

**Town of Charleston
Selectboard Meeting 2/26/2026**

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Chair Patrick Austin (PA). Also present were Selectpersons Tim Jenness (TJ) and Terry Rollins (TR); Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray (TG); Road Foreman Wendell Hastings; and Selectboard Clerk Colleen Kellogg (CK).

TR moved to approve the February 12, 2026 meeting minutes as written. PA seconded, and the motion was approved. There was no public comment.

ROAD REPORT

WH reported the crew has been pushing back snowbanks and opening culverts in preparation for warm weather. They also removed an obstacle on Museum Drive with help from the property resident.

PA raised the issue of replacing the pickup. WH said the current truck is a 2017 and the town recently spent \$800 on it. He checked sticker prices for 3500 extended cab pickups: Ford \$73,000, Dodge \$80,000, and Chevy \$75,000.

Regarding Class 4 maintenance, WH said Town Farm Rd is in the worst condition. During major storms, water and material run down Town Farm and wash out Hudson and Center School Rd. The road needs ditching, which will require cutting an estimated 40–60 trees on both sides. Once removed, the town can install ditching. Excavated material could be mixed with tailings and spread on the road to build it up and partially fill the ditch on the left.

The job is too large for the crew to handle with chainsaws. Justin Taft estimated about \$200/hr to cut and drop the trees, with two cuts per tree. PA noted that dropping that many trees may create issues for adjacent landowners. WH asked whether the wood could be included as part of the job price. PA suggested asking Taft to price the worst section at the bottom of the road and estimate the hours required.

WH will have Taft review the site and provide a price after mud season. He suggested the project could be done over multiple years—cutting trees one year and ditching the next, or completing sections over three to four years. Afterward, WH would like to upsize a culvert on Hudson Rd to 48 inches. Board members asked for information on the last logging of the town forest property, suggested checking with VTrans and MWA about possible cost assistance, and requested a list of property owners along the 1.8-mile road.

Also under Class 4 maintenance, WH reported that three salvaged culverts will be used to replace culverts on Crowe Hill Rd. He will also assess that road for possible tree removal.

As the town prepares for this year's gravel crushing at the Barton pit, WH said the overburden must be stripped. The town excavator is not adequate for the job, though town equipment could stack the material for later use as cover. WH has spoken with JBL and suggested scheduling the work soon before his season becomes busy.

PA noted that stripping will add to crushing costs and the amount required will not be clear until the boundary lines are blazed. Board members asked the Clerk to get an update on the survey work. WH believes another 10,000 yards could be recovered from the narrowing section at the

back of the pit and estimates about three acres will need to be stripped. PA said the board will plan another site visit once the weather improves and the survey status is known.

The town received no new job applications this week, and CK reported that job ads have finished running. Board members discussed whether to revise the ad to highlight the town's benefits. TJ moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter, seconded by TR. Executive session began at 6:40 pm and ended at 6:51 pm. PA moved to repost the position at \$24–\$27 per hour in the Chronicle and on Indeed.com. The motion was seconded by TJ and approved.

NEW BUSINESS

PA moved to enter executive session to discuss details of a PACIF grant application for a proposed security system. The motion was seconded by TJ. Executive session began at 6:52 pm and ended at 7:08 pm. PA moved to apply for a PACIF safety grant for the proposed security camera system. The motion was seconded by TJ and approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Board members signed the Reclassification Decision and Order regarding TH26. The Clerk will send copies to all notified parties and prepare the change submission for the VTrans mapping section.

Board members also signed contracts with David White for roadside mowing and pavement sweeping, in accordance with proposals approved at an earlier meeting.

CK reported that an updated draft of the LHMP—minus the table of contents and executive summary—has been distributed to the planning team for review and posted on the Planning Commission page of the town website for public comment. Once complete, it will be shared with neighboring towns and submitted to VEM with the Plan Review Tool. After review and any revisions, VEM will issue “Approval Pending Adoption,” after which the Selectboard may adopt the plan. Although the current plan expires in April, the town has been advised there is no penalty if the plan lapses.

One suggestion was to include summary data from the LWAP, since much of that work addresses erosion and runoff mitigation affecting the lakes. The LHMP focuses on protecting lives, property, and critical infrastructure, and highway erosion projects are central to that effort. The LWAP stream studies and infrastructure assessments could help guide mitigation project planning. CK asked the board to consider referencing LWAP documentation in the draft. Board members agreed and asked that the draft be revised accordingly. No additional comments were received.

BILLS & ORDERS

Two Selectboard Orders totaling \$9,740.69 and three Road Orders totaling \$18,584.03 were approved and signed by all members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 2026 Town and School District Annual Meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at Charleston Elementary School. The Charleston Girl Scout troop will serve a meal

following the meeting. Key elements of the proposed town budget are outlined in the Town Report.

Board members were reminded of their annual financial meeting with VTrans at 8:00 am on Tuesday, March 31.

Seeing no other business, TR moved to adjourn; TJ seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm. The next regular meeting will be held at 6:00 pm on March 12, 2026.

Approved this 12th day of March 2026:

Selectboard, Town of Charleston