

Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 7/25/2024

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Peter Moskovites, Chair.

Attending: Selectpersons Peter Moskovites (PM) Terry Rollins (TR) and Tim Jenness (TJ); Road Foreman Wendell Hastings (WH); Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray (TG); Ed Barber, Newport Daily Express; Matthew Wilson, Chronicle; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg (CK).

TJ made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2024 meeting as written, second by TR. The minutes were approved as written. There was no public comment.

ROAD REPORT

WH said the highway crew spread 43 loads of top gravel on Hudson Rd today, with him in the grader, one town truck, and two of JBL's trucks. Westmore Mtn. was graveled yesterday, and Dane Hill Rd will be done tomorrow. JBL will work for the town until next Wednesday, and everything should be caught up by then. Simpson DirtWorx got the Barton Pit open, and WH spent a day finishing the work. Mt. Bess Rd is ready for top gravel, the crew will dig out a culvert on Bowen Hill Rd, and will ask CVFD to clear two culverts on Bly Farm Rd. Following up on a washout on Bowen Hill Rd where a 10" field access culvert is undersized for the 4' w x 6'h ditch, PM gave the landowner the choice of putting in a larger culvert or having the town ditch across. The town needs to determine the size needed—possible 36 in—and give her a price. PM asked the disposition of woody debris from Hudson Rd, and WH said it would be collected in the town's sand pit. Ed Barber asked if the town saw a lot of erosion during the storm; and WH said there were washouts at the bottom of basically every steep road or driveway. He hopes the town is happy with the progress so far.

OLD BUSINESS

- Regarding a proposed Hazard Mitigation Grant to address flooding and drainage at the Town Office and Garage yard, PM will schedule a meeting with Hutchins to discuss scope and cost and will notify other board members of the date and time. PM and CK will coordinate to participate in the grant program's office hours to get guidance on eligibility and the application process.
- One full-time Truck Driver/Laborer will start Monday, and another position is unfilled. WH is encouraging a temporary driver to stay on, and is in touch with an individual in the process of getting his CDL—who will apply to work for Charleston. WH asked the Selectboard to consider a four-person crew year-round. This would free up the Foreman for various tasks, including operating the grader. TR and TJ were open to it; PM has questions and will put it on the next agenda for further discussion.
- Under other old business, PM spoke to Eric Pope, VTrans, about the possibility of discontinuing an unmaintained section of Class IV Crowe Hill Rd beyond Westover Rd and the town's obligation to maintain it. Eric said this is an ambiguous part of road classification, but a town could make a good argument to not maintain it. PM will chart out the consideration process at the next meeting.
- WH asked the board what should be done on Town Farm Rd. The town cannot keep having it coming down and taking out Hudson and Center School Rds. If the town will continue to maintain, it needs culverts. There was discussion of how logging activity and creation of a log landing has changed flow of stormwater and possibly crushed poor condition culverts.

WH said a 5' salvaged culvert was installed on top of the hill, and he was just informed by a property owner that another culvert further down is plugged.

NEW BUSINESS

- Charleston Volunteer Fire Department requests a permit to hold a coin drop fundraiser at Devaney Farm Stand on Hudson Rd on August 3rd from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. PM moved to approve a permit, seconded by TJ, and the motion was approved
- TG provided grand list, budget, and state education rate information needed to calculate the 2024 property tax rates for Charleston, which will result in about a \$218 increase per \$100,000 in property value, which is not far from the \$250 that was estimated at Town Meeting. TJ made a motion to accept the rates as calculated, with a second by PM. After taking time to review documentation, proposed rates were approved as presented and a notice to taxpayers was signed. Bills will be mailed in the next two weeks. PM asked about the timing of the reappraisal, and TG said the town has a contract with NEMRC for 2026.

Four Selectboard orders totaling \$13,821.66 and four Road orders totaling \$78,944.50 were approved unanimously and signed by all members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Charleston's Property Tax Sale will be held at the office on August 27th
- Echo-Seymour Lakes Watershed Action Plan will hold a community meeting August 7th at 5:30 in Morgan. CK recommends Charleston attend to coordinate town and action plan efforts to make improvements on West Echo Lake Rd. TR and CK plan to attend.

The Chair called for Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Executive session began at 6:34 pm and ended at 7:09 pm with no action taken.

Seeing no other business, TJ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by TR and the meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm. The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, August 8, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 8th day of August 2024:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston