

**Town of Charleston**  
**Selectboard Meeting 07/14/2022**

MINUTES

Attending: Selectpersons Patrick Austin, Peter Moskovites and Larry Young; Animal Control Officer/Health Officer Sarah Jenness; 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. Ms. Kellogg asked to add ambulance dispatch to the agenda under New Business. Also under new business, Mr. Austin will discuss a possible meeting date change.

Peter Moskovites moved to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2022 meeting as written, seconded by Pat Austin and unanimously approved.

There was no PUBLIC COMMENT or ROAD REPORT.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Sarah Jenness recommended that the Selectboard consider reducing the impound time for stray animals from ten days to five days in line with most area towns. If an animal has a willing owner, they are found quickly through social media, so holding them longer than five days is an unnecessary town expense. Ms. Kellogg provided a VLCT guide to ordinances; the process would be to post the vote on the next agenda, hold the vote, publish a notice, and wait out the 60-day public petition period. The board will hold this vote at the next meeting; and Ms. Kellogg will have a revised version of the Dog Ordinance ready.
- Ms. Jenness reported tire damage to her personal vehicle that occurred during an animal call and required a replacement tire. Many properties she visits for animal and health complaints are badly kept. The Selectboard agreed to reimburse her for the replacement in the amount of \$303.16. Going forward, the board asked her submit to the Town Clerk any expenses that come up beyond her usual mileage/supplies, and they will approve them on a case-by-case basis.
- Ms. Jenness also responded to the Devaney's on Hudson Rd, who reported that Lynwood Crown's cows were in their garden and berry bushes. Mr. Austin notified Mr. Crown that fences need to be repaired and asked Ms. Jenness to follow up with the Devaney's and Mr. Crown. It turns out the land has been leased and the cows are not Crown's, so accountability is questionable. There is nothing the town can do because there is no ordinance regarding livestock. Ms. Jenness is reaching out to Humane Officer Renee Falconer and gathering more information about what other towns are working on. Most of the calls she gets do not involve provable neglect so police support is limited, and something at the town level would help her take action. She will gather information from VCLT and others and share with the board.
- Ms. Jenness is also in the process of investigating a potential animal control and/or health officer issue at a residence on Hudson Rd. Neighbors are complaining about the smell; animals are presents, and household garbage can be seen, which can draw rats and pose a health risk. The person has not been around when she visited, but she is talking with the Dept of Health about how to proceed. She will likely have to impose clean-up requirements and deadlines, and it could escalate to a hearing, so she wants to know she has the board's support. Selectboard members agreed they will support her and asked her to talk to VLCT for additional guidance.

- A certified letter from the Selectboard to Michael Rice was never claimed. Ms. Kellogg will resend it priority mail, and board members took copies to try to deliver in person. The board has extended the deadline to move a junk vehicle to August 11th.
- In reference to a Hazard Mitigation grant for generators discussed at the previous meeting, Mr. Austin will work with Ms. Kellogg to draft a needs statement.
- Board members reviewed proposed changes to the Policies Personnel Policies and approved all changes with the exception of Section 11: Alcohol and Drug Use, which will be reviewed in greater detail and discussed at the next meeting.
- Mr. Austin said Jesse Currie has a materials deposit from the town and will start roof work in a couple of weeks.
- Mr. Austin said Green & Son is booking jobs in mid-August, but he will meet with Mike to get scope and pricing for a concrete pad outside the downstairs office door. Jesse Currie is getting prices on new door with no threshold to address accessibility issues in this same area.
- Mr. Austin is in touch with property owner Dale Simino and will speak to Bernie Pepin. When they ditch in that area, the berm can be taken off. material.

#### NEW BUSINESS

- Orleans/Essex VNA & Hospice requests that a \$3,000 appropriation request be placed on the 2023 Town Meeting Warning; same amount approved in 2022. Mr. Moskovites moved to place the request on the warning, seconded by Mr. Austin and approved.
- An estimate for body work needed on the Ford pickup following a collision with a deer was reviewed. Board members agreed unanimously to proceed with repair in coordination with insurance.
- No estimates have been received for Office/Garage generator installation. Ms. Austin would like to follow up personally with the invited vendors. Ms. Kellogg will forward contact information.
- Mr. Austin said he wants to make sure the Town is performing regular maintenance on Class 4 roads. Generally, work is done in response to complaints. If \$1500/mile were spent on Class 4 roads, the town would be within budget. Ms. Kellogg provided a report of work done this year on Allen Farm Rd and will check with Bernie Pepin to make sure all Class 4 work is included in the report. Mr. Moskovites sees Crawford Hill Rd could use a few loads of gravel where the Class 3 portion ends. There was more discussion of individual roads including: Maple Ridge needs mowing; Sanderson Hill Rd and Allen Farm Rd are good; Bly has had recent repair; not all need mowing. Mr. Moskovites suggests creating an inventory of needs. Mr. Austin asked all board members to visit any Class 4 roads they are unfamiliar with and take notice of whether it needs ditching, mowing, gavel, etc. Board members agreed to do this in preparation for the August 11th meeting. Mr. Austin will make sure the Road Foreman is present for this discussion and talk with him about the best options for possibly adding a Class 4 road to this year's mowing—hourly rate or otherwise.
- NEKWMD is proposing an amendment to their charter that would eliminate the Australian Ballot vote—the Board of Supervisors would approve it instead. Mr. Austin said ours is the only district that still uses Australian ballot, and although he favors this to put control in the hands of voters, the change is probably going to happen. As a member of the board, he could vote no if that town wanted. The Selectboard did not seek any action on this.
- Newport Ambulance has notified Charleston that towns will be billed for dispatch based on the number of calls per town. They estimate it will be about \$4,560 for 2023.
- Mr. Austin will not be available for the July 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, and it was cancelled by agreement of all board members. The Chair will work with the Town Clerk's office to schedule and warn a special meeting, possibly on the 26<sup>th</sup>, to approve the property tax rate and the revised dog ordinance as these are time sensitive.

Four Selectboard orders totaling \$14,594.29 and six Road orders totaling \$33,812.57 were approved unanimously and signed by all members.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

- A mailing receipt confirms that Penelope Newcomb received the Selectboard decision from the June 20<sup>th</sup> dog hearing.
- Town Officers have the option to participate in VLCT Town Fair, October 6-7 in Killington. The Town Clerk's Office can provide registration information.
- The Town was notified that lake reclassification for Echo Lake is on hold as the state reviews the septic system restrictions put on all lakes within the watershed of an A1 lake. The letter from the state indicates that Morgan/Seymour Lake object to reclassifying Echo Lake for this reason, and that DEC is working with the legislature to revise the rules in the coming year.
- VLCT will hold a virtual government finance workshop for Selectboards on July 28<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Seeing no other business, Mr. Moskovites moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Young, and the meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm. The next meeting will be held Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 11<sup>th</sup> day of August 2022:

---

Selectboard, Town of Charleston