

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD/ ALL BOARD MEETING
Town of Charlemont
Charlemont Highway garage

May 26,2021

Called to order at 6 pm.

Attending:

Marguerite Willis(select board), Elizabeth Van Iderstine(select board), Dan Girard(select board), Ron Smith(finance committee), Carlene Hayden(assessors clerk, planning board), Joe Pellegrino(sewer commissioner), Jim Williams(sewer commissioner), Jeff Van Iderstine(sewer commissioner) , Jay Healy(finance committee), Charlotte Dewey(ZBA), Bill Harker(planning board, conservation commission, board of health), Bob Handsaker(broadband committee), Cheryl Handsaker(broadband committee), Valentine Reid(broadband committee), Jerry Dupree (flag Committee), Bill Coli(historical commission), Bob Nelson(planning board), Jim Scalise(Berkshire East engineer) , Bill Martin(Berkshire East Lawyer), Jon Schaefer(Berkshire East), Tom Campbell(resident), Frank Mooney(capital planning committee), and Sarah Reynolds (Town Administrator)

- 1) It was explained that the mass works sewer grant for Berkshire East had started approximately 4 years ago and at the time there was opportunity zone program that everyone thought was going to help drive business using capital gains etc. Due to the projects not accelerating through the opportunity zone, the sewer project sat on the shelf for a couple of years because it was not the right time.

Recently the state has been pushing for the project to commit. When they picked it back up, they went over the issues with it when it was first presented, one is they could not hook it to the already existing town sewer like they thought, so they went through it and came up with the current design which is a field in the back of the Berkshire East parking lot, they would donate the land it sits on, indemnify all cost, and it is a 10,000 gallon system.

Also discussed that Berkshire East would self asses the rec tax as a booking fee, wants to be a good partner, and communicate well with the community.

Expansion items like condos would come later, right now sees a glamping/yurt type of offering. People are mostly day tripping to here from their research.

It was also discussed that projects like this happen in other towns and they gave examples in Pittsfield, the purpose is to help the business and the town gets the additional revenues through taxes.

Questions were discussed it was explained that after 30 years the town could choose to give the system to Berkshire East or continue to run it, the deed to Berkshire would carry the sewer restriction so that if it was sold, they would still have to honor the contract. The system would make money via hook up fees and use fees, they would need an operator and a clerk for billing. The houses on Thunder Lane could hook up if needed, they would figure out the fee, it was mentioned someone over there is getting a new septic and the price was more than the hook up fee would be.

***No contract has been presented yet to the Select board. When the state approves the revised 25% submission, then negotiations will occur. The contract will be available for public review before signing.

- 1) The boards then discussed the secretary to the boards hours they feel that the 12 hours per week is not enough, they are getting buried in work, many of the boards feel like a full-time job, it was suggested to bring it up on town meeting floor so that residents can hear this. It was also discussed that some boards should be getting a stipend that are not currently, this is something that is being worked on and will be brought forward next year.
- 2) Revenue ideas were discussed, the old box shop property was discussed, solar on Avery Brook Road was discussed, a visit to Hancock ma was mentioned they have a ski area as well, but a lot of their income comes from second homes. They send 400 bills and 350 pay and it works. It was brought up to check to see if we are getting all the room tax we should as a town, and we should check the Air B&B sites.
- 3) It was brought up to make sure when leasing a vehicle, we should tell residents to change the principal garaging to Charlemont, so the town gets the excise tax monies and not Boston.
- 4) There was some river discussion, parking fees were discussed and possibly parking permits.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.