

**Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 1/8/2026**

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Chair Patrick Austin (PA). Also present were Selectpersons Tim Jenness (TJ) and Terry Rollins (TR); Road Foreman Wendell Hastings (WH); Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray (TG); resident Peter Moskovites; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg (CK).

The Chair noted that the next meeting will be January 22, 2026. TJ moved to approve the December 9, 2025 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by TR and approved. There was no Public Comment.

ROAD REPORT

- On Willis Rd, WH reported that the plow truck turns around at the end of the town highway, and the landowner plows the rest. Most other roads are working well.
- WH met at Camp Winape and Dane Hill Roads with an NEKCV construction manager. NEKCV hopes to install an access culvert at the bottom of Dane Hill Rd but was not comfortable assuming liability for road damage and may instead install the line on stilts, potentially installing five poles. On Camp Winape Rd, NEKCV originally planned to trench the center of the road, which the town will not permit, and is now considering tying into an existing line serving three houses.
- TJ moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter, with a second by PA. Executive Session began at 6:05 pm and ended at 6:19 pm. Upon returning to open session, PA moved to post the full-time truck driver position on Indeed.com and in the newspapers at the same hourly rate as in the fall. The motion was seconded by TR and approved.
- WH and CK are preparing a Local Highway Safety Grant Application for replacement of damaged guardrail and possibly ledge removal, requiring no local match. The application is due February 2, with final scope of work approval planned for the next meeting.
- WH reported that the roller and wing have been installed on the new grader, so it is ready for use.

NEW BUSINESS

- TG reported that CVFD Treasurer Blair Moulton was unable to attend and asked whether the town could absorb the net metering credit reimbursement paid to the town for electricity credits from the solar array. TG reviewed the Net Metering Agreement, which specifies credits be applied to the school, fire department, and then town, with the town billing for the credit amount. TG is exploring ways to simplify reimbursement for CVFD. PA noted CVFD would need to request an additional voter appropriation for electric costs and welcomed further discussion at a future meeting.
- TG requested approval of the town's customary Late Homestead Filing Penalty of 3%. PA moved to set the penalty rate at 3%, seconded by TJ, and approved.
- During 2025 Road Commissioner site visits, board members learned that the traveled roadway maintained as Bennett Farm Rd is not the designated town highway. PA consulted with VTrans and was advised that the current mixed classification—Class 4 to Legal Trail to 200 feet of Class 3—is unusual and does not constitute a Class 3 obligation serving the town. Reclassification is recommended. TJ moved to initiate the process to reclassify the 0.04-mile portion of TH26 known as Bennett Farm Rd, seconded by TR and approved unanimously. PA recommended notifying all owners on TH26, not just Bennett Farm Rd. A site inspection will

be held at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, followed by a hearing at 6:00 pm at the Town Office to receive testimony.

- PA moved to increase the town mileage reimbursement rate from 65.5 cents to the federal rate of 72.5 cents. The motion was seconded by TR and approved.
- Appropriations: PA moved to place appropriations for Island Pond Library (\$700) and RCT (\$1,650) on the 2026 Town Meeting Warning. The motion was second by TR and approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- CK reviewed LHMP plan sections currently under revision and highlighted proposed changes and reorganization based on state feedback, with the overall goal of making the plan more usable for town officials and residents. Attendees supported the changes.
- Linda Studer requested an extension until June to remove a planter from the highway ROW due to frozen ground. The board agreed to extend the deadline, and the Clerk will notify the property owner.
- TG reported that Town Auditors have begun auditing 2025 financial records. She provided unaudited Revenue and Expenditure reports as of December 31, 2025, for all departments, including a detailed Road Department report.

MORE NEW BUSINESS

- The board reviewed an early draft of the 2026 Town Meeting Warning, including elected offices, tax deadline, and appropriation requests. Members discussed potentially asking voters to appropriate portions of a Road Surplus to the Road Equipment Reserve Fund and select special highway projects. WH will work with the Clerk's Office on project lists and cost estimates.
- Board members conducted a line-by-line review of proposed 2026 Revenues and Expenditures and agreed to hold a special meeting for detailed budget discussion at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, January 20th. CK will post notices and send reminders.
- PA reported a follow-up conversation with MWA regarding erosion on East Echo Lake Rd near the Brouillette property. MWA supports de-berming the road to allow even water shedding. PA requested this be added to the next agenda to discuss landowner notification and gravel needs.

Four Selectboard Orders totaling \$26,209.81 and five Road Orders totaling \$42,587.71 were approved and signed by all members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- NEKWMD budget and per capita assessment notice were received.
- Charleston's Equalization Study Results were received from the state, showing a CLA of 65.00%.

Seeing no other business, TR moved to adjourn, seconded by PA, and the meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

The next regular meeting will be held at 6:00 pm on January 22, 2026. A special meeting to discuss the 2026 Budget will be held at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

Approved this 20th day of January 2026:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston