

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**Town of Charlemont**  
**Goodnow Town Hall**

January 4, 2021  
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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chair Marguerite Willis. Select Board member Elizabeth VanInderstine also attended the meeting. This meeting was conducted via telephone conference pursuant to the Governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

1. The Board unanimously voted, Ms Willis – yes, Ms VanInderstine – yes, to approve and sign the WGE IGA Service Drop Installation Contract. Ms VanInderstine will sign the contract electronically and provide the Select Board office with a copy of each signed contract.
2. The Board unanimously voted, Ms Willis – yes, Ms VanInderstine – yes, to approve and sign the WGE IGA Purchase of Materials contract, Ms VanInderstine to electronically sign the contract.
3. Upon the request of the Broad Band Committee, the Board unanimously voted, Ms Willis – yes, Ms VanInderstine – yes, to approve a lower (1/2 million) insurance requirement for Niles Tree Service when providing service to Broad Band. It was noted that the Board had already voted a lower amount for this vendor during a previous September meeting.
4. Bob Handsaker, Broad Band Committee Chair, reported that the EMD tried to install the conduit for the generator at the Town Hall by himself. Unfortunately, his efforts did not work and asked the Board to approve Trevor Mackie, Broad Band Committee member, and himself, to install the conduit themselves. It was noted that the Town insurance will cover this action under Liability and Workers Comp. for volunteers and Special Town Employees. The Board unanimously voted, Ms Willis – yes, Ms VanInderstine – yes, to approve the request.
5. Mr. Handsaker stated that the Committee would like to get Main Street completed before the April traffic calming construction re-starts. A phone call meeting between the Select Board, Administrator, Bill Ennen and Mr. Handsaker will be arranged to discuss how this task can be completed in a timely fashion.
6. The sign-up campaign will begin once WG&E provides the Committee with their schedule.
7. Ms Willis asked for a motion to hire Sarah Reynolds to the Town Administrator position under the current job description, 40 hours per week, salary being the amount budgeted during the November 14, 2020 Town Meeting, full benefits, with a start date of 1-5-21.
8. Ms VanInderstine suggested the Board hire Ms S Reynolds as an interim Town Administrator until the end of the fiscal year, to allow the Town and Ms S Reynolds to see if this position is a good match for both. During this time, the

Town and Administrator will have a chance to re-analyze the current job description and make adjustments if necessary.

9. Ms Willis stated that the Board is in receipt of 2 e-mails that disapprove of the appointment/hire and proceeded to read the messages.
10. Ms Willis stated that she will not accept a motion for an interim Administrator.
11. Ms Cheryl Handsaker stated that she is not opposed to the person for the Administrator position but is opposed and has concerns regarding the process that is being taken. She admitted that one of the opposing letters was hers.
12. Jay Healy stated that he does not feel an interim Administrator is necessary and Ms S Reynolds has proved herself while she was a Select Board member and should be immediately hired.
13. Bill Coli stated that he has filed a complaint with the State Ethics Commission regarding the inappropriate hiring process and is waiting to hear back.
14. Ms Willis stated that she has already been in contact with the State Ethics Commission and Town Counsel who both have stated the Town has the authority to hire within, without posting the position.
15. Ms Willis stated that she is not comfortable with hiring an interim Administrator but is willing to compromise with a 6- month probationary period. Ms VanInderstine stated that she can agree to this compromise.
16. Ms S Reynolds was asked how she feels regarding a probationary period. Ms S Reynolds stated she had expected a probationary period as a professional.
17. Ms VanInderstine made the motion to hire Sarah Reynolds to the Town Administrator position, 40 hours per week, salary to be the amount voted during the 11-14-20 Town Meeting, full benefits, start date of 1-5-21, job description is the current one on file, with a 6-month probationary period. This motion was moved, seconded, and unanimously voted, Ms Willis – yes, Ms VanInderstine – yes.
18. Mr. Coli question what the Select Board will be doing regarding possible conflict of interest regarding the Administrator and other employees who are family.
19. Ms Willis reported that the Schools have been authorized to spend \$73, 548 of the Town s CARES funds. Additional invoices are expected from the FRCOG Health Agent.
20. Ms Willis reported that a needs base component and distance traveled will be added to the Transportation Bill. Ms Willis will respond with support for these components.
21. Ms Willis reported that the Fire Chief is asking for a Reserve Fund transfer for the cost of vehicle repairs (\$7,284.50 for the utility vehicle that still needs mudflaps and \$4891.21 for car 1 (engine light is still on)).
22. Ms Willis reported that the Tax Collectors software company, Pointe Software, will no longer be adding sewer liens to the Town RE tax bills. This will increase the workload of the Tax Collector.

23. Ms Willis reported that the Town is required to accept the latest version of the Recreation Tax Legislation where the Town will be responsible for collecting the tax, not DOR. Ms Willis will also be asking that guided fishing tours be removed from the tax. Ms Willis will follow up with Senator Hinds.
24. Ms Willis reported that the Court Hearing for the Charlemont Inn has been pushed back to January 13, 2021.
25. Ms Willis reported that the FY21 Hawlemont Elementary School assessment has been reduced by \$10,108.15 due to the School being over the allowable 5% of Excess & Deficiency funds.
26. Ms Willis reported that the Town is receiving conflicting e-mails from the Franklin Land Trust regarding the Warner Hill Conservation Restriction.
27. Ms Willis noted that the new Town website requires updates. Ms S Reynolds and Ms VanInderstine will work together on the updates.
28. Ms Willis will discuss scheduling a meeting with residents regarding the closure of the East Oxbow Road Bridge with the Administrator.
29. Ms VanInderstine stated that she has tried to contact the Transfer Station Attendant regarding dumpster and trash bag issues but has not gotten through.
30. The Board unanimously voted, Ms Willis – yes, Ms VanInderstine – yes, to approve/approve and sign:
  - Payroll warrants #2124 for \$24,005.65; #2123 for \$14,557.04; #2122 for \$16,822.37
  - Vendor warrants #2125 for \$236,780.79; #2123 for \$128,372.69; #2124 for \$29,511.57
  - Appointed Jackie Cashin to the Park and Recreation Commission until the next local election.
  - Select Board minutes for the 12-14-20,10-5-20;9-8-20 and 9-21-20, 8-24-20 meetings
  - ABCC 21 Seasonal Population Estimation Form
  - ABCC 21 Renewal Certification form
  - Vacation request from the Executive Secretary/Town Clerk for the weeks of January 25 and February 22, 2021
31. Ms Willis recognized Dana Johnson for his 45 years as an EMT for the Town.
32. Ms VanInderstine recognized Budge and Sheila Litchfield for serving 86 families Christmas dinner through the Good Neighbors program through the Federated Church.
33. Ms Willis will be meeting with Administrator Reynolds in the morning to go over job duties and time sensitive needs.
34. Business being concluded, the open meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully transcribed

Kathy A. Reynolds  
Executive Secretary

Approved by:  
Charlemont Select Board

This document is to be considered a draft until approved and signed by the Select Board.

Documents viewed by the Board

WGE IGA Service Drop Installation Contract  
WGE IGA Purchase of Materials contract  
Parks and Recreation Commission appointment request  
Warrants  
Minutes  
ABCC 21 Seasonal Population Estimation Form  
ABCC 21 Renewal Certification form  
Vacation request