

CHARLEMONT SELECTBOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 4th, 2025, 6:00 pm

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

Members in attendance: Kim Blakeslee, Wilder Sparks

Members on phone:

Others in attendance: Sarah Reynolds, Christopher Curtis, Star Atkeson, Anthony Cammalleri

Kim Blakeslee called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Appointments:

6PM – Christopher Curtis RE: Deerfield River Wild and Scenic Study Presentation

- Christopher Curtis presented a PowerPoint with a summary of the study that was done on the Deerfield River. He went over the criteria to become a Designated Wild and Scenic River, and the benefits of having that designation. There was National Parks money set aside per year that could fund a river project directed by a local advisory committee. The Designation mainly protects the river from new dams and water resource projects.
- Wilder asked Christopher what the lengths of the impounded portions of the river were and what that would mean for the designation. Ashley Sparks (member of Deerfield Wild and Scenic committee) noticed that a newspaper article didn't represent what she had as a member, signed off on at the last meeting there were edits that she didn't remember such as: if there was a project on the river, like a bridge or culvert, proposed, using federal funding, the project would be reviewed by the National Parks Service. Bridge projects using federal money are already very expensive. They do not want the designation to disallow a more inexpensive bridge in favor of a more scenic but cost-prohibitive bridge.
- Christopher Curtis will get answers about these to question to the select Board. They spoke about the Long Bridge, which is slated to be replaced in 2027. Christopher said that the Designation could take many years beyond that to take effect. Westfield's took 15 years.
- Wilder suggested bringing it to next meeting with more information about the impacts, with the questions answered about impoundment distance and case studies and the range of outcomes that they could expect for a bridge or culvert replacement, how it would impact the timeline and the expense of the project. Christopher will send info about a bridge in Westfield that had a design change that he didn't think increased the cost but did change the design and materials used.
- Curtis thinks that Emergency repairs would not be reviewed by the Park Service, even if funded by FEMA.
- The next step would be to craft legislation with Senator Markey. A back up plan would be to have the Governor petition the Secretary of the Interior.

Administrators Report:

1) Local Early Actionable Planning launched by Department of Transportation for infrastructure projects, does the Selectboard have project ideas?

- Money is available for Transportation Safety improvements. Sarah asked the Board if they had any ideas. The proposals are due on September 30th. As one example— one section already looked at with the speed studies and pedestrian safety concerns is the section of North River Road down to Sunburn beach. At some point the road will need to be resurfaced, signs had been talked about

but maybe there could be a redesign, and they wouldn't need to do the signs. Sarah will print off the email and give to the Select Board to think about and bring it back.

- Wilder asked if they should do outreach to find out where the safety concerns were. There are speeding issues on Legate Hill Road, East Oxbow needs a guard rail, South River Road needs a carrying beam.
- They can finalize the list with Highway.

2) Chapter 90 Funding announced with new Formula Charlemont to receive \$409,223.75

Sarah explained the new increase in amount. With only the old formula they would have received @ \$170,000. The portion of the increased money is coming from using a new formula.

3) Update on Recreation Earmark Money Projects and Grants/project monies

- Sarah recommended a maximum of \$60,000 to go towards playground equipment from the rec grant.
- Recently Buckland Shelburne Elementary put money towards their playground. Kim would like to know what resources they used and how they raised the money, and if Hawlemont could try that avenue. Christie Moore of Greenfield Parks and Rec could also be a resource. Unfortunately, Park grants don't apply to playgrounds associated with schools that have limited opening times.
- Wilder thinks it would be detrimental to the school's ability to attract kids to have defunct playground equipment. He said the playground will be closed off soon. Wilder will try to find out how Buckland came up with the money
- They spoke about the projects at the Fairgrounds. The bathrooms and the parking lot are a good start, there need to be engineered drawings done for the exhibit hall. The contractors need to know exactly what needs to be done by code to give an accurate quote, there may need to be a sprinkler system or interior bathrooms.

4) Web EOC training for emergencies from Massachusetts Emergency Management, updates from July 29 training with Rowe and Colrain

Sarah explained the training (Emergency operation Center) that she did with Lynn Hathaway in Rowe. It is a user-friendly computer program. It is a way to get resources quickly in an emergency, a way to communicate with MEMA. It was intuitive, there was access to weather maps. You could see what other towns were facing and asking for. There was a phone login as well. There is a tabletop exercise that Dennis was talking about doing as well about what to do in an emergency.

5) Municipal Vulnerability Plan Update – Vendor Selection update

Charlemont is updating the MVP plan with Colrain through a regional grant. They put out the RFPs for a vendor to help with the plan, there were big selection of responses. They will open the cost proposals and talk to the vendors. Sarah, Thorne Palmer and Dennis Annear are working on it.

Liaison Reports:

1) Tyler Memorial Library Trustees meeting report from liaison

Kim described the meeting that she went to as library liaison. Electronic circulation and special programs are supporting larger numbers. They got new computers. Sarah let Kim know that library should deem the old computers as surplus to dispose of them. The emergency shelter could be offered the Air Conditioner.

They will do a survey and Kim suggested getting the Town mailing list and sending the survey out that way. This is the last year of their strategic plan. Wilder thinks it would be good to make sure families get the survey, wonders if it can be sent home with kids at school.

Agenda items:

1) Agreements from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for Animal Control Officer and Regional Dog Shelter Services- Review and approve/sign

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve and sign both animal control officer and Regional Dog Shelter Services. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor

2) Agreement for lay down yard for Asplundh Construction at end of Avery Brook Road

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve and sign the Agreement for lay down yard for Asplundh Construction at end of Avery Brook Road. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor

3) Health Insurance Rate Increase -Update from Insurance Advisory Committee Meeting on proposed Increase. Sarah explained the health insurance increase. There was still enough money in the budget that could cover the increase. The large usage of Ozempic is the reason for the rate increase. The Insurance Trust voted to not cover Ozempic starting in October unless it is for a medical reason.

4) Opioid litigation with Purdue, Paperwork for the new case, designate a signatory.

A new round of opioid litigation has come up. **Kim Blakeslee made a motion to designate Sarah Reynolds as signatory for the Select Board. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.**

5) Marijuana Host Community Agreement Policy – update for the new Cannabis Control Commission rules. Review and approve.

Wilder will contact Emily Thurber about their Community Equity Plan. The bylaws are in good shape, and a special permit will be required. the Town needs to create a one stop page for how to navigate opening a marijuana establishment as an equity gesture. Otherwise the SB needs to vote to adopt a community host plan, and bring it to Town Meeting to be voted on.

Approve and Sign:

1) Minutes of July 21, 2025.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to change the last bullet point in the July 21st Minutes regarding police Chief Jason Pelletier's 6:00 appointment, to clarify that the question being asked of the Chief was in regards to Officer Kyle Sweeney's (internally decided) additional hours, triggering full time pay and benefits and whether that should have been a Town Meeting decision. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Payroll and Vendor Warrants

Kim Blakelee made amotion to approve and sign the Payroll and vendor warrants. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:49. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor

Documents reviewed in meeting

- Agenda for August 4, 2025
- July 21, 2025, Meeting Minutes
- Recreational Infrastructure Earmark breakdown

- Sample letter for National Wild and Scenic River Designation for the Deerfield River from Christopher Curtis
- Schematic Plans for tennis court overhaul at Hawlemont
- Town of Charlemont Host Community Equity Plan
- Massachusetts Cannabis Industry Portal / application license submittal confirmation dated 7-28-2025
- Email from Christopher Curtis to Sarah Reynolds dated July 11, 2025 re: Deerfield River Wild and Scenic Initiative: Next Steps
- New National Opioids Settlement: Purdue Opioids Implementation Administrator packet / participation form