

**Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 8/14/2025**

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Patrick Austin, Chair. Also attending: Selectpersons Terry Rollins (TR) and Tim Jenness; Road Foreman Wendell Hastings (WH); Property Owner Gary Hosford; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg (CK). There were no changes to the agenda.

A motion to approve the July 24th meeting minutes was made by TJ and seconded by TR. The minutes were approved as written with no discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gary Hosford has property on Mill St. and is helping Kathryn Sloan clear the road ROW for a town project. He asked what is needed and what the project will entail. Mrs. Sloan is concerned because her buildings may be in the ROW. The Chair explained that the town is required to upgrade the road so that it meets standards. Buildings are not an issue, but any stored items that are junk should go, and anything that is needed must be moved from the right-of-way. WH said the scope of work will involve a ditch and stone on the left side going up and an additional 30" culvert somewhere near her garage. He would like to see the area cleaned up from where a pickup now sits to the garage. He added that a wider ten-wheeler truck will be plowing the road. PA and WH agreed that the work will address Mr. Hosford's ongoing problem with gravel washing onto his property at the bottom of the road.

ROAD REPORT

WH said the crew took six loads of material from under Bridge 4 on Hudson Rd, and it now has a 5' clearance. VTrans is happy with the work, which they say doubled the volume of water that can pass through. Simpson DirtWorx moved back into the Barton pit to resume crushing. The crew is using round bales to revegetate new ditches on Dane Hill Rd, and it's working well. They plan two days of hauling gravel and then ditching on Evergreen next week. They brought four loads of shim gravel to Tripp Hill to deal with rocks poking up. CK reviewed upcoming grant projects for 2026: VTrans structures grant to upgrade a large culvert on Hinton Hill, another culvert replacement on that road that might be a good fit for Better Roads, and a ditching and culvert on Mill St that may be the Grants-in-Aid project. TR said a property owner asked him if the town would pay for mower equipment that was broken when he drove over heaved pavement on Hudson Rd. Board members agreed that the town was not responsible for such incidents, and WH said that the area will have to wait until the next highway replacement project. Cutting out pavement creates a worse problem to manage.

OLD BUSINES

- Sarah Jenness is unable to attend so discussion of a proposed Livestock Ordinance was tabled until the next meeting.
- In a discussion of Class 4 Roads, PA said the standard is to keep the road assessable by a four-wheel drive vehicle, and the town has historically set an amount of money for the year. The town can't haul gravel to a Class 4 road to make it smooth for private plowing, however, a certain amount of maintenance can save the town money overall. In the future, the board could consider asking voters to fund special Class 4 projects if needs arise. CK said that, so far in 2025, some hydroseeding had been done on Town Farm Rd, and a couple of culverts changed on Crawford Hill Rd, totaling about \$1400.

- Of the Class 4 roads, WH said that Town Farm Rd and Crowe Hill Rd need work. Upsizing four culverts on Crowe Hill Rd with salvage would ready the road for a heavy storm, but he can't replace culverts without hauling cover material, and then the road would exceed Class 4 standards. He noted a problem at the first field driveway on the left, which sends water into the road, and he doesn't have a solution for slowing water on that hill. Town Farm Rd is a bigger project because there are 15 undersized culverts. He currently has five he could install there, but even if they were replaced, there is nowhere to send water. Hydroseeding did not take on the bank. Before ditching Town Farm Rd, the town must consider the cost of hauling away material vs. spreading it in the woods. Two trucks cannot pass each other on that road. PA suggests stabilizing the bottom of Town Farm Rd, which all goes into the Clyde River. WH sees the problem more at the top of the hill near Crown's field and a maple orchard—it's all trees.
- WH and TJ noticed a locked gate across Westover Road. Gates on town highways can only be installed with written permission from the Selectboard and must be unlocked. PA asked WH to wheel the road to see if it is within the Class 4 town highway, and CK will look for any record of Selectboard permission to install a gate.
- TR would like to take some trees from his land in the Crawford Hill Rd ROW to help the road dry. Other board members agreed that he is free to do so.
- Board members are in favor of having the Barton Pit surveyed. PA asked CK to email surveyor proposals to all board members for review and further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

- Board members reviewed an Echo-Seymour LWAP report from Will Marlier detailing recommended upgrades to West Echo Lake Rd. PA noted that the town has done a lot of work on that road in recent storms, and it's holding up well, but the report shows some culverts may still be undersized. WH pointed out the estimate budget of \$257,000 for 1.5 miles of road. PA suggested the board invite Marlier to the next meeting to discuss the project, and all board members were in favor. CK will reach out to Marlier.

Two Selectboard Orders totaling \$16,165.88 and two Road Orders totaling \$62,661.38 were approved and signed by all members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- CK provided the following update on FEMA reimbursement for 2024 disaster #4810: Of the 5 projects, two have been reimbursed, the town has submitted reimbursement requests for another two, and the fifth one totaling \$270,371.26 has been obligated, and the office is waiting to receive reimbursement paperwork from the state. Reimbursement for #4810 will total \$344,999.45.
- WH said the town pickup is being repaired, and he'll let the board know how it's working when he gets it back. It has 106,000 miles on it. PA said the board will have to talk about replacing the pickup at some point.

Seeing no other business, TJ made a motion to adjourn, with a second by TR, and the meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm. The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, August 28th, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

Approved this 28th day of August 2025:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston