

Town of Charlemont, Massachusetts
JOINT MEETING FOR SELECT BOARD and FINANCE COMMITTEE
“Small Town Summit”
AGENDA FOR THURSDAY, June 2, 2016
Hawlemont, 7:00 P.M.

List of Attendees to follow

1. Toby Gould convened the meeting.

2. Introduced new attendees Martha Thurber – Buckland School Committee, Diane Bushee – Goshen Select Board, Amy Wales – Charlemont Finance Committee Chair, Trevor Mackie – Charlemont Broadband Committee and Wired West alternate, Eileen Stewart – Hampshire Council of Governments.

3. Chris Cappucci introduced his replacement Jessie Cooley and shared what his new role is Save our public Schools. MTRSD is losing \$600k to charter schools. Has cards for those interested in staying in touch. Sheila acknowledged Chris’s work, thanked him for his service.

4. Need to address our communities about the following issues: Groups broke out and reconvened to summarize their findings/ recommendations.

- **Broadband** – Trevor Mackie, Jim Drawe, Diane Bushee, Joe Kearns

Sent request to Rep Kocot requesting the State adopt the New Hingham special legislation allowing 1 year borrowing on state notes for all towns. Reply to Bill Ennen (MBI rep) concerning requests to update MBI Town Profile Data. Meet and ask Bill Ennen any concerns or questions. Talk, engage your Select Board and Broadband Committee. Point out how the lack of Broadband effects your town and our region. Stress that our area knows about regionalization, understands it, and wants it for Broadband. Be positive about working with MBI, the past is just that. More money would help a lot, along with over lashing of the middle mile, using middle mile dark fiber. This is a large dollar project and our citizens have/are supporting it. Our Select Board/ Finance Committee understand what the borrowing entails.

- **Schools** – Sarah Reynolds, Chris Cappucci, Jenny Glitz, Martha Thurber, Michele Giarusso

The group talked more about building use and the claw-back of the financing agreement. If they are going to re-use any buildings, a lot of towns cannot afford to renovate; there will therefore need to be discussion around what can be afforded. They discussed how to market the schools better, through real estate offices, etc. In terms of funding, they discussed transportation, special education, administration. Offering better education would help retain students and create sustainability. Broadband affects schools b/c it drives down population growth. Comment from Jim Drawe – consider different lengths of days and school year. Comment from Martha Thurber – the law states a school is required to have x days, not hours, but they are trying to change that.

- **Regional shared services** – Beth Bandy, Sheila Litchfield, Michel Idoine, Phoebe Walker

Ambulance, Fire, Police: They got a good overview of towns working together through South Co. Ambulance, a good example of what might be faced if any town was to try a regional model. The location/ housing of the ambulance is the issue. When going through the process of upgrading the ambulance who owns what portion, etc. Deerfield is the fiscal agent, but the vote is by thirds. The service is tremendous. Consider votes based on financial weight rather than thirds. Comment from Jim Drawe – three ambulances, structured it as 501(c) 3 and signed contracts that agreed would assess each town based on population each year. That proportion would be the offset received from insurance payments. The capital expense is

proportional to the population as well. Three former ambulance directors and one appointed representative from each town sit on the board. It's been formed since 2001, with paramedic service for Cummington, Ashfield, Goshen, Plainfield, Chesterfield, Williamsburg – mutual aid with Charlemont and Buckland, and Worthington. Goshen houses the Ambulance, staffed on site. Huntington doing a similar thing.

Shared Fire Chief: Wendell and New Salem are sharing one. They talked about what the idea of a county-wide regional department would look like, though they don't have a lot of information to go on just yet; satellite departments in the towns with volunteers are still necessary. The only savings might be the redundant equipment. Feel like need to hear more from the Wendell/ New Salem Fire Chiefs, the Highland Ambulance, Zach Smith – So. County Ambulance, examine the draft scope for the Deerfield, So County, Montague, Greenfield towns. Hawley, Charlemont, Rowe, and Heath would like to learn more about providing regional EMS.

Comment from Jim Drawe that the towns look at equipment and try not buying redundantly now while showing up for mutual aid. Also consider cross-training on each other's equipment.

- Small town challenges – Toby Gould, John Payne, John Sears, Bob Dean

Push for a provision in the Woodlands Partnership to address PILOTS. Comment from Jim Drawe – need to come up with a cost/burden before anyone will hear concerns.

Unnecessary paperwork – presumably this is being addressed under the municipal modernization act

Best practices vs/ rules – suggest the State give towns training and guidelines about what works best

Open Meeting Law – suggest going to MMA to present this as an issue

School transportation – legislative issue. We know they're working hard to get more. Right now it states that it will be 100% funded

Zip code – distorts. DOR should add a field on the tax form.

5. What next: how to accomplish goals

Legislation group: Suggest taking legislative related ideas and come up with a list of what they are, who to write to.

Schools group: what steps you think the towns should go in.

Shared services groups: how to set up these meetings, and who needs to be invited. Sheila will potentially coordinate a meeting highlighting shared services

Comments:

Trevor McDaniel asks if the Collaborative be able to help?

Sarah Reynolds suggests starting an email with Martha, Trevor, and Michele.

Trevor volunteered Deerfield as a potential. Consider a Wednesday preferred 7/13.

Town/ affiliation:	In attendance:
Adam Hinds running for Senate	Jenny Gitlitz – Adam Hinds running for Senate
Buckland	Dena Willmore – Buckland Select Board
Buckland	Martha Thurber – Buckland School Committee Vice Chair
Charlemont	Beth Bandy – Charlemont Select Board
Charlemont	Sarah Reynolds – Charlemont Select Board
Charlemont	Toby Gould – Charlemont Select Board
Charlemont	Amy Wales – Charlemont Finance Committee Chair
Charlemont	Trevor Mackie – Charlemont Broadband Committee and Wired West alternate
Cummington	Jim Drawe – Cummington
Deerfield	Trevor McDaniel – Deerfield Select Board
FRCOG	Bob Dean – Franklin Regional Council of Governments
FRCOG	Phoebe Walker – Franklin Regional Council of Governments
Goshen	Diane Bushee – Goshen Select Board
Hawley	John Sears – Hawley Select Board
Hawley	Bob MacLean – Hawley Select Board
HCOG	Eileen Stewart – Hampshire Council of Governments
Heath	Sheila Litchfield – Heath Select Board Chair
Leyden	Michele Giarusso – Leyden Finance Committee Chair
Middlefield	Joe Kearns – Middlefield Finance Committee, Gateway Task Force

Rep Paul Mark's office	Jesse Cooley – Rep Paul Mark's office
Save our Public Schools	Chris Cappucci – Save our Public Schools
Shelburne	John Payne – Shelburne Finance Committee
Wendell	Michael Idoine – Former Fin Com and Select Board Wendell

Respectfully submitted by Peg Dean 06-10-16

Draft minutes until approved