

CHARLEMONT SELECTBOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 23rd, 2025, 6:00 pm

in person and via conference call, Town Hall, 157 Main Street, Charlemont MA

Members in attendance: Kim Blakeslee, Jared Bellows, Wilder Sparks

Others in attendance: Sarah Reynolds, Bill Harker, Rachel Gammell, Madison Schofield, Star Atkeson

6:00 PM- Rachel Gammell RE: Questions on accuracy of Town Meeting items and discussion on the School Items. Rachel wanted to let the Board know that she was offended by the tone from the Finance Committee at Town Meeting regarding funding the school. She thinks the Town should be supportive. The Board spoke to her about the Finance Committee's role in presenting the options to Town Meeting. Sarah went over some of the reasoning concerning people's differing feelings about funding the school. Jared assured Rachel that everybody loves the school, and they want to make things work.

6:15 PM- Parks and Recreation RE- appointing Barbara McKenna to empty seat from a resignation Mike Hayden has resigned from the Department of Parks and Recreation. They have elected Bill Harker to be Chair. Barbara McKenna will take vice Chair once she is appointed.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to appoint Barbara McKenna to the vacancy on Parks and Rec. Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in favor.

Sarah asked Bill to let Barbara know that she should take out papers for the next election. The Board would like to send Mike Hayden a Thank You card.

Administrators Report:

- 1) Legate Hill Bridge- Notice of phase 2 construction grant award for \$442,093.00.
The State small bridge program opened back up and Charlemont was awarded the 2nd phase grant, which is the construction phase; there will be a notice to proceed in September. The top of the bridge will be demo'd. The new prefab bridge deck assembly will sit on the existing abutments.
- 2) Gill Engineering Contract for construction phase of South River Road Bridge, review and approve.
Money for this contract (\$29,012) will be taken out of the \$20,000 allocated to bridge projects from Town Meeting.
Jared Bellows made a motion to approve and sign the contract from Gill Engineering. Kim Blakeslee seconded the motion. All in favor.
- 3) Ev Charger Agreement for Funding at Hawlemont School Location – Review and approve
The cost of the chargers has gone up to \$48,528. They will be purchased with a grant from DEP. Sarah will be working with National Grid in the next couple of meetings on the electric account.
Jared Bellows made a motion to approve the EV Charger contract. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Liaison Reports:

1) Assign liaisons to departments boards, Franklin Regional Council of Governments and committees and commissions.

- The Board went over the liaison assignments and what is entailed and agreed what roles each member would take. (See attached)

- They would like a Planning Board member to be the liaison to the Franklin County Regional Planning Department. **Jared Bellows made a motion to ask the Planning Board to appoint a person to the FRCOG Regional Planning Department. Kim Blakeslee seconded the motion. All in favor.**
- Earth Removal Committee needs to be formed again including a member from the Planning Board. Jared will find out if Erwin Reynolds is still willing to be a part of it. Bill Harker will continue as ConComm member and Wilder Sparks will be the SelectBoard representative. Rob Lingle is the Board of Health representative.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to accept the 2025/2026 liaison representative list as it stands. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Police, Fire, and Ambulance liaisons discussion on departmental operations involving a strong chief, possibility of an annual check-in meeting to discuss staffing needs and departmental plans.

The Board has not been doing regular meetings with the department heads/ strong Chiefs to talk about staffing and department plans. They should do it once or twice a year. Jared thinks it would be a good idea to do this to make sure they are covered. All agree.

Agenda items:

- 1) Selectboard Policies Document update, discussion and vote: policies include all policies voted previously by selectboard and include items such as complaints, mileage, appointing members to empty board seats, website policies, flag policy, and surplus property disposition.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to accept the changes prior to May 2025, (policies that were tracked individually,) as read. Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in favor.

Jared would like to send Valentine Reid a thank you card for putting so much work into this.

- 2) Franklin Regional Council of Governments Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program Contract Renewal. The Select Board received confirmation that the Planning Board was in favor of renewing the contract.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve and sign the FRCOG inspection program contract renewal. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

- 3) Warrant for Special Town Meeting to approve bylaws, review, approve and sign
The Board is happy with the work that Thorne did. It's in the newsletter and on the website. Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve the warrant for the Special town Meeting (General bylaw reorganization) as presented. Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in favor.
- 4) Recreation tax discussion on email received from residents on how to get recreation tax passed
Kim had wondered what the protocol was for answering emails from residents. In this case the Board was copied on an email to Natalie Blais. The rec tax has died again but is gaining traction to be like a rooms and meals tax that the whole state could use. Representatives are not wanting their names tied to a new tax especially in an election year.

- 5) Yearly Appointments to boards, committees, commissions and departments.
Kim Blakeslee made a motion to put the remaining vacancies for needed appointees on the website. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Kim asked if there is a mechanism in place for when someone comes of retirement age, to see if they can still uphold their duties. Jared said that there was not something in place. Sarah said that the State mandated that police and Fire officials retire at 65 years old. A succession study has been done that they can bring back to the next agenda. The Board would like to put together a policy.

They spoke about how to proceed with the emergency services appointments without the policy in place. Kim asked if ambulance responders were ever alone on a call. There is a state rule that they have to go on a call in pairs.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to move forward with appointments of Ambulance and EMTs as listed on the June 21st 2025 list from Charlemont Emergency Services and Charlemont Ambulance, including first responders, with the understanding that they will bring back to the table a discussion about policies regarding abilities, retirement, and succession planning, for enactment next year. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Kim Blakeslee read the Charlemont Police list for 2026.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve the personnel to be appointed. Jared Bellows abstained. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

6) Ambulance request for support letter for shared service study

Dana Johnson and other Towns' ambulance directors put forward a letter asking for support for a shared services study between Colrain, Buckland, Shelburne and Charlemont.

Jared Bellows made a motion to sign the support letter for shared services. Kim Blakeslee seconded the motion. All in favor.

**Unforeseen within last 48 hours

Bill Harker wants to figure out how to prevent people from walking their dogs (and not cleaning up) on the slope near the Hawlemont tennis courts. It is causing a mess for the people that mow. He was suggesting putting signs up and wondered if they need a bylaw to back them up if they used a fine. They would need to pass a general bylaw. It was agreed that it would be worth it to reach out to the one or two people that walk their dog there, or ask the police, and to solve it that way.

Approve and Sign:

1) Minutes of May 5, 2025 May 19, 2025 and June 9, 2025.

Jared Bellows made a motion to approve and sign the May 5, 2025 May 19, 2025 and June 9, 2025 Minutes as written. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Payroll and Vendor Warrants

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve and sign the payroll and vendor warrants. Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in favor.

3) KP Law invoice 153808

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve and sign the KP Law invoice; Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

4) Vacation request from Thorne Palmer.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve Thorne's vacation request; Jared Bellows seconded the motion. All in favor. They are all fine with allowing him flexibility around the dates.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:16; Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Documents reviewed in meeting

- Agenda of June 9, 2025
- Minutes of May 5,19 and June 9, 2025
- FCCIP Contract renewal dated April 25, 2025, from Bob Dean of FRCOG. Signed by Jared Bellows and dated June 23, 2025
- Letter to Sarah Reynolds from Gill Engineering dated June 10, 2025, re: Fee Proposal for Engineering Services Bridge No. C05027 Deck Replacement South River Road over Albee Brook Bid, Construction, and Part-Time Site Observation
- Agreement between Massachusetts Department of Environmental protection and Town of Charlemont re: EV charging stations for 10 school Street, signed by Jared Bellows, dated June 23, 2025
- KP Law invoice no: 153808
- Letter to Sarah Reynolds from Jonathan Gulliver, MassDOT 15 dated June 10, 2025 re: Phase 2 construction grant for bridge # C05054 on Legate Hill Road over Legate Hill Brook
- Letter from Colrain, Charlemont and Shelburne Falls Ambulance Directors dated May 25, 2025
- Special Town Meeting Warrant (see Town Clerk)
- Lists of Emergency Services Appointees for Police and Ambulance
- FRCOG Municipal resources forms FY26:
 - Cooperative Public Health Service Oversight Board Appointments
 - FRCOG Council Appointments
 - Emergency Manager & Response Coordinator Appointments
 - FCCIP Advisory Board Representative Appointments

Liaison/Representatives									
<u>Date</u>	<u>6/30/2021</u>	<u>8/30/2021</u>	<u>1/19/2021</u>	<u>6/20/2022</u>	<u>1/17/2023</u>	<u>6/5/2023</u>	<u>6/10/2024</u>	<u>6/24/2025</u>	
Accountant	Willis	Willis		Reid	Val	SAME	Val	Wilder	
						FOR			
Agi. Commission	Willis	Willis		Willis	Jared	ALL	Jared	Jared	
Ambulance	Girard	Girard		Girard	Jared		Jared	Jared	
ACO	Willis	Willis		Dan	Val		Val	Kim	
							Sarah	Sarah	
Assessors	Willis	Willis		Willis	Val		Val	Wilder	
BOH	Willis	Harker		Willis	Bill		Kim	Kim	
Broadband	S. Reynolds	S. Reynolds		S. Reynolds	Val		Val	Wilder	

Police	Girard	Girard		Girard	Val		Val	Kim	
Schools	Willis	Willis		Willis	Val & Jared		Jared/Kim	Wilder	
Select Board Office/Town Hall	willis	Willis		Girard	Jared		Jared	Jared	
Tax Collector	Willis	Willis		Willis	Bill		Kim	Kim	
Transfer Station	Willis	Willis		Reid			Val	Wilder	
Treasurer	Willis	Willis		Willis	Bill		Kim	Kim	
Tree Warden	Willis	Girard		Girard	Jared		Jared	Jared	
VEAC	Willis	Willis		Willis	Jared & Bill		Jared	Wilder	
VEAC Alternate	K. Reynolds	K. Reynolds		K.Reynolds			Sarah	Sarah	
Webmaster	Willis	Willis		Reid	Sarah		Sarah	Sarah	
ZBA	Willis	Harker		Reid	Bill		Kim	Wilder	
Woodsland Partnership	J. Healy	J. Healy		J. Healy	J. Healy		J. Healy	J. Healy	