

Town of Charleston
Annual Town Meeting – March 3, 2020
Charleston Elementary School

MINUTES

Moderator Jean Wilson opened the meeting by calling attention to School and Town Report covers honoring the late Wayne Bowen and Richard Colburn, Sr., whose service meant so much to the Town of Charleston. Town Business began at 10:17 am. With Moderator Jean Wilson re-elected during School Business, business began with Article 2.

Article 2. To elect all officers as required by law.

- **Selectboard Member for a term of 3 years.** Larry Young nominated by Peter Moskovites, second by Audrey Frizzell. Pat Austin declined nomination. Unopposed, Larry Young elected for three years.
- **Selectboard Member for 1 year remaining of a 3-year term.** Pat Austin nominated by Linda Studer, second by Alice Letourneau. Unopposed, Pat Austin elected for one year.
- **Lister for a term of 3 years.** John Westinghouse nominated by Steve Wilson, second by Robert Wilson. Robert Wilson declined nomination. Unopposed, John Westinghouse elected for three years.
- **Town Auditor for a term of 3 years.** Janice Bowen nominated by Michael Morelli, second by Diana Marckwardt. Unopposed, Janice Bowen elected for 3 years.
- **Delinquent Tax Collector for a term of 1 year.** Grace Frizzell nominated by Linda Studer, second by Katherine Sloan. Unopposed, Grace Frizzell elected for one year.
- **Second Constable for a term of 1 year.** There were no nominations, and the office remains vacant. The Selectboard will look into appointment.
- **Cemetery Commissioner for a term of 5 years.** Sherman Allen nominated by Peggy Stevens, second by Sue Dwelle. Unopposed, Sherman Allen elected for five years.
- **Cemetery Commissioner for 1 year remaining of a 5-year term.** Darald Moulton nominated by Sherman Allen, second by Robert Devaney. Unopposed, Darald Moulton elected for one year.
- [School Director – Ryan Besaw elected for three years during School Meeting]
- **Town Agent to serve until the next annual meeting and until a successor is chosen.** Julianne Woolard nominated by Penelope Newcomb, second by John Kellogg. Unopposed, Julianne Woolard elected for one year.

Article 3. Shall the voters authorize the Treasurer to collect current taxes with a final due date of Friday, October 23, 2020, with the policy of turning over to the delinquent tax collector taxes not physically received by the Treasurer in the Town Clerk's office by 5:00 pm on October 23, 2020, with postmarks not accepted as timely payment? Moved by Nancy Engels, second by Jana Ferrie. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed. The Treasurer explained that mail can arrive long after a post-mark date, which means funds are not available, and late arrival complicates bookkeeping of on-time vs. delinquent taxes.

Article 4. Shall the voters authorize total fund expenditures of \$874,043.75 for selectboard, highway, and cemetery operating expenses for the year beginning Jan. 1, 2020, of which \$662,527.94 shall be raised by taxes and \$211,515.81 by non-tax revenue? Moved by Diana Marckwardt, second by Sherman Allen. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT:

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Passed. Asked about non-tax revenue, the Treasurer said these include items such as clerk and license fees, and highway aid. Selectboard Chair Peter Moskovites compared 2019 and 2020 budgeted expenses, \$871,000 and \$874,000 respectively, noting that actual expenses look higher because expended grant funds are included in this number. He added that an estimated .67/.68 town tax rate is in line with recent years.
[At this time, Moderator called for a ten-minute break.]

Article 5. Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to transfer the 2019 Road Surplus of \$5,820.04 to the Road Equipment reserve fund? Moved by Nancy Engels, second by Jana Ferrie. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.

Article 6. Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$14,179.96 to the Road Equipment reserve fund? Moved by Sherman Allen, second by John Kellogg. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: passed. Selectperson Larry Young said the board usually asks for a \$20,000 appropriation. This number plus Article 5 equals \$20,000. The town owns its equipment and must plan for replacement. The Town's loader has been repaired piecemeal and is next to be replaced. With the Barton gravel pit paid off in 2020, the board may ask to keep that ~\$54,000 amount in the annual budget to build the equipment fund. The board appreciates taxpayer/voter support for town roads, and encourages them to call when there are problems. Asked about the crew's winter schedule, Mr. Young said the crew doesn't have set hours, but is on-call to respond to storms and receives overtime pay.

Article 7. Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to the Charleston Volunteer Fire Department and direct the Selectboard to assess a tax over and above the budget to meet the same? Moved by Nancy Engels, second by Sue Dwelle. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed. CVFD Treasurer Blair Moulton said the tanker cost \$180,766. \$125,000 was financed with a \$14,841 annual payment for ten years. Morgan's appropriation was increased the same rate. Dan Whipple said the department puts funds into an equipment reserve each year, which covered the down payment on the tanker.

Article 8. Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$12,574 to the following organizations, which received appropriations of the same amount in 2019, and direct the Selectboard to assess a tax over and above the budget to meet the same? Moved by Nancy Engels, second by Jana Ferrie. Vote: Ayes have it. RESULT: Passed.

- a. \$500 to Charleston Historical Society for support of the museum and collection
- b. \$1,000 to Echo Lake Protective Association for milfoil prevention programs
- c. \$800 to NorthWoods Stewardship Center for conservation and education services
- d. \$1,100 to Dailey Memorial Library for services to residents
- e. \$700 to Island Pond Library for services to residents
- f. \$1,650 to Rural Community Transportation for transportation services to residents
- g. \$500 to Orleans County Citizens Advocacy for mentoring individuals with developmental disabilities
- h. \$200 to Orleans County Child Advocacy for the Special Investigations Unit serving child victims of violence
- i. \$600 to Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging for services to elder and disabled

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Vermonters

- j. \$1,074 to Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc. for mental health, substance use, and intellectual disabilities services to residents**
- k. \$500 to Pope Memorial Frontier Animal Shelter for care of unwanted pets**
- l. \$3,000 to Orleans Essex VNA & Hospice for community nursing and health programs**
- m. \$50 to GreenUp Vermont for the statewide cleanup event and bags**
- n. \$100 to VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force for the Dry Hydrant Program**
- o. \$100 to Vermont Symphony Orchestra Symphony Kids for performances for local students**
- p. \$700 to Umbrella for domestic violence prevention and services to victims**

Article 9. To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

There was discussion of local composting options, including a new composting business in Westmore and a workshop at Dailey Library in April. Charleston Chew is a new Facebook group catching the attention of new, former, and long-time residents.

Seeing no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:03 am.

DATED AT CHARLESTON, VERMONT THIS 3RD DAY OF MARCH 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

BCA

Selectboard

Moderator

Town Clerk