

Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 11/11/2021

MINUTES

Attending: Selectpersons Patrick Austin and Peter Moskovites; Foreman Bernie Pepin; Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg.

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Patrick Austin, Chair. He expressed thanks to all Veterans in honor of Veterans Day. There were no agenda changes.

Peter Moskovites moved to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2021 meeting as written, seconded by Mr. Austin and unanimously approved. There was no Public Comment

ROAD REPORT

Bernie Pepin said that bailing has begun in the Barton Pit and is turning out well despite the vendor's staffing shortage. About 4,000 yards has been bailed. He doesn't foresee any problems; water is not accumulating the way an engineer thought it might. He'd like to haul out more gravel to make room to mine. The crew has cleaned up berms on Hudson Rd and started hauling stay-mat. A culvert on Town Farm Rd was fixed about a month ago. Stone installed on Bly Farm Rd is preventing erosion. Ted Aldrich has been training on the grader. Mr. Pepin asked to discuss staffing needs later in Executive Session.

OLD BUSINESS

- Mr. Pepin said new propane heaters are in use and heating the garage well. The stove pipe is unhooked, and he will get the furnace out. Mr. Austin said that Jesse Currie was delayed by illness but is on his way to complete the roof work. Because Bourne's was 10 cents per gallon less than Fred's, the town has signed a propane contract with Bourne's. Tank installation is complete.
- (The gravel pit was discussed during Road Report.)
- Estimates for engineering services to replace a large culvert on Ten Mile Square Rd were received from East Engineering (lump sum \$13,000 plus hourly cost for ROW assistance) and Ruggles Engineering (not to exceed \$16,349). All vendors have good track records with VTrans. Motion by Mr. Moskovites to award the job to East Engineering as the low bidder, seconded by Mr. Austin and approved. An agreement form was signed by the Chair and will be returned.
- Ms. Kellogg provided some Q and A information regarding proposed disability insurance – from the insurance broker as well as league HR and benefits staff. Mr. Moskovites asked for more time to review the information and to discuss it further at the Dec 9th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Town has firewood it no longer needs for heating: 7-8 cord split at ~24"; 10-12 cord blocked at 18-24", and 4-5 cord log length. With split delivered wood going for \$200/cord, Mr. Austin suggests trying to sell the log length at \$100/cord. Selling the rest may be difficult because it would have to be picked up, and there are liability concerns. There was discussion of how it might benefit townspeople and what organizations might accept donations. By unanimous agreement, Mr. Austin will try to move the log length at \$100/cord.
- The Town is eligible for an equipment grant through the state Grants-in-Aid program. Of the eligible equipment, the Foreman said a hay bale shredder/mulcher is needed for ditching/shoulder work. Mr. Moskovites moved to submit the Letter of Intent to apply for grant to purchase a hay bale shredder/mulcher, seconded by Mr. Austin and approved.
- Requests to place appropriations on the 2022 Town Meeting Warning were received from Umbrella, Dailey Library, GreenUp Vermont, and Rural Community Transportation. All received support at the same level in 2021. Mr. Austin moved to place these on the 2022 Town Meeting Warning, seconded by Mr. Moskovites and approved.

- A rental tenant at the 242 Twin Bridges Rd owned by Lynwood Crown has requested a rental inspection, and as the Town Health Officer, Mr. Austin is required to perform this inspection even though he has no training or experience. Because there has been no interest in the THO position and no one has been appointed, the Vermont Health Commissioner appointed the Selectboard Chair. Mr. Austin suggested the board try to interest someone in the position. Teri Gray provided contact information for the Brighton Health Officer. Mr. Austin will reach out to see if she might have interest in providing service to Charleston. If not, he would like the board to find another way to relocate this responsibility away from the Selectboard.

Three Selectboard orders totaling \$1,171,911.70 and Four Highway orders totaling \$32,360.91 were approved unanimously and signed by both members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

- The board would like the 2022 budget to be the main focus of the Dec 9th meeting. Ms. Gray and Ms. Kellogg will have an updated 2021 budget status report and some rough numbers for 2022.
- At the board's instruction, Ms. Kellogg will ask Sheriff Harlow to limit her presentation to 10-15 minutes.
- An upcoming state Diesel Upgrade/Replacement Grant opportunity does not fit any current town needs.

Ms. Moskovites called for Executive Session to discuss personnel matters with Mr. Pepin and to complete employee evaluations. Session began at 6:59 pm and ended at 7:48 pm with the following action: Motion by Mr. Austin to increase the hourly rate by 3% for the four highway employees and increase Ms. Kellogg's hourly rate to \$22/hour effective the following pay cycle, seconded by Mr. Moskovites and approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm. The next meeting will be held Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 9th day of December 2021:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston