

Minutes of the Charlemont Select board  
May 5, 2022  
Charlemont Town Hall

Present: Marguerite Willis, Dan Girard, and Bill Harker (arrived around 4 pm) and Sarah Reynolds

Visitors present: Katelyn Banks

Also present Representative Natalie Blais

The board discussed several topics with Representative Blais, as an introduction to Charlemont and what current issues are.

Items brought up were:

- The police reform bill and the effect on the Charlemont Police department, as well as training issues.
- Town buildings and the need to address that some are in the floodplain, some are not properly sized for the equipment they house
- The inability to use the second level of town hall because of the need for an elevator, the elevator feasibility study drawing was shared.
- The rec tax
- ARPA funding
- The need for elderly housing and worker housing
- The school and its cost, it roughly cost Charlemont \$19,000 per pupil and Hawley \$34,000
- Infrastructure such as bridges, roads
- Administrative paperwork is burying departments
- Open meeting law and the inability to talk outside of meetings prevents some healthy discussion on topics that are presented in meetings
- Lack of volunteers
- The ambulance and Boston's lack of understanding about an ambulance in a rural community.
- Whether there is still a grant to help with the homeowners who want to fix their houses and paint so that the town could get help with areas like main street
- A lot of Charlemonts visitors are day trippers and Charlemont is one of few areas that has year round recreation offerings
- Katelyn Banks also discussed her business and researching websites for tourism and Ma and finding inaccurate information or also in one case no information on Charlemont and its activities, she is seeing visitors from Connecticut and Amherst. Charlemonts economy would be helped if we could get visitors to stay in town.
- Representative Blais mentioned contacting the Franklin County chamber of commerce and talking to Diane Szynal
- Representative Blais also discussed the Auditors report, dirt roads, census numbers that show Franklin and Berkshire County have declining populations and highlighting that

there is an issue, she also spoke about fully funding public transportation, investing in rural communities and the need to address that "out here" we need smaller housing units (5-10 units) and not the larger ones the state's current housing grants address.

- Water and Sewer infrastructure was mentioned and the fact that we could not add dry water lines for future development under route 2 with the current project, the MVP program was recently changed to allow for water and sewer projects
- Representative Blais also mentioned they are looking to add an office of Outdoor Recreation
- Public water supply requirements were also brought up and how the requirements affected a business permit at one point.

On a motion by Bill Harker and Second by Dan Girard, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 when Representative Blais left.