibly going to help and get cameras set up so if people litter and they get caught, he said in Southbridge the people were given the option to pay the fine or clean up some roads. Earth Day will be the last Saturday in April and they will have the earth fest on the common. Old Home Day is coming up. Fay Mountain Farm has a wonderful farmer, Neil Johnson. He has been pruning the apple and peach trees. He has the cider press going and the committee is really happy with him.

Stefan Sage said the Library is a 21st century library and it's an amazing place to learn. There is a quilt show going on and on Friday, Mr. Sage will be helping Paul Dawgiert who is a stained glass artist with some projects he is doing in the Library. There is a program going on Thursday night which is learning about Islamic Religion. Ms. Drury-Boote said she lives at Overlook Independent Living and every month there is an article in the resident newsletter from the Library letting people know what's available and what's going on. A lot of people use it. She said it's great. Mr. McGrath stated that he and his grandchildren love going there. Mr. Sage said that if anyone is looking for a book and the Library doesn't have it but another Library does, they can get it for you.

Russ Jennings – Municipal Building Committee said the Accessibility project has been completed and came in under budget. He said a lot of people put a lot of work into it. Now were moving onto other projects such as archival storage. They look at other buildings and how they will serve in the future and how to make it user friendly. Mr. McGrath said that one of the things that makes this committee work is someone like Mr. Jennings who is in construction and is able to come in and sit with us and keep us on the straight and narrow on the project.

Ross Lemansky – Planning Board said they have been really busy with solar farms and the Tree House Brewery. Karl Storz will be expanding. There will be a few more solar farms coming in. Chairman Szafarowicz stated that at the last Selectmen's meeting, marijuana dispensaries were discussed. He asked if the Planning Board has been approached yet. Mr. Lemansky stated not yet but they have been receiving information from the state. He stated that another thing was the complete streets project. They were awarded the grant for the sidewalks. Sidewalks have been reviewed and they know what needs to be updated. Mr. Sage asked what department deals with the law on private roads and the answer was the Highway Department. He asked if we wanted to eliminate private roads and make them all public, what department is that. Mr. McGrath stated that part of the problem for the town to accept a road, it has to be up to the standard needed. He reviewed the process. There is no mechanism for the town to accept them unless they are brought up to the necessary standards. Mr. McGrath stated that if people have questions about it, they could contact Town Planner Alan Gordon. He is well versed in it.

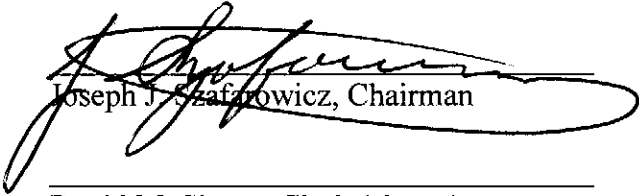
Heath Drury-Boote – Cultural Council which is an organization of volunteers that carry out the mission of the Massachusetts Cultural Council to promote the arts at the local level. The money they receive comes from the Mass Lottery and they have to give it out every year which they do in grant form. They also have an art show during the Old Home Day event. One of the goals of the council was to form a scholarship fund for a senior student furthering their career in art.

Ms. Walker stated that she serves on a lot of committees and it makes her happy. The research has shown that people that volunteer live longer and their happy. She would encourage everyone in town. Ms. Drury-Boote said there is a lot of opportunities at the Overlook but she wanted to help here. Chairman Szafarowicz stated that we volunteer because we care and thanked everyone that does and for what they do.

Meeting ended at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Devlin
Administrative Assistant



Joseph J. Szafarowicz, Chairman

David M. Singer, Clerk (absent)



John P. McGrath, Vice-Chairman

Cynthia B. Cooper, Member (absent)



Frederick C. Swensen, Member (absent)