

**Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 10/26/17**

MINUTES

A meeting of the town Selectboard was held October 26, 2017. Attending: Selectboard members Meghann Carter, Glenn Peterson, and Larry Young; Road Foreman Bernie Pepin; Head Lister Jean Wilson; Planning Commission Chair John Kellogg; Solar Subcommittee Members Tom Jensen and Diana Marckwardt; Engineer Tim Ruggles; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg.

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm.

Motion by Mr. Young to amend the minutes of the October 12, 2017 meeting to reflect the fact that Mr. Senz' pasture is used by Mr. Crown and not by Mr. Young, seconded by Ms. Carter and approved as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENT

As Lynwood Crown was not in attendance, Board Chair recognized Lister Jean Wilson who presented for Selectboard approval a contract for the hire of John Westinghouse as a consultant on the town-wide reappraisal, at a rate of \$35/hr with a cap of \$35,000 for the entire project. Services will be paid using special funds set aside for reappraisal, currently totaling about \$100,000. Board members took copies of the contract for review and will sign on Tuesday morning if no objections are raised.

Written comments were received. Resident James Smith stopped at the clerk's office to complain of excessive speed past his home on VT 105 just outside the east village. His dog was hit and killed recently. In an email, Kennedy Farms reports three years of repeated problems caused by loose heifers belonging to Lynwood Crown. Both will be kept on file.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of a Community Solar installation contract, and related financing documents, was tabled from the previous meeting. Regarding concerns about whether or not VEC could back out of the Town's net metering agreement, Ms. Marckwardt reports that the CPG ensures state and VEC commitment and guarantees the purchase of electricity at the current blended residential rate for ten years. After 10 years, the extra \$.04 goes away and the presented budget accounts for this. Ms. Marckwardt added that when legislative changes occur, existing projects are grandfathered and adhere to the rules under which the project was approved. She also noted that carrying the line of credit for early expenses will cost the Town about \$500.

Mr. Kellogg stated that his main concern was the stability of state political forces over the life of the project, and that he had reached out to State Senator John Rodgers, who sees the policy environment as relatively stable and feels that projects already granted a CPG by the state are likely in a stable position. At Rodgers' recommendation, Mr. Kellogg also contacted Andrea Cohen with VEC, who stated that it was VEC's intention to challenge only new renewable energy projects and not to look back at anything already granted a CPG. Mr. Kellogg stated that the overall financial risk for the solar project was not negligible but probably within acceptable bounds to sign the loan and send the deposit to the installer. He added that the great work done on the project so far needs to continue by monitoring installation and operation and reporting to townspeople going forward. He asked the Selectboard to consider formation of

an Oversight Committee—at least 3 people—which would start at 2018 Town Meeting to report regularly on risk, financing, status, and progress. He is willing to serve but prefers not to be Chair as he will be focused on the new Town Plan in the first half of 2018. Mr. Jensen and Ms. Marckwardt said they are willing to serve and will think about another candidate. Motion by Ms. Carter to create a Solar Oversight Committee to oversee installation, maintenance, and finances; report to the town at Town Meeting; and report directly to the Selectboard with at least monthly email updates and immediate notice of any changes as installation proceeds, seconded by Mr. Peterson and approved. Committee appointments will be finalized at a later meeting. Ms. Marckwardt noted that installation included an online monitoring capacity and suggests including a financial report in the next Town Report.

Further discussion of the project covered the following issues: Mr. Pepin wants to make sure that the installation is located to allow continued access to the bank face for excavation of winter sand—he suggests that closer to the road is better. Ms. Carter suggests a site visit soon to “re-stake” the precise array location. Warranty coverage includes: installation is covered for five years; panels are guaranteed for at least 80% production for 25 years; and inverters warranted for 12 years. Our budget considers replacement rather than extended coverage after 15 years. Mr. Jensen stated that electricity sale/purchase agreements with Charleston School and Charleston Volunteer Fire Department need to be arranged this winter, and that the budget commits funds for legal services.

Ms. Carter stated she saw the project risk as acceptable. The Selectboard will discuss further and notify the project committee after the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Bids for the replacement of Bridge #5 on Hudson Rd (near Mt. Bess Rd) were opened with the following bids submitted:

JP Sicard: \$110,235
Mathews Excavating: \$121,250
Wells Excavating: \$122,462
Dale Percy, Inc: \$128,850
Shawn Austin: \$168,500

Motion by Ms. Carter to award the job to J.P. Sicard, seconded by Glenn Peterson and approved. Ms. Kellogg will draft award and non-award letters, reach out to landowners, and inform VTrans so the Town can proceed with a structures grant.

Phil White of Kingdom Games submitted a request for Selectboard approval for the Echo Lake Swim on Wednesday, August 15, 2018, which will involve swimmers, kayakers, and one motor boat on the lake. They will use the NorthWoods property for access. Motion by Ms. Carter to approve, seconded by Mr. Young and approved.

VLCT will hold a Municipal Road Management workshop Weds, Dec 6th at the Capitol Plaza, Montpelier. Ms. Kellogg will register herself, Ms. Carter and Mr. Peterson.

NEKWMD will hold a public hearing on the 2018 budget. The Selectboard instructed Ms. Kellogg to see if Pat Austin will again represent the Town/board’s interest in budget discussions.

ROAD REPORT

Mr. Pepin reports that the crew has been chasing washouts from recent rains and done more ditching on Crawford Hill Rd since the last meeting. The Cole Rd box culvert is onsite and scheduled to be set by Alliance tomorrow. Mr. Pepin has looked at Better Roads work sites with Ms. Kellogg to start FY2019 grant applications and will meet with Shane Morin, VTrans, soon to discuss how to patch the Durgin Rd bridge abutment. The storms have delayed a much-needed start to installing snow whips and winter tires. The Town is in possession of the new pickup, and add-on equipment is about 90% complete, with the bed liner being sprayed tomorrow. He spoke with Pierre Dupuis, who is still interested in trading his stone material for the International dump truck that is for sale. He offered \$25,000 in sta-mat material at \$14/yd. Mr. Young said the Town is considering trying sta-mat to stabilize steep slopes, like the bottom of Dane Hill Rd; it has worked well on Rocky Ledge Rd. The board would like to hear if other towns have had success with sta-mat, and they feel the offer is low. Mr. Peterson will follow up with Mr. Dupuis and report back to the board.

Ms. Carter called for a decision on the solar project. Mr. Young still has concerns about the reliability of the state and prefers to abstain from vote. Motion by Ms. Carter to accept the terms of the contract, make down payment and proceed with financing through Community National Bank, seconded by Mr. Peterson and approved. Mr. Pepin is to be kept involved in locating array and underground line to ensure continued pit access.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm by motion of Mr. Young and Mr. Peterson. The next meeting is Thursday, November 9, 2017 at 7:00 pm.

Approved this 9th day of November 2017:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston