

**Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 1/9/2025**

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Peter Moskovites, Chair. Attending: Selectpersons Peter Moskovites (PM), Tim Jenness (TJ), and Terry Rollins (TR); Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray; Charleston Elementary Principal Christopher Lawson; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg (CK).

TJ made a motion to approve minutes of the December 12, 2024 meeting as written, second by TR. There was no discussion, and the minutes were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Charleston Elementary Principal Chris Lawson reviewed state and property value factors affecting the education rate and shared the school budget, which was approved at a school board meeting the previous night. The school has completed facilities upgrades, including a new pellet boiler paired with a propane boiler as backup and summer water heating, thanks to a \$550,000 grant.

With the Road Foreman unable to attend due to weather, there was no Road Report.

OLD BUSINESS

- The Treasurer provided a final 2024 budget report, including \$26,798.68 remaining in highway funds, which the board will ask voters to transfer to the Road Equipment Reserve Fund.
- There was a line-by-line review and discussion of proposed 2025 budget figures with respect to 2024 expenditures. The chair encouraged members to keep the property tax rate similar to last year. Board members expect FEMA reimbursement and final payment on equipment loans to be significant factors in 2025.
- The Board reviewed a list of 2025 hourly pay rates discussed during personnel evaluations. PM made a motion to approve the rates as listed, with second by TR. TR suggests increasing the Animal Control Officer rate. The ACO will attend the next meeting, and Board members agreed to discuss and finalize her wage then. Payrates were approved by all members with the caveat that the ACO rate was subject to change.
- Regarding a letter from property owner Studer on East Echo Lake Rd, board members and the Foreman will keep the road draining issue on their radar and expect to hear from the property owner in spring. The Clerk will send a short letter reflecting this.
- Conversation around a possible livestock ordinance was tabled until the next meeting when the ACO will attend to discuss it.
- A contract with Pike Industries to repave Durgin and Church Hill Roads based on the estimate approved at the previous meeting was reviewed and signed by all members.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Town's Annual Highway Mileage Certification Form was preloaded with an adjustment to the length of Class 4 Highway Dolloff Mountain Rd based on remeasurement by AOT. There were questions regarding the town's resulting Class 4 mileage total, so signature and approval were tabled until the next meeting.
- Requests to place appropriations on the 2025 Town Meeting Warning were received from NorthWoods Stewardship Center \$800; NEK Council on Aging \$600; and Echo Lake Protective Association (ELPA) \$1000—all of which received the same level of support in

2024. The Charleston Volunteer Fire Department will ask voters to level fund their services—\$55,609 as in 2024. With agreement from board members, all requests will be placed on the Town Meeting Warning.

- The Town Clerk and Board Members discussed items needed on the 2025 Town Meeting Warning. Due to changes in laws concerning delinquent taxes and tax sales, board members will put a question before voters to make the Delinquent Tax Collector position an appointed rather than elected office. The change would allow the town to keep delinquent fees as revenue and the Treasurer to collect delinquent taxes at the Town Office.

Four 2024 Selectboard Orders totaling \$7,884.24, two 2025 Selectboard Orders totaling \$10,984.42, three 2024 Road Orders totaling \$151,186.67, and two 2025 Road Orders totaling \$11,413.50 were approved unanimously and signed by all members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

- Orleans County Meeting will be held January 21, 2025.
- The 2024 Service Report from Newport Ambulance was received, including 121 emergency calls and 12 hospital transports in Charleston.

PM called for Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter, with second by TR. Executive Session began at 6:55 pm and ended at 7:00 pm with no action taken.

Seeing no other business, PM made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by TJ, and the meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm. The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 23rd day of January 2025:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston