

CHARLEMONT SELECTBOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, September 14th, 2026, 6:00 pm
in person and via conference call, Town Hall, 157 Main Street, Charlemont MA

Members in attendance: Wilder Sparks, Kim Blakeslee

Others in attendance: Sarah Reynolds, Star Atkeson

Member On phone: Jared Bellows

Kim Blakeslee called the Charlemont Select Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Administrator's Report:

1)Tennis Court Construction update

Sarah gave the Board the planting plan for the tennis courts, mainly focused on the bank and the side around the picnic table that they can look over and give feedback on. Overall, it looks good. Sarah sent Andy Mueller, tree warden's, email as well. They talked about the shrub and ground cover types.

Sarah answered a question — that the handicap parking spot can be for use by the school.

The orientation of the tennis court will be turned 90 degrees (East-West) to make it a regulation size court.

Basketball poles will be sandblasted and wrapped with a bumper mat for safety. There will be new backboards and hoops. This weekend the path to the tennis court will be completed.

2)EV charger work update on power install and project

The EV charger work is done. The location was decided based on where the power and roadway came in. Teachers' parking will not be impacted.

3)Update on shared services meetings for Fire, Ambulance and Police

Rowe and Charlemont are doing shared services for Fire Department. Now Heath and Colrain are interested in that and possibly police as well. FRCOG got a grant to do early stage facilitating for ambulance sharing with Leyden, Colrain, Heath, Rowe, Charlemont, Buckland and Hawley.

Towns are interested in doing a smaller scale administrative-duty police share as well to help with the extra paperwork required by POST. And possibly share some FT patrol officers to fill in gaps during busy times of the year. A survey was filled out with the interim Police Chief and handed in.

With Ambulance, the many town involvement could slow the process as it's harder to come to an agreement. Decisions such as: ambulances (# of ALS and Basic Trucks,) creating pay formulas for the towns, and hiring. Sarah suggested getting started with some incremental steps first such as 1 ALS truck and 1 BLS truck.

With a larger service with staff, Towns will be better equipped to chase the "bad addresses" and recoup some revenue from Ambulance. It will be cheaper to join together with other towns (although still expensive unfortunately), and will ensure that there is continued ambulance service to the area.

Sarah will send along emails with numbers prior to making the presentation for Town Meeting.

4)Town Hall Bathroom flooring questions

Sarah spoke with a contractor about pricing and was informed that the linoleum in the Town Hall bathroom now could contain asbestos. There is a place in Deerfield that can test it, Sarah will get quotes. Wilder noted that encasing was an option. Jared was not in favor of encasing it, because the layers could create a moisture trap; it would also raise the height of the floor. Kim would like the floor to match the maple that was laid in the meeting room and other offices.

5) Opportunity Zone status update

Sarah spoke about Charlemont having been an “opportunity zone” which afforded some tax incentives to businesses and developers. The state is changing and the program ran out; the Governor wanted to prioritize environmental justice communities closer to Boston. Sarah wrote a letter asking that the state continue the program for communities that already have the designation. It could help businesses. The Board appreciates that she did that, it needed to be in before tonight’s meeting.

6) Phone system, fire alarm update

The recently changed phone system cut us off copper wiring. The town hall offices were all done, but Sarah didn’t realize the fire alarm had 2 phone numbers associated with it. The secondary dialer (for tests and pings) needs to be replaced. They company is ordering a part which will take a few weeks. If there were a fire, the call would go in on the primary line.

Liaison Reports:

1) Progress of School Sustainability Study Committee - Wilder

Then school sustainability committee is reviewing a lot of information. Wilder will wait for the committee to give official thoughts before relaying them.

**The letter to DESI to square away the enrollment error and subsequent assessment error is finished and Wilder wants to get signatures.

The 2D8T committee wants to come to the next SB meeting to answer questions at 5:30 pm. Wilder will send questions to Martha Thurber in advance.

Agenda items (Discussion/Vote):

1) Brookfield Power Request for comments on warning system for river water flow

When bear swamp relicensed, they promised to do an emergency warning system, an audible alarm system including flashing lights up and down the river. River stakeholder and residents who lived along the river wrote many strong letters opposing the idea. Brookfield proposed to do an emergency phone system for emergency calls instead of the water release alarm system. They are asking for input. Sarah printed off whole packet for board members to read. It would be at Zoar gap and Shunpike. People are in favor of a warning system for large or catastrophic water rises or floods but not sounding every time the dam is opened. Jared wants more information about when they are sounding the alarm and how loud it will be.

Sarah will get more information

2) Invitation to new State Representative to attend a meeting after election

Sarah had gotten inquiries about candidates visiting the board to talk about priorities before the elections and thought it better to just invite whoever wins the election, as usual. The Board agreed.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion that whoever wins the state representative seat be invited to introduce themselves to the board and to talk about the issues. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion, All in favor, Jared Bellows – Aye

3)Request from Planning Board to Appoint Lori Shulda-Merrigan to an associate position and William Harker to a "full "position.

The planning Board doesn't have a quorum at the moment. Lori is willing to come as associate, and Bill has agreed to move to a full seat. They have already served as PB members and are in agreement with the change.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to appoint Lori Shulda Merrigan to associate and William Harker to a full position. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor. Jared Bellows – aye.

4)Interest in expanding transfer station hours

Thorne Palmer has heard from a number of people that they can't get to the transfer station on Saturday and Wednesday is not open early enough. Shelburne is open an entire day and a ½ day. Thorne is willing to try 12-7 on Wednesdays, beginning next week.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve the requested extended transfer Station hours. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. Kim Blakeslee and Wilder Sparks in favor.

Jared Bellows abstained from the vote because of relationship with Melissa Griswold.

Approve and Sign:

1)Minutes of August 17,2026

Kim Blakelee made a motion to accept the minutes of August 17, 2026 as written. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor. Jared Bellows- Aye

2)KP Law invoice 160061

Invoice for \$927.50 for assessors' valuation contract work and to consult on selling the McCloud property.

Kim Blakelee made a motion to pay KP Law invoice 160061. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor. Jared Bellows- Aye

3)Payroll and Vendor Warrants

Kim Blakelee made a motion to pay Payroll and vendor warrants. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor. Jared Bellows - Aye

Kim Blakelee made a motion to adjourn the Select Board meeting of September 14th at 7:00 pm. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor. Jared Bellows - Aye

Document reviewed in meeting

- Agenda for Charlemont selectboard meeting Monday, September 14, 2026
- Charlemont select board meeting minutes Monday, August 17,
- Email from Sean Kelly to Sarah Reynolds dated Friday, September 11, 2026, regarding Charlemont, Massachusetts, police chief recruitment
- Planting plan L1.0 Community Park town of Charlemont.
- August/September 2026 update Mohawk Trail/Hawlemont regional school districts sustainability study
- Packet including letter from Brookfield renewable N. A. Dated August 24, 2026, subject: bear swamp/Fife Brooke project (FERC project number 2669) pre-filing consultation regarding a proposed non-capacity amendment to the project license, initial statement for application for amendment of license; and feedback from stakeholders