

Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 12/28/2023

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Patrick Austin.

Attending: Selectpersons Patrick Austin, Peter Moskovites and Tim Jenness; Road Foreman Wendell Hastings; Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray; Ed Barber of Newport Daily Express; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg.

Colleen Kellogg asked to add an email request from James Bronner to Public Comment, follow-up on a Selectboard letter under Road Report, and an appropriation request from Island Pond Library under New Business. These items of business were accepted by the Chair with no objection.

Tim Jenness made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 9th meeting as written, seconded by Peter Moskovites, and the minutes were approved as written. Tim Jenness made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14th meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Pat Austin and the minutes approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Colleen Kellogg presented an email from James Bronner requesting a ‘potentially vicious dog’ hearing concerning his puppy that died in a Charleston dog daycare. She said the Clerk’s office replied to the email with the Dog Ordinance, which describes the process and details required in a written complaint, but has not yet received the written complaint. Board members discussed specifics that must be provided, including which dog it was, and questioned whether the ordinance applies. Board members suggest the business has liability but that it is hard to see the town’s role.

ROAD REPORT

- Foreman Wendell Hastings said the roads are rough and muddy. The grader isn’t back yet, but they’ve started using 1.5” stone in the worst spots—three loads that day.
- Regarding a Durgin Rd bank that was eroded in July storms, board members agreed to conduct the repair outside of the stream—reinforcing the bank with large stone from the road above. Wendell Hastings will develop a scope of work for contractors.
- The town is still looking to hire a full-time Truck Driver/Skilled Laborer. By agreement of all members, the Clerk’s Office will continue posting on Indeed.com and will re-run newspaper ads after January 1st.
- Wendell Hastings is interested in purchasing a used wood chipper to deal with an increased volume of overhanging trees and roadside brush. Rental is \$400/day, a used one runs \$5,000-\$11,000, and a new one costs \$40,000. Brighton’s Foreman would also like one, so Mr. Hastings suggests sharing the purchase with another town. Board members see an ongoing need for a chipper and are open to partnering with another town. Mr. Hastings will speak to Brighton about a possible equipment share.
- To maximize equipment access in the Barton pit, Mr. Hastings hopes to harvest gravel next from the bank and wants to avoid encroaching on the neighbor’s right-of-way. Board members are committed to maintaining access, so they will plan a site visit in the spring to identify the ROW and plan further harvest. Board members also agree the town should do what is needed to get all of the gravel possible for the town.

- Reviewing a letter sent to Crawford Hill Rd property owners to move a dirt pile from the road ROW, the Selectboard will allow two weeks—until January 9th—for the landowner to comply, after which time the town will move it and bill for time and equipment.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ms. Kellogg contacted Frank Erickson of Vermont Waste Management and Prevention Division to reopen an illegal compost dumping complaint against Rodger French and Kathleen Lyford on Crawford Hill Rd. Peter Moskovites put him in touch with neighbors who will log activities and times to inform a site inspection. Pat Austin contacted NEKWMD to communicate the town's dissatisfaction with how they are handling organics and ask them to file an injunction against this hauler.
- Board members reviewed town meeting articles proposed by the Cemetery Commission to establish a stone cleaning reserve fund. Pat Austin moved to place the articles on the Town Meeting warning, seconded by Tim Jenness and approved.
- Board members reviewed a proposed Development Notice and ordinance offered by the Listers to keep property valuation fair and comply with state requirements to have a standard system in place. Board members would like to consider the matter further, and asked that the proposed draft be included in the minutes for public review.
- With the job awarded at the last meeting, a contract with JBL Hauling & Excavating to replace a culvert and reinforce a bank on Fontaine Rd was signed by all board members.
- 2023 Highway bills and payroll have been paid, and \$47,528.31 remains unspent but is encumbered by a gravel crushing contract with Simpson Dirtworx to be completed in 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

- Pat Austin made a motion to place appropriation requests from NorthWoods Stewardship Center, Orleans County Citizens Advocacy, and Island Pond Library on the Town Meeting Warning, seconded by Peter Moskovites and approved.
- On the matter of Equipment Replacement, Wendell Hastings would like to replace the 2020 International truck, which he sees as too small for the volume of town work. The lead time on a new truck is currently six months, and a body takes a year. He sees repairs as under control even on the oldest (2015) truck and feels it is more valuable as a spare than a trade-in. Board members were not opposed to keeping an extra truck and would like to see truck prices on other makes in an addition to Mack.

2024 BUDGET PLANNING

- Board members are interested in using ARPA Funds as a revenue source in the 2024 budget as recommended by VLCT and will discuss corresponding expenditures at the next meeting. To make a final decision on CVFD's request for ARPA funds toward their new well, board members asked the Clerk to invite them to the next meeting.
- A budget template with known line items to date was provided to all board members, and various items were discussed including projections for Animal Control and Town Health Officer, which are newer offices. Board members will review the template before the next meeting so they can propose numbers.
- Pat Austin made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel performance. The motion was seconded by Tim Jenness, and Executive Session began at 7:40 pm. The session ended at 7:50 pm with the following action: Tim Jenness made a motion to give Teri Gray a 5% raise and to upgrade Wendell Hastings health insurance to a two-person plan in lieu of a raise. The motion was seconded by Pat Austin and approved.

Three Selectboard orders totaling \$17,479.47 and five Road orders totaling \$40,400.46 were approved unanimously and signed by all members.

Seeing no other business, Tim Jenness made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Pat Austin, and the meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm. The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 11th day of January 2024:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston

October 26, 2023

Request for a Development Notice Ordinance

It is requested that the Town of Charleston Selectboard adopt an Ordinance to Notify the town for parcel changes including:

- 1) The development of an access to a town road including new driveway.
- 2) The addition of a new stand alone structure over 80sf and/or the installation of water supply/septic system.
- 3) An addition to an existing building – including decks, porches and additions.
- 4) Major renovations or replacement of existing structures.
- 5) Deconstruction and/or removal of existing structures.

The purpose of this ordinance is to:

- 1) Ensure the accuracy of the grand list to maintain equity for all taxpayers.
- 2) Inform the road commissioner of new driveway to review drainage / culvert requirements.
- 3) Help maintain Act 250 and wetland requirements.

This is not a permit that requires approval from the town. It is merely a notification of intent. There could be a minimal fee to accompany the notice, and/or a penalty imposed for violation.

Hereby Requested,

Charleston Board of Listers

Jean Wilson, Steve Wilson, John Westinghouse

Development Notice Ordinance - DRAFT (10/26/2023)

The Charleston Selectboard adopts the following form to be filled out by any person developing access to a town road, developing a site, addition of any new buildings or additions/major renovations or removal of existing buildings in the town of Charleston.

PROPERTY OWNER: _____ PARCEL ID _____

PROPERTY LOCATION: _____

NAME OF CONTRACTOR (if applicable): _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

NATURE OF PROJECT: _____

CONSTRUCTION: APPROX START DATE: _____

APPROX. COMPLETE: _____

BUILDING: LENGTH _____ WIDTH _____ STORY HEIGHT _____ FOUNDATION _____

TYPE OF WATER SYSTEM: _____

TYPE OF SEWAGE SYSTEM: _____

Under normal conditions, a 15" culvert must be installed by the applicant wherever a new driveway meets a Town Road. This requirement can be waived only with permission of a Charleston Selectboard member and the Road Commissioner after an on-site inspection, and with the understanding that if drainage becomes a problem in the future, the applicant will be required to install a 15" culvert at that time.

The applicant assumes responsibility for any development or construction in any known or possible wetland areas. A Conditional Use Determination from the Agency of Natural Resources should be applied for if necessary. Also, new residential development must comply with Act 250 requirements as set forth by the State of Vermont.

This notice will expire two (2) years from the date of application.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received by Town: _____ Date: _____

Fee Paid: _____