

CHARLEMONT SELECTBOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday December 29th, 2025, 5:30 pm
in person, Charlemont Town Hall, 157 Main Street

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

Others in attendance: Sarah Reynolds, Bob Handsaker, Star Atkeson, Madison Schofield

Jared Bellows called the Charlemont Select Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Appointments: 6:00 pm- Bob Handsaker Re: Broadband updates and National Grid Information relative to broadband

- Bob Handsaker went over his concern with the discrepancy in policy about who ought to pay for reattaching broadband assets to poles. He had given the Board a written overview of his research so far. For some reason MLPs are not protected from the reattachment costs as Charter or Comcast is (or is supposed to be). He'd like to use some Broadband money to engage Deidre Lawrence, Telecom lawyer, to draft a public comment from Town for the upcoming revisions by the Department of Public Utilities.
- Wilder asked if this would pertain to the midspan poles as well. Bob said he thought it was a separate issue, but would be worth checking, if MLPs should be held harmless if the number of poles changes along a set route
- It was said that Comcast and Charter sign the same license as the MLPs, but DPU said that they should not be charged to reattach. The DPU can't answer why there is a carve out for MLPs.
- Bob said National Grid did say in a public meeting that they would move the fiber for the Town, and the Town would be happy with the price, intimating they would give a good deal on it. Therefore, Bob told Whip City not to move anything. Some fiber has been moved by Whip City, if it's the National Grid project, Bob doesn't want to pay for it, as he had told them explicitly not to. They need to see if it was the National grid project poles or something unrelated.
- Bob would like to let National Grid know that so far Broadband has incurred \$7,000. in costs from dig safe requests.
- The Board is happy that Bob is on it.

Administrators Report:

- 1) Grant application for Mountain Road Bridge to the small bridge program (currently an over 10-foot culvert) Sarah let the board know that she was advised to and did a small bridge application for the Mountain Road bridge.
- 2) 25% design plans for Chickley Bridge came in— there will be no detour, they will build new bridge next to old bridge and then demolish the old bridge. Next will be the 50% then 75% design plans. There will be a pre-construction call about easements. The State pays for construction out of DOT funds, the Town is responsible for temporary and permanent easement costs.
- 3) 3) Short Term Rental Bylaw next steps now that Attorney General Approved The next step is to meet with FRCOG. Short term rentals currently require license of inspection and fall under Board of Health regulations. Now there will be a Charlemont "actual license" that will need to be created. Sarah will need a selectboard representative to help design the form based on the bylaw. Kim Blakeslee will do it.

Liaison Reports:

1) Report from Board of Health hearing on tobacco violation

Kim attended the Board of Health hearing and listed the participants, summarized the proceedings and the outcome and included the perspective of the proprietors of Cold River. Several ideas and concerns were discussed. The Board remarked that they have been in there and noticed that they have stepped up with the carding.

Agenda items (Discussion/Vote):

1) Legate Hill Construction Bid results from Franklin Regional Council of Governments bidding, review and vote to approve contractor There were 9 bids total. Clayton D. Davenport Trucking came in the lowest at \$316,148. He needs his tax and insurance document and then FRCOG can take care of the rest. They have done several projects— West Oxbow bridge and the corner of 8A.

Jared Bellows made a motion to accept the bid from Davenport Trucking. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Jared Bellows made a motion to sign the contract paperwork outside of a meeting when it is ready to be signed. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Work on Selectboard Budget for FY 27

The Board can bring this home and look it over, it needs to be in on the 15th. Health insurance assessment has increased by 20%, which will carry over to other assessments, so they will need to be as frugal as possible. There was a lot of cutting and consolidating last year; there is nothing obvious to cut. They will look it over and discuss on January 12th.

Approve and Sign:

1) Minutes of December 9, 2025

Jared Bellows made a motion to approve and sign the Minutes of December 9th. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Payroll and Vendor Warrants

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

Jared Bellows made a motion to adjourn at 6:46. Wilder SParks seconded the motion. All in favor

Documents reviewed in meeting

- Agenda for December 29, 2025
- Minutes from December 9, 2025
- Overview of research and conversations @220 CMR 45 and MGL Chapter 166, section 25A, from Bob Handsaker, 2 pages
- Letter to Sarah Reynolds from Jason Fischer from Gill Engineering Re: Legate Hill Road Bridge, recommendation as to Award dated December 18, 2025
- Select Board 2027 Budget