

**Town of Charlton
Saratoga County
Town Board Agenda Meeting**

November 25, 2019

The Agenda Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Charlton, Saratoga County, New York was held at the Charlton Town Hall, 758 Charlton Rd, Charlton, NY and called to order by Councilman Grasso at 8:22 p.m. to set the agenda for the December 9th meeting.

Present: Councilman Grasso, Councilwoman Heritage, Councilman Ranaletto, Councilman Robbins, Supervisor Grattidge, Town Clerk Brenda Mills, Attorney Jim Craig.

RESOLUTION #194

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Councilman Grasso

Seconded by Councilman Ranaletto

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board hereby approves the minutes from the regular Town Board Meeting November 12, 2019.

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays. **CARRIED.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Offices will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday from November 28 through the 30th.

There will be a tree lighting ceremony at Gideon Hawley Park gazebo on December 8th at 5 p.m.

The December Town Board Agenda Meeting has been changed from December 23rd to December 30th.

COMMUNICATION

On Election Day, November 5th, Charlton voters passed the Referendums for 4 year terms for Town Clerk and Tax Collector. Local Laws #2 and #3 that the Town Board passed in July to extend the terms, have now been filed with the Secretary of State.

DISCUSSION

The Sales Tax for the month was \$122,070.00 and the Mortgage Tax was \$14,543.90. The 6 month mortgage tax distribution was \$62,449.69.

The Town Assessor has given the Town Board a timeline for a Town revaluation. The Supervisor said that he would like the Assessor to come the December Board meeting to discuss it.

The Tax Collector and other Town Departments that collect money are looking into the ability to receive credit card payments. The Tax Collector can buy enhanced software for electronic payments. The Water Department, Town Clerk and Building Department also collect funds. All service charges would be passed on to the customer.

The Town has received notice that the increase in health insurance premiums is 3% this year. The Town will be renewing the same insurance that we already have. We are looking into dental insurance coverage for employees, and it would be paid at employee expense.

The Board has locked in the Town's electricity rates with Constellation for 24 months at a rate of .05 per kwh.

Verizon Cell Tower Application Discussion

Councilman Grasso said that the Town Board received the revised Verizon EUP application for the cell tower at 764 Charlton Road in September. It went through review by the Town Engineer and various Boards and Committees. Questions were raised and submitted to Verizon. Verizon addressed the questions and resubmitted their application electronically last Friday. It has a revised EAF and responses to questions. It is a supplement to the original application materials.

Councilman Grasso said that he has thoroughly gone through the application and the additional information. He said that the applicant did a good job of responding to the questions and concerns that were raised. The first step in the decision making is the SEQR process. The Full EAF needs to be completed and a series of questions needs to be answered, including part 2, and a discussion of the potential impacts in part 3. He feels that it is appropriate to start the SEQR process and answering those questions, and putting thoughts together about how it impacts this application. The Councilman said that he does not feel that this application, as it is currently submitted, is going to create a significant environmental impact. He said that he will do a draft and distribute it to the Town Board and discuss it at a later Board meeting. As far as the EUP application, he is in favor of it. He has reviewed the application in detail. There was a tremendous number of great comments tonight at the Public Hearing, many people in favor of it and a few people against. He recalls that number of people that came out last time that had concerns about it, he is familiar with the petitions. He was surprised at how many new things that he heard tonight about why we should approve this application. That hit home for him. He is not sure that we should review this application without considering the water tower application.

When he compares the two sites, he still feels that this site is much better than the water tower site. He feels it is less impact on the historic district – putting an antenna on top of the water tower would be more visible for the historic district. The Charlton Road site will have less impact on residents. Yes, no matter where we put a cell tower in town, it is going to impact some properties more than others. But he feels based on the information presented, it is going to have a very small visual impact, and very small impact on the rural character of the Town. He likes this location, it will have less impact from noise from the generator. This site can accommodate more carriers. There is a concern of the maintenance issues of the water tower, and installing or having to remove equipment when maintenance is needed on the water tower. The base equipment will not be visible here at the Charlton Road site, but compared to the water tower location, it would be visible from Cherry Lane. There is a light required on the top of the water tower, but no light is required on the cell tower if located on the Charlton Road site. He feels that there are a lot reasons why the Charlton Road site is better than the water tower location.

Councilman Grasso said that appreciates all of the work of the Boards and Committees that reviewed the application and gave feedback; in particular, the Cell Advisory Committee. They gave the Board a great list of pros and cons for the sites, and it was very helpful. He feels it is time for the Town Board to move forward in considering this application.

Supervisor Grattidge said that he agrees. He had an opportunity to look at the additional information that the applicant sent last Friday and a large portion of that had to do with property values and resale values. The study shows that having no cell coverage lowers home values significantly. Studies show that once the Cell Tower is up, after a short amount of time, it has no negative impact on home values. When the tower goes up at first, it can be an initial shock. He also agrees that the environmental issues have been pretty well identified. He would like Councilman Grasso to put together the report on that and get it to the Town Board. The Councilman said that it will take him a fair amount of time to do that, a few weeks probably.

Councilman Ranaletto said that he feels that there were great comments tonight, and this is a good opportunity for the Board to be able to look at both sites and make a good decision for the cell antenna for Charlton.

Councilman Robbins said that he lives on Maple Avenue, and he will drive by it. He hates technology, but after hearing people tonight, people in the service industry, constables and emergency people, it limits what they can do. He has solar panels, and he hates looking at them. The visual impact is outweighed by the benefits.

Councilwoman Heritage said that she agrees with the last comments. She agrees that there has been a very thorough review. She thanked the Cell Advisory Committee members and Councilman Grasso for all of their time and efforts. She feels that the Board could not have a more complete picture. The Charlton Road site is the application that the Town Board is considering. She feels that they should move forward with this application.

Councilman Grasso said that there have been some comments of the visual impact. He is not in favor of trying to disguise the tower by making it look like a tree or other structure. But, if there are things that Verizon can do to minimize its visual impact, he would like them to. When he looks at other towers, the ones that are lighter in color or white seem to be less visual than the ones that are grey. He recommends that we try to get it white. As far as arrays on top, they can look very cluttered. so if there is a way to consolidate it or make it look like more of one unified structure, or condense it at all, he would like Verizon to do it to make as little visual impact as possible.

RESOLUTION #195

Abstract of Claims

Motion by Councilman Ranaletto

Seconded by Councilman Robbins

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board has approved the payment of bills as presented in Abstract #120, voucher numbers 727 – 755 in the amount of \$20,926.77.

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays. **CARRIED.**

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Ken Crotty, resident, said that as a semi-agricultural Town, if a farmer has an accident in the field, they won't have access to a cell booster, and they need direct cell coverage.

RESOLUTION #196

Adjournment of Meeting

Motion by Councilwoman Heritage

Seconded by Councilman Robbins

Vote: All Ayes, No Nays. **CARRIED.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Mills
Town Clerk