

Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 7/9/2020

MINUTES

Attending: Selectpersons Peter Moskovites, Pat Austin, and Larry Young; Road Foreman Bernie Pepin; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg.

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Peter Moskovites, Chair. Motion by Mr. Austin to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2020 meeting as written, seconded by Mr. Young and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laura Kross, who owns property at Dane Hill and Gay Hill Roads, left a message with concerns about opening roads to ATVs and referred to previous problems with ATV users involving guns and aggression toward her. Ms. Kross also reported that Balsam Fir trees near the Dane Hill roadside are turning orange and dying, and she asked that the town look at the site to see if it was related to road maintenance—what she referred to as generous gravel and chloride application. Motion by Mr. Young to send a response letter advising Ms. Kross to contact state police about such firearms incidents, and also informing her that the Selectboard and Foreman would inspect the road/tree site, seconded by Mr. Austin and approved. Ms. Kellogg will get the letter out.

ROAD REPORT

Mr. Pepin reports that Patenaude began roadside mowing today, starting around Echo Lake. As requested, an area close to the lake is not being mowed to prevent drainage to the lake. The crew has been hauling gravel to Calhoun and Bowen Hill Rds. Repairs to Bly Farm Rd are complete, as is chloride. Poulin Grain contacted the Foreman about trouble accessing the Davis Farm on Bly Farm Rd since the work was done. It's Mr. Pepin's assessment that the road meets standards, and a grain truck should be able to navigate the area. The property owner may have to work something out to ensure grain delivery.

Patricia Barrett who lives off Crowe Hill Rd called to request gravel, and perhaps grading, on Crowe Hill Rd. She said the steep part is rocky, and she is concerned about losing the road. Mr. Austin was contacted about a washout on Town Farm Rd. Mr. Pepin said a property owner has filled in a culvert causing gully erosion down the length of the road. Board members and the Foreman agree on the need to contain Class 4 costs, and property owners are reminded that maintenance is minimal on these roads per town policy. Mr. Young and Mr. Pepin will do site visits to assess needs on Crowe Hill and Town Farm Roads.

Mr. Pepin reports that a driveway culvert to Melvin Bowen's hay field has been crushed. The Selectboard agreed that a letter should be sent to the property owner informing him that the culvert is crushed and needs to be replaced. Mr. Pepin and Ms. Kellogg will collaborate to get the letter out.

Mr. Pepin suggests that any funds leftover in the mowing budget be used to cut back trees on overgrown roadsides in key locations. He could identify a road or two each year. This will help road conditions and keep the town's nice equipment out of thick brush.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Pepin asked to receive his cell phone stipend annually rather than monthly. Motion by Mr. Moskovites to pay the Foreman the entire \$25/mo stipend by July 1st of each year, seconded by Mr. Austin, and approved unanimously. For 2020, the amount will be paid by August 1st. Ms. Kellogg will submit a payment request.
- Selectboard members would like to know more about the Vermont Building Communities grants. Ms. Kellogg will find out details about guidelines, match, etc. and report back. Examples of projects the town may be interested in: sand/salt shed, plow shelter, elevator.

OLD BUSINESS

- All board members were provided a copy of the ATV resolution passed at the last meeting. Mr. Austin has heard complaints from three residents of Chilafoux Rd about the section of Chilafoux between Gay Hill and the Brownington town line being left out of the ATV trail and posted with “No ATVs” signs. It’s a short section of road that connects to Brownington, whose roads are all open to ATVs, and Mr. Austin feels it was an oversight. Motion by Mr. Austin to amend the June 25th ATV resolution to open Chilafoux Rd from Dane Hill Rd to the Brownington town line, seconded by Mr. Moskovites and approved unanimously. Mr. Austin will update the signage.
- Regarding two recent noise complaints in West Charleston Village, Mr. Austin suggested that they may be neighbor issues rather than general problems, but suggested the board could consider specifying reasonable times of day in a noise ordinance. Mr. Moskovites noted the ordinance is pretty vague and may need to be revisited at some point. Mr. Young has heard from Mr. Bowen that his neighbors have been decent lately, and he suggested the matter be put on hold for now. All agreed, and the matter was tabled until further notice.
- ANR has not responded to the town’s report of environmental violation at the Mead property. Mr. Austin is trying to reach Reg Smith who handles enforcement for our area.
- Mr. Young contacted Constable Jonathan Bruce and reports he is still interested in pursuing police training, but he is unable to proceed until the COVID situation is over.
- Maintenance on Bly Farm Rd is complete. Ms. Kellogg will compile costs separated by: washout, driveway culvert, and maintenance near Route 105.

Seven Highway and Selectboard orders totaling \$49,650.00 were approved unanimously and signed by all board members.

Seeing no other business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:53 pm. The next meeting will be held Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 6:00 pm, with public participation by telephone.

Approved this 23rd day of July, 2020:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston