

Select Board Meeting minutes for 9-19-17

This open meeting was held in Charlemont Town Hall meeting room.

In attendance: Select Board members Sarah Reynolds, Beth Bandy, Marguerite Willis, Fire Chief Doug Annear, Lieutenant Hamel, Captain Shane Furlon, Fire Fighter Kevin Crowningshield, Ambulance Director Dana Johnson, and Town Administrator Peg Dean.

1. The Select Board called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. This meeting was a follow-up from a liaison's meeting with Fire Department and Emergency Services meeting held by Select Board liaison Marguerite Willis. The Select Board Chair opened up the meeting, stating there was a lot of feedback, not all good, from the liaison's meeting, where a lot of underlying issues arose. The hope from the Select Board is to find out what's going on, why some on the Fire Department feel the way they do and most importantly how the Select Board can fix it.
2. Select Board member Marguerite Willis read a prepared statement:

I have spoken with the Fire Chief and he indicated he would want it in open session. He also said it was up to me when I asked who he might mention at the meeting as they have a right to be informed. Again, the Chief left that up to me. For the record I want acknowledge all the good work done by Doug Annear for this town. He started as a teenager with his many volunteer efforts. I, personally, as a new EMT in the mid 1990s looked to him for his ability to manage certain scenes, particularly those that became a cluster (that's an in-house term). His experience and efforts as a firefighter and an EMT would/could/should be a model for community involvement. His dedication is a case study of how small towns work. His record of 38 years of volunteer service (that I'm aware of) is part of our dying culture. In June the Chief indicated to me that he would probably would leave in January. He expressed his concern about being personally liable for his personnel's training and equipment, particularly in light of a NJ Fire Chief being jailed for one year because a man died that he sent into a fire w/o proper training. In July at a meeting at the Firehouse with most of the firefighters present he again spoke to his concerns about his personal liability. At our joint meeting of Fire and EMS (8-30-17) the chief made at least five references to leaving in January or even the next day. At the All board meeting (9-14-17) he mentioned January or sooner for resigning. Each meeting had more issues under discussion but the chief consistently has indicated he does not want the personal liability. I would ask that the Chief resign now so we may proceed. His written suggestions would be appreciated as we go forward, particularly details on the NJ case, the statutory requirements for firefighting training, up to date evidence of training and certifications and his recommendations for future actions.

3. The Fire Chief stated no, that he is willing to resign tonight if that is what they would like but doesn't feel he could fill the requests at this time if resigning tonight. The remainder of the Select Board asked that he back up and please not resign. It was clarified that it is Marguerite's opinion that he should resign and not the opinion of the other two Select Board members. It was brought to the Chair that the Chief felt like he didn't have the Select Board's support, that the Select Board is favoring one department over another. As was explained to Charlie Hamel at a recent Select Board meeting, to explain why the Ambulance has been a priority for the Select Board, the Town needed to see the

Ambulance re-licensed, on the Select Board's agenda prior to Sarah coming onto the Board. The Fire Department doesn't need the Office of Emergency Medical Services' (OEMS) license to operate. The Chair would like to see the Select Board address both Fire and Ambulance issues.

4. The Chief mentioned that he shouldn't have directed so many of the issues towards Dana the night they met with Marguerite and said he'd apologized before he left that night. Doug stated that he has continued to say to Marguerite and to others that the Town is not ready to be the recreation capital, that if the Town wants to be the recreation capital it is not prepared. He feels the Fire Department has been left out of a lot of things from the Select Board over the years. Doug mentioned that, in conversation with Marguerite, she told him she thought Doug was one of the people that ran Kenny out of office, which Doug emphatically expressed was untrue. He doesn't know where that would come from but believes she is getting a lot of misinformation from certain people in Town.
5. Marguerite wanted to continue with her prepared speech:

*At our first June meeting at my home the chief and a firefighter expressed an objection to the ambulance director for being an *ss. I said they would have to be prepared to say that publicly if we could not resolve this outside of town hall. That complaint, the chief's perceived sense of personal liability, the pay disparity with EMTs, and training with ambulance were the matters discussed. The chief said I needed to hear that from his people. I asked for a copy of the state training requirements for firefighters/first responders. At our June 27th meeting at the firehouse with firefighters the same accusation on the ambulance director was made along with the statements "he acts like a cop", "he has a police mentality", he chooses who can ride on calls, and there was no training provided. The chief said, "If the law is changed about EMTs and First Responders, who will want to go"? I then asked "was it the intent of the group that the ambulance director be fired? With the exception of one person, all said "no" and in fact several said he knew his work and was very competent. The next meeting was arranged to be held at Hawlemont as it was considered a neutral spot. At that joint meeting (8-30) I asked the ambulance director to respond to the accusation that I described as acting like an *ss. The ambulance director started to respond but was interrupted by the Fire Chief. Then the fur started to fly. I take full responsibility for this out-of-control meeting. I thought it best to let all the venting to be done. I did not expect the range of new issues that came forward. For example, "nothing has been right for 25 years". Yes, someone may feel that way but that is not a reasonable complaint. For those not familiar with any kind of emergency work, sometimes any one of us could lose it in a moment of extreme tension and in general there is a wide berth of acceptance on behaviors (among firefighters and EMTs). But the chief was angry with his first utterances. His body just about vibrated with his anger. He could not sit still, he paced, he walked out at least 5 five times after yelling "you'll have my letter of resignation tomorrow", commented that the town has its head up its butt, said we should be regionalizing and then attacked the regional schools, spoke again of his sense of personal liability, said we should regionalize fire departments. Finally an EMT asked him "what was wrong?" as she could not follow what he was saying and said so.*

6. After, Doug put his badge on the table. Beth jumped in and stated that the purpose of this meeting was to find out the issues, whether in open session or in Executive session, where the Board would get to hear the issues and be informed about what's happening. Instead, the Select Board have someone resigning before they hear what the issues are.
7. The Chief stated he doesn't know what Marguerite's problem is against him but there is definitely some tension here right now. Doug admitted he did lose it, in his words, at that meeting with Marguerite because they were in his opinion all blind-sided at the meeting; those meetings shouldn't happen because what is happening at this present Select Board meeting is usually what comes out of it. Doug mentioned that he went through this with concerns over a special event at Berkshire East; he went to a meeting with Toby that was supposed to be a cup of coffee. It got out of proportion, which he said Sarah knows happened. Sarah stated that was why she wanted to bring everyone here, that she may be naïve, but she believes when everyone is doing their job, the jobs are not the issue; it's the other stuff that comes with it. If there is a Fire call and the Ambulance has to be there, they can work together. It's the underlying issues, such as pay, training, feeling like the Town didn't support equipment requests. Sarah stated it was Select Board's fault too; she's been working on bridges for three years, getting into one thing, realizing she is not paying attention to the bigger picture. Sarah has a problem asking Doug to resign when, as Marguerite stated, he has been the Fire Chief, been in the Fire Department since he was a teenager, he has so much knowledge. Sarah doesn't want it to end that he leaves upset or thinking that the Select Board hates him, to which Marguerite stated she doesn't think anyone wants that. In Sarah's words, Dana can be an ass to people; that's in his nature. Sarah reminded all that, as she'd stated in the All Boards Meeting, they're not all going to love each other. If the underlying issues are adding stress Sarah feels the Select Board can help. Beth mentioned that they can take whatever they learn from this meeting and potentially make some of those things a priority. Doug mentioned that it goes as far back as when Kenny was Chief, that it is reflected in the state of the Fire House right now. The Select Board haven't supported any of those issues in Doug's opinion. He doesn't know who was on the Board when Mr. Tower was on the Board, but Mr. Tower ran Kenny Hall out of that Fire Department and Doug was not a part of that. Beth mentioned that Vaughn, Dave, and Jeanie made up the Select Board for the most part, that Beth was coming on right at the tail end of that, present for one meeting.
8. Doug stated that the burden falls on the Select Board at this time because he is a weak Chief. He said some people have asked why not have a strong Chief. If the Town wants to be the recreational capital, it is going to have to hire some type of administrator to make sure the laws are being followed. Doug said that Marguerite mentioned wanting to let things bubble up and then deal with them, but he stated that we can't. He stated that we have to be proactive. He stated we have Peg helping us out tremendously, saying he thinks if the Board let Peg do her job, the Select Board could concentrate on some other things that maybe would benefit the Fire Department. Doug admitted he is frustrated right now, and he apologized to Dana for the previous meeting, saying he and Dana have had more than one argument in his lifetime.
9. Between pay, training, their request for equipment, and the appearance of the Fire Station, he feels like the Town doesn't support them. Maybe this is the year that the Town focuses on its Emergency Services. The Chief suggests sharing a full-time Chief with Heath and who oversees the Ambulance. There are different options that the Town can look at but it is a fact according to Beth Bandy, that it

costs more money to run these types of departments in recreation towns. Looking at different places across the country, maybe we don't need to go full-time; maybe we need to look at what the unique situation is here, but this is something that is going to cost a lot more for the Town. There are a lot of expenses that we have not been paying as we should've been, so we're trying to catch up, plus get ahead of this curve.

10. The Fire Chief mentioned that when he came into this position he tried to make sure all the Firefighters were trained to be FF1 and FF2, stating that they successfully got eight through both. The Chief then tried to start enforcing some laws in the Town and everyone became upset with him. He brought up that he had an appointment at the school, that someone must have spoken to the Principal in advance of him following up with the Principal about the appointment and that the Principal thought the Chief moved things around in the school. When the Chief asked for a police report on the alleged things that had been moved, the School wouldn't provide one. As a result, Doug was told he is not allowed in the school after hours as the Fire Chief without someone with him; he stated that is not true, that as Chief he can go in that school anytime he wants, or at least he could have, but he won't anymore. There is somebody who always has to stir up trouble. Maybe Vaughn will step forward and become the new Fire Chief. To clarify for Beth, this was not referring to the meeting last year regarding the school inspections, but another inspection he did recently during the night of the meeting with Marguerite. When he called the Principal to talk to her the next morning, the Principal was already on the defense, and it turned into a big situation in his words.
11. Marguerite stated that this was the first time she'd heard Vaughn's name used, that he's not here to defend himself, that she wouldn't have thought to invite a former Select Board member. She stated she is concerned because each time she talks to Doug the list of concerns gets longer and longer, to which Doug stated he'd resign.
12. Again, Marguerite stated she didn't finish her report. Beth clarified that what Marguerite is stating is inflammatory and that it's not helping them hear what the Fire Department has to say or get to a place where they can help. Marguerite continued to read her prepared statement.

A long term firefighter, Shane Furlon, said "if we had a disaster now, we would all work together. That broke the tension. An EMT said to the firefighters that they had no idea the firefighters were so upset and offered an apology. She suggested training together. But in that discussion, many of us realized that the joint training that used to occur was changed when Firefighter One and Two came into being. Thankfully, others stepped up. Shane Furlon, Tracy Hall and Melissa Dekoschak quickly, quietly and efficiently resolved the issue of joint training. There will be six sessions a year; three on a Firefighters' meeting night and three on EMTs meeting night. As liaison I will coordinate with Shawn and Tracy with a definite review in 3 months. Questions/complaints on protocols come up and the ambulance director answered them by way of OEMS requirements. Copies of first responder certificates and current drivers' licenses are not a negotiable item. (And that was important for him to have a chance to say that because some of the firemen my impression was that it was being arbitrary and it wasn't.) To my knowledge most people left the meeting with the majority satisfied that issues of training were resolved. Some problems, such as a complaint that nothing has been right for 25 years and personal animosities, were not going to be resolved. I called Sarah, told her who attended

meeting and asked her to pick a few to call to get their impressions. (I do even not know who she talked to. I wanted to follow up with a few people to find out what was their impression of that meeting.) I don't know who she called. To sum up, your was initially directed at one person, and it was deflected, and you expanded to whole town, certain individuals, the Board, how people vote, and everything else. At the same time we have to understand that each Department or Board thinks their request should be first. We are not able at this time to fund everything that is being demanded of the town. We can not plan around his behavior that seemed most erratic. (It was scary.) While he may be concerned about liability, it cannot become a threat.

13. As was stated in Marguerite's speech, Sarah was asked by Marguerite to follow up with a few people from the previous meeting to get their impression. Based on Sarah's calls, she felt that things are fixable. Getting Dana the firefighters' licenses and certificates, for instance, is easy. Sarah admits the meetings should've been done differently, for instance with each department separately and then a meeting together. Sarah doesn't want Doug to quit tonight for very selfish reasons; Sarah gave the example of how she came on as an Assessor and in the first month the whole board quit because there was an issue going on there which no one mentioned to Sarah in advance. Similar, she doesn't think it will be beneficial to the Department if Doug just walks away, saying they will be worse off. There are personality differences for everyone, but Sarah believes that people know a lot more than the Select Board do when it comes to their expertise; there is knowledge there that no one else will have.
14. The Fire Chief again put his badge on the table saying Marguerite's comment that the crew didn't know they need their licenses and certificates provided to Dana is not true; they all know it's a requirement. That's a no-brainer. Chuck Hamel chimed in that he's been on the Ambulance. Doug jumped back in saying that Dana has always been very open about needing licenses, that you have to give him your driver's license and your first responder card, saying he's not sure where Marguerite's coming from, that the Fire Department didn't realize they were required. Marguerite said it was based on their comments from the meeting with Dana, that they were asking Dana about it. Marguerite thought what was good about that moment at the meeting with Marguerite was that they were challenging Dana on it, to which Dana responded that he has to have it every year. Kevin Crowningshield stated they all knew that though, that they've always had to give him their driver's license.
15. The Ambulance Director asked if he could jump in, stating he's not sure he should be here at this point in time. In reference to needing drivers' licenses, Dana stated that because it did come up at that meeting, he currently doesn't have an up-to-date copy of everyone's driver's licenses, first responders, and CPR cards from the Fire Department. He has to have one annually according to OEMS. Per Dana, he does theirs every January. He needs a copy of their driver's license, CPR card, and first-responder card, and when Doug first took over it was handled, but Dana doesn't have current copies right now. Dana doesn't get as excited about it. What bothers Dana is when he's sitting with the Inspector as he was in March, April, May, and the Inspector is looking through everything "how come you ain't got this, how come you ain't got that." Dana then has to come up with a plan of correction for all that stuff. The Inspector didn't hit us too badly on that one. There was another issue that the Inspector was concerned about, with one that's an EMT riding with us, he said the Inspector wants to see the preceptor documentation that the person hadn't had a chance to obtain yet because they didn't have the call volume yet. Dana said, "they are pretty sticking with that stuff".

16. Dana thinks there were some issues brought up that they, as EMTs weren't aware, were as much of an issue. For example, he brought up rubbish. Since he came there in 1980, the Fire Department's always taken care of the rubbish. Dana said he's addressed that issue now. Dana will make sure the Ambulance will take care of their garbage. There was a food item left there because they have a dinner meeting every time they have a meeting. Dana felt like it was progress that the Fire Department told them there was a problem and it was addressed. All the EMTs at the meeting with the liaison didn't know what they were coming together for, that - as it was said - shouldn't have been one meeting and then another before coming together, but they learned from it.
17. In Dana's opinion, they really need to look at working with the Fire Department and the Ambulance. There was a project Dana spoke to one Fire Fighter about, who was involved in acquiring an item. Just off the top of Dana's head, he asked the firefighter some questions what he thought about it. Maybe the departments can work on a project to benefit both departments, but primarily the fire department through the auspices of the EMTs or in some instances first-responders. (Dana never stated what the project was or gave any specifics.)
18. Dana stated that they are looking at training, which he saw as a positive thing. Years ago they did have people come to the training. What Dana thinks happened was that their training was a little more generated towards the Ambulance Department so that it may not be appropriate for someone who may not have had the training. "We've already addressed this." According to Dana, the Chief Training Officer has already said they will schedule trainings that work for both departments, so Dana saw positive things come out of that meeting. Someone referenced that we discovered the training schedules changed with the onset of FF courses so the joint CPR training was set aside.
19. As far as the recreational center of New England, Dana's not sure how we were awarded that honor. He's not sure if it's self-promotion from somewhere within the Town, from the companies, but he then stated "recreation does have an effect on us," and further stated, "currently [he] thinks it has to be looked at."
20. Dana gave an example of the two-day bike race last weekend at Berkshire East; they ended up having one incident out of it. Dana was consulted by Gabe Porter Henry about the need for Emergency Services on site in advance of the event, and stated that he didn't feel comfortable telling Berkshire East they should have to have an Ambulance at the event; The problem in Dana's opinion was that the Franklin County Fair was the same weekend, and every Firefighter and Ambulance was going to be there on Sunday. He suggested if you looked through the pictures after the fact, present at the Fair were Colrain, Shelburne Falls, BHA, and Northfield. Dana doesn't send our Ambulance there because he knows all the ambulances are at the Fair. The only times it goes is when it's a brand new truck but other than that we don't go. It's the same thing as the Fourth of July; he won't send it to Shelburne Falls because he knows Colrain is there. Dana stated "Does it look bad that Charlemont doesn't want to put their ambulance in the parade, yes it does," but he said he has to look out for what's in the best interest of the people here and not the people in the eastern part of the county. Dana stated that "it's the same thing with the Mountain. Sarah knows [he] has worked with the Mountain, with Gabe, to try to better their response and where they pick people up. Doug is right, liability does fall on your shoulders." Because the liability does fall on the EMTs and Dana when they touch the patient, Dana and Gabe designed a map showing where extrications will take place, that he is working out with Shelburne

Control. Yes, we've run into a bug or two. He sent the maps out to every Ambulance service that covers the area and one service forwarded the email but didn't put the map in the truck, so there was a bump in the road. He knows there are going to be bumps. Dana said he agreed the Town can't afford the full-time services that we need because he said he needs to look at the call volume vs whether or not it is worth it, and this year the Ambulance hasn't been overly busy for mountain biking but, he continued, the first year that everyone was complaining, he had Shelburne Control run him the numbers. From January 2016 – January 2017 there was only 5 bicycle accidents that the Ambulance was dispatched to, and that's all the ambulances in the county. "Does it have an effect on us, yes it does. Last year we had a bad winter at the mountain, a lot of calls, but in fairness to the Mountain, he went back to 2010 and 2011 and they had more calls back then, so it all depends. You've got to do five-year studies. We agree that the Town has to see where they want to go with this, and they have to look forward."

21. Sarah said this is the stuff we want to address; obviously, it is an issue. She stated that they got doing bridges and some other stuff and that this is obviously an issue, things that are on the Departments' radars that the Town could really work on. Communication is not that great, Sarah admitted, saying she should've checked in and then tried to figure out what she can do to help this. That is how she's been working with everybody that she's been liaising with. Or for instance, with Massachusetts Department of Transportation, she asks what does she have to do to fix this. What list can she take away and reasonably work on to feel like the Select Board is trying to help you?
22. Beth stated that they need a list, these are the priorities they need to work on. It sounds like the cooperation that's going on is a good foundation. Beth isn't worried about the Departments working together on that level. What she's worried about is what are the things that the Town and the Select Board need to do to push this year so that the Select Board can make certain things happen, such as the state of the Fire Station and a number of other issues. Doug stated they've been trying for three years, to which Beth said wasn't totally true, but yes the Fire Department hasn't gotten everything it needs, certainly. She went on to state that the Select Board pushed for equipment, grants and lots of things that they didn't do before. They tried to do some things within the framework of how much money the Town has, such as the windows, but if this is an issue where everyone is quitting, the Select Board need to reprioritize. Doug stated that others aren't quitting, that he is resigning, yes, after Marguerite's letter, and because of the last 6-8 months, what he has put up within the Town, it's not worth it.
23. Dana doesn't want to be going after Doug, agreeing that he's done an excellent job in the Town over the years. Since their meeting with Marguerite, they've been on at least 2 or 3 ambulance runs and haven't had an issue. Dana stated that he sits on some pretty big things, going to list them. He ran the executive committee for western mass emergency medical service. It covers all the ambulances and hospitals in western Massachusetts. He was on the Executive Board for 10 or 20 years. He ran the Franklin County EMS Committee as the President for 15-20 years. He currently sits on the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Radio Communications Systems board. He has trouble with the FRCOG with this, but with all other Committees, they do this. Dana understands that they are guests in the Charlemont Fire House, or at least they feel like guests because they just have the space for the ambulance and the two closets, but on all these other projects, they are prioritizing, asking themselves what the issues are, because right now the issues are being thrown out there, valid issues, but what other issues. But what other priorities are out there that they all need? This project that Dana hasn't talked to

Doug about yet “but could be a project both departments work on could be a priority.” Dana sees a lot of frustration over and a lot of people saying they didn’t know. Beth mentioned that it’s not that they didn’t know, that these things have come up at different points. It’s the fact that they’re all coming together at this point and that there is a badge on the table that is the issue. That it has gotten to this point is the concern. Beth reminded everyone they’ve talked with the Finance Committee about the state of the Fire Station, about how are they going to look at municipal space in general for instance. What the Select Board has been trying to do is set their priorities, for example keep the bridges upright, and a handful of things it will take effort to focus on. Each year the Select Board will set these four or five things to work on. Sarah is trying to set up this structure, saying here is a list of priorities the Town needs to work on, and the Town can’t make any progress if we can’t figure out what those priorities are.

24. Doug stated he has brought those priorities up, reminding the Select Board that he asked them in a previous meeting what kind of a department they wanted in this Town. If the Town can’t follow all the rules and regulations of the state, Doug can’t be part of it. For example, certain people don’t want rules enforced at the school, or certain people want more rules enforced in other areas of Town. The Chair agreed that is not how we run the Town. Being a weak Chief, Doug can’t tell the crew they have to do training. He can’t tell them they have to be FF1 and FF2. Doug gave the Select Board job descriptions. He can’t enforce those rules and regulations. Sarah asked what he meant that he can’t enforce the rules. Doug explained that he can’t tell his crew that they have to go get 15 hours of training in certain aspects of firefighting. Sarah stated this is a problem they’re addressing, but it takes a little with the State.
25. What happens when someone who doesn’t go to the trainings or meetings shows up to a fire. Beth said this has come up repeatedly, but we established three years ago that these people are not supposed to be going on runs. Part of this comes back to communication. If the Select Board say something isn’t supposed to happen, and it does happen, they need to know about it right away so that they can do something about it. What is the most streamlined way to go about this? Beth asks because she is not the liaison, and not in daily conversation. Marguerite asked if this is something where the small town exemptions could be effective. She gave the example of when the Ambulance Director has worked with someone for 20 years and knows their skills level, he should have the authority to re-certify them, and she asked if Doug would like the same authority. Doug stated no.
26. Asked how many Firefighters are actually trained, eight are trained, four are active, none are certified through the State. Six months ago he recommended that the Town get a hold of the Town of Rowe and hire the gentleman that did their study for their fire dept and get some ideas. Beth rebutted that part of the issue is funding. She pointed out that she is aware he came to the Capital Improvement Planning Committee with requests, and then after the process was complete, came back with more requests and the Capital Planning Committee had to re-work their numbers. If we want to hire someone, we have to budget the money or get a grant, so some of this came up six months ago, which is too late. We need to hear about this in October or November so that we can get it into the budget process, to fund the position in the Spring and hire. Doug mentioned that there was a lack of communication regarding the budget process and stated that it was hard to get an appointment with the Capital Improvement Planning Committee, saying he emailed the Committee twice and hadn’t heard back. Beth said these are things the Select Board should be made aware, that if the Capital Improvement Planning Committee isn’t responsive enough, the committee or role that did the appointing needs to know that this is a problem; otherwise it won’t get fixed.

27. Regarding training, there have been some joint training, such as CPR, over the years where a few of those people made it through the class but weren't competent to go on the ambulance. If going to do shared training, we can't fluff it off. If can't pass the class, they shouldn't be pushed through. Dana stated he is going through that with someone on the ambulance right now. Doug reinforced if someone is going to show up on the scene and totally didn't know what to do it could affect many people. Dana stated that in his situation the State blessed the person. Marguerite asked about the preceptor program. Dana said we have a preceptor program, but that Charlie wouldn't obviously participate in that. Anyone new would be provided the preceptor opportunity. Dana said he doesn't know Steven's status on the Fire Department, but when he does go on Ambulance he is very capable and helpful. He mentioned that he knows Steven is not his biggest fan, no offense to Sarah as his sister. When on the Ambulance he does what he's supposed to do, knows where everything is, and he is very good at it. Sarah asked if he was doing anything with the Ambulance anymore. Dana said no, to which Sarah said it was a waste of his talent.
28. The Fire Chief chimed in that the Select Board have to decide how they want to enforce these rules. Doug cannot and will not do it. Dana brought up training again, saying everyone should be able to get through the CPR training. Dana then said if they find someone is not training, it is incumbent upon the Chief or Ambulance Director to let them know this person is not on my list, why/ the reason why. Dana stated that in his opinion it is his responsibility for his people. For the Select Board, they need a checklist to stay on top of who is getting the training, in case they do not hear back from the Departments, especially the budget process. The Capital Improvement Planning Committee is doing their piece before the formal budget process. The Select Board should be more proactive about getting everyone the timelines.
29. Marguerite asks if there is still an Executive Committee to talk to someone you feel is not competent, as it used to be done. Doug clarified that there are disciplinary forms, verbal warnings, and reprimands. Marguerite asked if that is being done, and Doug said very little. At this point, he said he is done because if the Town goes by all the rules then none of the Fire Department is going to be labeled competent. Charlie probably has more certificates than anyone at the Fire Department and his competency is being questioned. Beth asked if this was internally or part of this board? Doug stated that Marguerite had questioned Charlie's competence, Marguerite corrected and said "maturity", to which she stated yes, as his liaison, someone had called complaining. Her procedure is to go directly to the department head. She said someone reported the Fire truck was going too fast and Doug told her that Doug was driving, not Charlie. Doug stated that it shouldn't have been addressed, it shouldn't have been a complaint unless it is in writing. Beth pointed out that there is a complaint policy. Doug said he spoke with Marguerite about that. For the record, it is important to have a complaint policy because no matter what you are doing in Town eventually you'll annoy somebody and that person will have a complaint about you. Verbally those complaints will fly, some may be justified or not, but the way we make sure someone is serious about it is that we get it in writing before we address it. It's one thing if it's in your departments and you're complaining about each other's competence; if it's something from us because we haven't followed the right procedure that is a whole other thing.
30. Doug stated that there were reviews done to all the members of the department as it states in the employee handbook. Doug will give the Select Board those. On the performance, everyone was on the

same page for the most part. The Select Board will have to decide what kind of department you want down there. The department has made some huge leaps and bounds in the last few years, but someone else has to do it. Beth tried getting clarification about when he will be stepping down, that initially, it was going to be January 1, but because of Marguerite's letter, he would say that he needs to retire. Beth reinforced that the letter was not from her.

31. Doug asked Marguerite why she thought he should retire tonight. Marguerite stated that it was just as she said. She stated that it was not competency she talked about, but his maturity. Doug said that on the phone she stated it was competency. Marguerite said that Doug said a lot of things she has no way of rebutting, so she's not sure what to say. Marguerite stated that her major complaint was to get beyond the anger to try to figure out what the issues were, that Charlie came in talking about issues, and now tonight so many issues came out. She didn't mention the trash, one little issue that came out at the joint meeting. The joint meeting, all the complaints were against the Director, not against the EMTs. Trying to get a handle on the issues, it seemed like it was personalities and old feuds. Again, tell her she's wrong, but the philosophy was to let them vent, let it get out. She had no idea the extent of Doug's anger, and she didn't know why he was angry. She doesn't have a list now, it's like a moving target. Doug said it seems very plain that Marguerite wants him to resign, and Marguerite stated only because it feels like a threat. He's said it so many times, and he is leaving in January. The town has to start moving forward. Doug offered to resign tonight as Chief and will stay on the Department. The reasons that are coming out are not new. The Board has not addressed them effectively. Beth disagrees with the approach about venting. What are the productive steps, the money that we need, or the policies we need put in place, or the things that the Select Board needs to enforce that they haven't; those are the things they need to do to actually change. That is what she wants to see happen. If we're going to have a liaison who is creating more frustration and having people quit before we get to a more productive place, that's a problem. Doug said he was going to quit anyway. Beth asked if he was going to quit tonight, saying she knew he was going to quit in January but that is much different than tonight.
32. The Fire Chief outlined again that he went into a meeting with Firefighters and EMTs only, and then someone called the school the next morning to stir up trouble. He could shut the school down, he could go down to the school right now and find enough violations to shut it down. The original time he shut it down, and he believes he didn't get money on town floor because of it, was because they were covering up the smoke detectors. Doug stated in his defense that no one knows these details, that he is being judged. He feels that someone who was in that meeting was stirring up trouble for either Doug, Dana, Kevin, or Charlie, and they brought it back to the school the next morning by 8:30. Marguerite asked if Doug asked the Principal, yes, he did, and she wouldn't tell him. It was not Sue Annear, and he wanted to emphasize that many people misunderstand, he has no problem with Sue. The fact that someone stirs up this sort of trouble is one of the determining factors for him resigning.
33. For the next person who comes along, the Town will need to address the other issues to decide where the Town needs to go.
34. Asking if the Select Board wants a new liaison, no. If yes, it can be addressed at another time. Charlie stated that he would like a new liaison. He felt when you have a liaison who comes to the station and says everyone knows how she feels about Dana Johnson. She loves him to death. That shows the Fire Department she favors the Ambulance, and has an issue with Doug. Doug has issues with Dana and

Dana has problems with Doug, at which point Dana told Charlie to “stop, don’t say that.” He told him to apologize for saying that, saying he doesn’t have an issue with Doug doing his job. Dana continued, saying “I was a cop and I did my job and if he wants to enforce laws down there, I have no problem with. Do you understand me? So don’t ever say that. It’s out of context and an improper statement.” Charlie walked out, saying he was done, and good luck having a fire department. Beth asked if she could talk to him for a second, and Charlie said no.

35. Kevin asked if he could make a suggestion. He recommends the Town hire someone that’s retired, that knows what to do on the Fire Department and has the time to do it, whether it is just administrative because no person who works 60 hours a week can do it. It’s too much for somebody who works full-time. Kevin reminded them that Dana said at the meeting as someone who is retired he is sometimes working full time for the Ambulance. Kevin asked Doug how many meetings he is attending, and Doug said at least one or two a week. Kevin said Doug hasn’t been home. Marguerite asked if Kevin had someone in mind. He suggests someone that hasn’t been on the department. The department needs change and this has nothing to do with the Ambulance. Sarah asked Doug if he agrees, and he said yes, that is what he has already recommended. The Heath Chief is going through the same thing. NFPA is pushing way too much on volunteers to do what we do. Kevin’s been on for 33 years and isn’t certified in any of this stuff. He’s tired and says they’re all worn out. They need new blood. The Town needs to advertise that it needs new firefighters. If you bump the pay up a bit, the new generation might do it for a little more money. Kevin wouldn’t be able to leave his job at the rate he is paid. The times have changed. It’s not to help the community anymore, it’s a job.
36. Regarding the person up in Rowe, Beth has to contact them about the Animal Control Officer, so she can follow up with them about that. We started looking at how we can share services, and whether it would work. Kevin said it would work. We started with Police, but maybe we should’ve started with Fire.
37. Doug responded to the comment saying that there were a couple of things that took offense to him. There was the study the Town did about shared services, first with Ambulance and then Police, but didn’t pull in the other department heads. Beth explained that where that came from was that they were working with four towns who had to agree as a group which discussion to have first based on what they had going on.
38. Beth explained that there were two groups that worked on Ambulance. Back when Phil Bonaiuto came in three years ago, Dana chimed in that we were forced into it. The four towns’ select boards came together to figure out how they were going to look at this issue. Talking with Phil, the Select Boards, and Dana, it was decided they would have a group get together specifically for the Ambulance that Dana headed up, FRCOG was involved. Ted Harvey did all of the work, background, and research, provided a report, Dana presented a letter to the Select Board, and then the Board had to provide their own action plan per OEMS. (Dana mentioned that the FRCOG did the same for other towns, for instance, for the Fire Departments of Sunderland, Shutesbury, New Salem.) Beth summarized that there were two things going on, 1) the Town was under the gun for OEMS and its license, and 2) the Town had been having big group department head meetings and the Select Board were told in no uncertain terms that people did not like being pulled in for extra meetings that didn’t concern them. So the Select Board tried to focus things specifically on the Ambulance license. The liaison situation has fluctuated from time to

time. Part of the issue is the communication from the liaison to the fire and the liaison to the ambulance. There was a focused reason why we were doing it. If it turned out it was a mistake, we should've communicated better to help Fire get involved with, if the Fire Department felt like needed to. The other piece was an RFP to look at if we did have to hire out for ambulance service, just trying to get some idea of what would be out there. It was related to the license and it wasn't committing us to anything. It was information gathering only. Dana shared that neither he nor any of the EMTs had anything to do with the RFP. What we were intending to do was bring in experts to help write certain parts of it, but when the Town didn't get the recreation tax at that time it became a moot point. It wasn't that the Select Board was trying to leave anybody out; it is just that there was no point in having a meeting about something that the Town couldn't fund.

39. Marguerite stated that sometimes good intentions can get one in trouble. When the Select Board was assigned liaisons, Marguerite heard that the Ambulance and Fire questioned whether Marguerite would make a good liaison. She also heard that they thought because she was a former EMT that she would favor the Ambulance over the Fire Department. Marguerite's goal when Dana was called an ass and Marguerite responded saying she loved Dana (and added that she may be the only one in Town), was that she was trying to diffuse the situation and obviously that did not work. She is friends with so many people because she did not grow up here and she takes people individually as she finds them. She is friends with a lot of people who don't talk to one another. That part of a small town is hard for her. She also said at that meeting that she was a friend of Fire Chief also. That makes this all really really hard. Dana chimed in that he wished Charlie had been here for him to say this, but Marguerite and he have been friends like Doug and Marguerite for years and he can tell them that if anyone is going to chew him out, it is Marguerite. Doug chimed in that that is what he does with Dana on the side, and then it is over. Doug doesn't agree with everything Dana does and how it does it, but that is Dana's department. When Doug has a problem with him, he usually addresses it with him. When he sees Dana on the street the next day it is fine. Doug asks "is Dana an ass sometimes, probably," but stated that he himself is as well. What Doug thinks is that there are much bigger problems that need to be addressed, they're just beating a dead horse right now.
40. Sarah said they have a laundry list of stuff here that is huge, which is what she was trying to get a sense of. When you start something and have so much going on, things are going to slip through the cracks. To hear from Kevin and Doug that it is too much... there's the reality. As Doug mentioned, there is all this liability.
41. Doug has two recommendations: The board would agree to let Peg contact Chief Strahan, Greenfield Fire Chief, who said he would come up here and talk to the board. Marguerite asked aren't there six men who qualify to be on the fire department, and Doug clarified that is on the call force, where they had 40 before because they put rules and regulations in place. Gill Fire Fighting, you can't even think about being on their Fire Dept unless you've got training in SCBA, Structural Firefighting, or they'll throw your application right out. We can't do that or the Select Board have to decide whether we can do that. Right now if the fire alarm goes off, four people aren't going to... Kevin chimed in that one or two of them will be firefighters.
42. Dana said he sat on a committee with the county fire chiefs on rehab for firefighters in the field. We put together a program before the state-wide one came out and not everyone is following it. The one here

has been sort of curtailed. He was at a meeting in Old Deerfield. The Fire Chief says unless my guys show up for every meeting, they're gone. You don't have that luxury because you don't have that many people knocking down your door. South Deerfield Fire Department, for instance, has had people on a waiting list for people to retire so they could get in.

43. Doug mentioned that Erving Fire may be another place to look at, they just put four full-time guys on. Maybe they could share how they did it, why they did it. Phil Wonnka. Kevin asked what the percentage of second homes in this town is to which Peg responded 10%. Dana stated that he thinks we struggle with the tax rate, where do we have to pool money from, and how to fund all of this. When the committee was together Dana said that when they talked about regionalization, not even the State thinks they could really regionalize. That was back when Dana was keeping an eye on South County Ambulance, three towns, with a \$1.3M budget, still not up to full force, the three towns are fighting like cats and dogs. You think we're fighting in here? I have a video of people banging their fists on the table. Dana continued saying it becomes an issue sometimes. He said they looked at their geographical area. Dana said he brought up at another meeting that we have 170 square miles versus they have 69 square miles if you take all of west county. Doug jumped in to clarify, asking if what Dana was saying is that financially the reason it can't be done, and Dana corrected him, saying no, that money is a part of it. Sarah jumped in saying they started out with four towns in the police meeting, and are now down to two. Doug mentioned that he heard about that. Sarah said the trouble is when they get going, there is a certain perception, that when a different person in charge or they're not in charge, are they going to have to comply with different standards. Doug said he feels it is worth talking to Heath because Heath's Chief did not get re-appointed. He is still active but he didn't want to be reappointed. The Towns have to figure this out.
44. Right now if we get a tone right now, Doug has it set up so that if our trucks don't come on the air, Shelburne Falls is first. If it comes in as a structure fire, it is Shelburne, Heath, and Colrain. That is where you guys have to push to get this thing started. Doug has tried. He's been to several meetings. In the daytime, Charlemont may have 8 guys one day, and 3 guys the next day. Ivis Russell's house is a perfect example. Greg went up there by himself, and as other people show up, then Steven shows up to run the pump, and Sarah mentions "with no shoes". Does he tell him he can't run the pump because he hasn't been to a meeting? Do I tell him to pack his bags and go home? He can't do that. He cannot assume that responsibility. If Kevin goes into a structure fire and ends up getting killed, and I know that he had a bad back, then and Sarah chimed in "you're liable." Doug said he has another guy who doesn't come to any meetings, but if we hear him on the radio we know we're going to have water. He's the one that if he puts on an SCBA he's claustrophobic and he could get hurt or hurt somebody else. There are some guidelines the Town is going to have to come up with as to requirements for the Firefighters. Talk to the Chief at Greenfield or Erving. I haven't gotten the NFPA things to Marguerite because it costs about \$700 through the program.
45. Marguerite asked if the Chiefs ever talk about any possibilities about not complying with these recommendations and simultaneously lowering standards. Doug responded that they are necessary and that a lot of the standards were pushed on them by full-time fire departments because they had the time, energy and money. Sarah chimed in saying that is what has happened with policing. At the Chief's meeting most recently they spoke about this, that it is not worth being the Fire Chief. The Fire Marshall

comes in and tells you all the fines/ regulations that we've been opposed to, certain things that must be met. So yes to answer your question, Marguerite, it is out there, everyone knows about it.

