

**Town of Charleston**  
**Selectboard Meeting 02/10/2022**

MINUTES

Attending: Selectpersons Patrick Austin, Peter Moskovites and Larry Young; Charleston Elementary Principal Chris Lawson (remote); 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.

Peter Moskovites moved to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2022 meeting as written, seconded by Larry Young and unanimously approved as written.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Via the Town Clerk's Office, resident and taxpayer Ron Lavoie said he hopes the board will consider downgrading class 3 roads that are basically driveways to one house—to save undue maintenance costs. The board will discuss the matter further at the next meeting. Mr. Moskovites and the Clerk will bring an inventory of roads and other materials related to this subject.

Charleston Principal Chris Lawson provided information on the proposed school budget and Annual Meeting Warning. Referring to pg. 22 in the annual report, Mr. Lawson said programming remains the same, but cost increases have increased the departmental budget 6.37%. The overall budget is up 12.79%, but this includes Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund expenditures that are offset with additional revenue, so the budget that must be raised is 10.88% higher as shown on the Warning on pg. 2. The estimated \$.06 tax increase is due mostly to the town's CLA, and the increase is lower than last year (\$1.208). The equalized pupil count has increased from 115.2 last year to 120.97, and the per pupil spending of \$17,954—10% higher than the previous year—is the middle of the pack across the supervisory union.

The other major article on the Warning asks to raise \$100,000 for the asset replacement fund. Following several bathroom plumbing issues after paving a couple years back, and work over Christmas to replace the grease trap, which resulted in having to excavate the length of the kitchen to find intact pipe to join onto, the school must plan for additional plumbing and floor repairs. The funds will also allow the school to replace lights with LED fixtures.

Mr. Lawson thanked the town for supporting the modular building, which is a great asset to the school, providing the older grades some separation, allowing each grade to have its own classroom, and providing a dedicated art and music room. COVID response grant funds enabled the school to replace all air change units except the gym, and they hope to secure upcoming ARPA funds to upgrade the gym system and finish exterior vents that weren't completed during original construction, all of which are estimated to cost around \$20,000. Mr. Austin said the gym upgrade will be a benefit since the gym is the town's meeting place. Mr. Lawson and board members agreed that the recent parking lot/yard upgrade and road paving look great and show the town's pride in the school.

**ROAD REPORT**

Mr. Austin said the crew has been out winging snowbanks and doing some work on Ten Mile Square Rd. Board members have not heard any concerns from residents.

## OLD BUSINESS

- The Town received an invoice from JA McDonald for the balance of pit materials excavation completed so far. Because the arrangement was to pay when the job is complete, the board instructed the Treasurer to hold the invoice until Mr. Austin can discuss the matter with the Road Foreman and JA McDonald. It was noted that the amount excavated was 15,000 CY and the job is for 20,000 CY.
- Board members reviewed contracts with David White Trucking for roadside mowing and pavement sweeping in 2022. Both were reviewed previously by the Foreman. Mr. Moskovites moved to approve and send both contracts to the vendor for acceptance, seconded by Mr. Young and approved.
- East Engineering reports that applications for both stream permits needed for the culvert replacement on Ten Mile Square Rd have been submitted and should take about two months, after which the job will be “shovel ready.” The Town will discuss a state structure grant with VTrans at the annual meeting.
- Mr. Austin has been in touch with Currie Construction about insulation-related work needed at the garage—including the side door—and will try to have a price at the next meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

- A contract with CAI for the town’s biennial Tax Maps update was referred by the Listers for approval. Mr. Moskovites moved to accept the contract, seconded by Mr. Austin and approved.
- Board members proposed to schedule the annual meeting with VTrans on Tuesday March 15<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. Ms. Kellogg will confirm with VTrans.
- Ms. Kellogg said the final Treasury rule on ARPA spending allows towns to declare the entire award amount as lost revenue, allowing towns to spend the funds on “provision of government services,” and not just the original categories. Board members discussed possible projects including grant matches, office and garage upgrades, highway equipment and broadband. The Chair asked to keep ARPA discussion on the agenda so an allocation plan can develop.

Two Selectboard orders totaling \$14,107.27 and four Highway orders totaling \$36,769.58 were approved unanimously and signed by all members.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

- NEK Waste Management District received state approval for their board approve the budget, and there will not be a ballot vote. Mr. Austin said voter approval is unique to this district and he favors that method.

Seeing no other business, Mr. Moskovites moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Austin, and the meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm. The next meeting will be held Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 24th day of February 2022:

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Selectboard, Town of Charleston