46. What Marguerite sees is the professionalization, whatever we want to call it, that is coming down with the expert to do it and the Towns don't have money for it. The Towns did manage for a couple hundred years before all this and it is coming from outside and we're expected to have the same standards with asking where the money comes from. Marguerite continued, saying we can't get angry at the levy limit, and asked are we going to get angry at the voters if they say no. Beth is trying to pursue other sources.
47. You need to be willing to find a Fire Chief who is willing to be sued or go to jail. You'll find one, Doug's sure. Marguerite asked if what he was referencing was the case with the weak chief law? Doug said with any law. Dana brought up that the Boston Fire Department is being sued for failure to train people properly. Marguerite said the US Navy isn't training, that we're not training as a nation anymore. Dana said that the problem is that you need to go to them and say you can't train for every scenario, that's what the reality is.
48. Beth stated that there are two pieces here, 1) knowing what we're supposed to be doing and to the best of our ability making this function as best as we can, and helping you/ doing what we can with what we've got and then 2) the outside part of the new requirements. These are two parallel things. If we wait to accomplish the structural outside stuff, we're not going to have a fire department.
49. Kevin stated that there are people who still think the volunteers live down at the fire station are that they live there full time. They stop by the station and ask where is everyone. They're volunteers. The people around don't get the mentality that they are volunteers. Kevin stated the Town is not required to have a fire department by law and asked if he was right. Peg responded that she believes a fire department is required and that an ambulance is not. Dana stated your insurance people require you to have a fire department and that if you don't have a fire department your insurance rating will go sky high. Sarah chimed in that's why they ask you where your closest fire department, water, or hose are. Doug mentioned that any structure fires someone has right now, the insurance companies are pulling the records from control, and there is a time frame this fire department is supposed to respond by, which Doug believes is 15 minutes. Kevin mentioned that the reports require you to explain anything over a 20 minutes time span. Dana mentioned that they don't consider where you live, that they have the same thing with their EMTs, their Ambulance is supposed to be there within 6 minutes of the call, and they don't understand. He went on to say that fortunately Boston does, or OEMS do because several of them live here.
50. Peg asked if the first-responder legislation goes through allowing for 1 EMT and 1 first-responder, who can respond, saying Doug had mentioned that there are currently only 1-2 first responders that are accepted onto the Ambulance. Dana and Doug concurred that only 1-2 go on the Ambulance. Kevin said he just recertified today so he can go, as long as he can give Dana his card. Dana responded as long as that course is approved by OEMS. Dana continued by saying that is another thing OEMS hits us on, our courses have to be approved by OEMS. Dana said for CPR they don't care but for first-responder, firefighters, police officers, lifeguards this goes back. Kevin shared that his course was through the Sheriff's Association first-responder. Dana said it is probably fine. When asked are there more than two people from the fire department that Dana is accepting onto the Ambulance, Dana said Steven went

with them a lot and Charlie's been the other one who went. Asked if they could be accepted on the ambulance today, Dana said if he could get copies of the certifications to cover himself like Doug is doing, yes. Doug chimed in that legally they can't right now. Asked if he's communicated this clearly to everybody before that meeting, Sarah said yes, and that was one of the things that they brought up. Asked if there is anything we can do at the Town level to help get certifications to Dana and then update his list of who can respond, Dana said they have a copy machine at the fire station, and Peg mentioned there is one here. Beth said that is something they can work out amongst themselves, but we know that that is something that is important. Dana said we're re-inventing the wheel here because there are so many new people. We are going to do a preceptor because the state wants us to, which means you don't just get on the ambulance and go, so they have to do that, and they'd like them to be checked off for driving, through an Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC), which if you ever wanted to do a training for everybody for fire and EMS, that could be something we do. Doug said he doesn't know if an EVOC training is required for firefighters. Kevin asked if that was a course they took years ago? Dana said they all went down to the insurance company. Doug said they have a simulator now. Dana said Tracy is an EVOC trainer now. Sarah said that is something she could work out with them all. Beth said it seems important to have them sync up, to make sure whatever each department is taking can back each other up. If there is a problem where one course doesn't work for one department but it works for another, and Dana jumped in saying no that's not the case for EVOC, except that they may want a firefighter on a fire engine. Dana and Doug mentioned that there is a van the insurance company can bring here. Beth asked if there is a problem syncing up the training, to let the Town know and that is something they can push on their side. Doug said he didn't think it would be a problem. Peg apologized, saying the intent was not to have them rehash what they had already discussed. She brought up that she is in a vacuum when it comes to communication, that there is a lot of discussion going on between the Select Board as liaisons and the Chiefs, but the personnel files that live here need to remain up-to-date, asking how will she be notified someone is accepted on the Ambulance.

51. Peg brought up that for report runs, it was suggested by other Emergency Services outside of Charlemont that the Departments be reporting in report runs. Dana interrupted saying "you're not getting them." Per Dana the run reports are electronically submitted to OEMS, and they're protected by HIPPA. It was brought up earlier in the meeting about how to hold crews accountable, who is responding, and one of those ways would be for Town Hall to be getting reports to know who is on runs. Dana stated, "you're not getting them." Beth said this sounds like a separate issue. Dana said that would be the personnel file, and that right now they're just keeping records for the State. Medical records are protected. Peg clarified that it would not be medical records she is requesting. Beth chimed in saying she wants to keep us on the same issue. It is important to keep our records up to date, and we need to have a conversation about what information can be and what can't be in Town Hall, but that is separate from what we're trying to do here tonight which is try to figure out what we're going to do about the fire department and those priorities items to work out. Peg said the question about personnel files was separate from run reports.
52. Sarah outlined what she has for priorities and what she is going to start doing tomorrow, we're going to get ahold Chief Strahan, Peg will do that, Beth will get ahold of Rowe to find out who did their study, Sarah is going to call the Town of Heath since she has already been working with them on the Police services, and she will call the FRCOG person who has the grant for regionalization to ask him whether fire can be incorporated into the conversation. Kevin chimed in that Charlemont used to cover the four

towns. Sarah explained that there is a person at the FRCOG that can facilitate the conversation. Dana mentioned that the one they used is gone. He doesn't know who they would be using. Those priorities to Sarah seem like what should be done right off in light of what Doug and Dana have said.

53. Doug stated that Chief Strahan is where the Town wants to start.
54. Sarah asked if Doug and Kevin would be a part of the conversation, and asked if Doug would stay on until January. She is not putting the responsibility on them but is asking if the Select Board can get the help. She acknowledged that part of the problem was that they didn't do this (approach Fire and Ambulance Departments) the right way in their mind, so she would like to do this the right way starting now. If we're going to do this, we're going to sit down and have input from the people that have been working at it and know what's going on. Doug can't guarantee he'll go to all the meetings, which Sarah understood. She asked if everyone, instead of saying that "you're an ass" or "I'm an ass", agrees to disagree. Sarah would like the departments to move forward. She is the type of person that is willing to admit she does not know enough about something, but with her time on the department learning this stuff and watching the crew, she knows she doesn't know enough about all of the things that go on and need to go on, so she is asking if they can do this in such a way that the Select Board can get their knowledge and help, saying Doug and Kevin don't owe it to us, but asks they to consider it.
55. Doug asked for permission to have Peg help with some things that he doesn't have time for. He can't do it at work. If he can have Peg to do a few things, it would take her 15 minutes where it takes him an hour with starting and stopping. Sarah said that's fine and said that Sarah's told people that Sarah has Mondays off and if there are things she can do, or things that more than one person needs to do, Sarah will be more than willing to do it. Doug stated that Peg has been great, and he wouldn't have been able to do the job if it weren't for her. Sarah said she would like to move things in a direction of fixing what we have. Doug stated that he wouldn't be here right now if Peg hadn't come into the picture; she has helped him tremendously. That needs to be looked a little bit.
56. Beth seconds what Sarah says. She knew from past conversations that Doug was frustrated. She came to the Select Board just as Kenny was leaving (when Doug had said he would do the job for a year). Beth is serving year five on the Select Board and knew this wasn't going to last forever. She was hoping that when he gave us the January 1 date, that it would give the Town time over the next few months to have a smoother transition and get to these issues. She knows he still has the badge on the table but whatever capacity we can still have him in, where getting his input and getting us to a place where we can draw on all these resources he just listed would be incredibly helpful.
57. Sarah doesn't want to stress Doug out, but what she's learned is that we don't fix things by saying I know better than you do. Doug stated what Sarah is bringing up is another issue. No one likes authority. Sarah agreed, they don't.
58. When Kevin retired the fire station became a mess. He used to do all the cleaning. Kevin stated he was spending his two days off down there. Sarah said we need to address all of it. The responsibilities are non-stop with cleaning or paperwork. Like Doug said, when a call comes in, everyone shows for the fire, and then takes off without cleaning up the gear. Sarah said she used to fill up the air tanks because everyone would be gone. Kevin emphasized that he is a volunteer, he doesn't get paid to do this. Sarah

and Beth that this is part of addressing the big picture. The four left are officers. The Town needs to get recruiting, pay for their courses. Kevin went on to say that the worst thing Mohawk ever did was stop the EMT course. That was the golden ticket for a few years and then he rhetorically asked how many students we gained from the program. Dana chimed in that we got a lot out of it, a lot of them went on to do bigger and better things. Dana said we're not going to change their mind, that we tried numerous times.

59. Doug asked if we can apply for the \$1,500 S.A.F.E. senior planning grant to partner with the Council on Aging and make home visits. **Action:** On a motion from Ms. S. Reynolds, the Select Board vote, Ms. Bandy – yes, Ms. S. Reynolds – yes, Ms. Willis – yes, to allow the Town Administrator to apply for the S.A.F.E. grant. It requires someone to go to a 40-hour class to be certified to present the material. Dana commented he was talking to a guy from Ashfield where they came to his house and gave him a smoke alarm.
60. Doug and Sarah went back and forth about whether he would take his badge back. Marguerite asked if he would like a new liaison, to which he responded no.
61. Sarah proposed if he would begrudgingly take back the badge, she'll do the liaising for a little bit. She'll give up Mondays for a little bit and come down to start working on this stuff, but she asked if he could at least give her a few weeks. Doug stated that he didn't think it was his responsibility. Sarah said she didn't care if it was hers or not, that it is worth doing. Beth said there are a lot of things on the Select Board side that doesn't fall into that category. Doug said that would be something the Board would have to decide. Marguerite asked if that was a motion, saying she'd second it.
62. Sarah asked when they meet. Doug said they're there the 2nd and 4th Tuesday, but someone is usually there every week. Sarah said she would start coming to the 2nd and 4th meeting. They said they would all three be willing to come down if that is what it takes.
63. Dana recommended they go down and look at the fire station. The Ambulance has no place to put anything anymore. He has 2 closets full. They need to know how serious this is. Doug said they think Eric will help them out with the building itself.
64. Doug said he is done January 1. Doug thinks Peg has to be able to be more involved. She should be able to know what's going on in parts of the department, regarding projections, and forecasts, and she needs to be more involved with what their needs are. Sarah agreed.
65. Beth talked through who else would be involved in these projects. She brought up whether the Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIC) had some discussion about equipment. Would it be helpful to have them do a walk-through? Doug said they came down to the Fire Station. Dana interrupted saying, the CIC Chair knows very well what the building is like because she is at the Station once a month. Beth said she agrees, but she wasn't sure if they should be incorporated into this process. Dana said he thinks they'll find it an eye-opener, that the station needs to be addressed, that everyone has been complaining about it for a number of years but for whatever reason, it has been put on the back burner, and he thinks it is time, and Sarah finished the sentence saying "to start pushing". Dana said you have to do something. Kevin drew up plans for the fire station years ago. Kevin said they spent hours as a

Committee and it was shot down by a certain subject. Beth said the problem is we can't build down there. Beth remembers Kevin bringing the plans back up a few years ago again after nothing ever came of them, that the Select Board went to the Attorney and the Conservation Commission, and at that point, they were told they can't build out so that was why the plans sat there. The Select Board have been looking into this issue; when they did the municipal space planning, for instance, this came up. There is money set aside from a few years ago to look at a feasibility study for the fire station, and how to use that. We need to look at other options in town where the fire station can be out of the floodplain, and where that could be. We were trying to do a municipal space for the Town in general, but that was too broad. How do we take that money and make the most bang for the buck? We can add windows and things like that but how much money do we want to spend. Kevin said we should move down the street. Doug said he thought we did have permission to build there originally. Beth said yes at one point when the plans were drawn yes. Asked if it was the Conservation Commission or the State saying this, Beth said she thought it was the State. Sarah mentioned that there is a DEP person that comes to their meetings. Dana said maybe you can put on your list to start looking for alternate locations. Beth said they did start working on that. Sarah mentioned that they started going through other buildings in town that were for sale. Dana asked is there any place on the property high enough to not be in the floodplain. Sarah said that is a good question. Beth mentioned that there are lots of configurations of places it can be, and they did start looking at this, but that's as far as they got. Now they'll make this a priority to start looking at it as part of the whole package. Marguerite suggested it could look like an old-fashioned barn.

66. Doug took back his badge and said he was off to talk to Charlie. He said he'll be in touch with Peg and will keep her posted.
67. Peg asked Dana if there was an alternate form of communication she could use besides ambulance@charlemont-ma.us, that she was told a while back that she can call him only in the case of a very important emergency, but otherwise, email. He said she can call, that he has an answering machine, and she can leave a message. She said she texts with the other Chiefs and it seems to work well. He said his cell goes to no one. Sarah chimed in that he is good about getting back by email. Peg agreed he does get back quickly by email. Dana then told her he would appreciate if she'd stop sending emails saying to watch out for certain emails or links, that those alerts are more than five years old. She clarified that she is only sending those she is most concerned about and that it goes to all departments, of which he is included. She asked again about contact, saying if she heard him correctly, she can call for more than just a very important emergency, and he responded that she can email, that's his home business.
68. Peg then brought up the role of liaisons, saying there are obviously a lot of conversations going on of which she's not aware, that in theory when a liaison speaks to a department head, as was proposed to the Select Board two and a half years ago, and before finishing, was told by the Select Board Chair that this is a different meeting, that we'll have to do this next time. Peg then asked if Sarah is working with Doug, can she keep her in the loop? Sarah said yes. Beth chimed in that she assumes if Doug wants to be working with Peg that we're all going to work together. Sarah agreed.
69. Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm

Respectfully submitted by Peg Dean

Draft minutes until approved by the Select Board

Documents viewed during meeting

Prepared statement by Select Board member Marguerite Willis