CHARLEMONT SELECTBOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, October 19th, 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, Rob Adams, Mary Ann Adams, Star Atkeson

Kim Blakeslee called the October 19th selectboard meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Appointments:
6:00 PM: 1) Mary Ann and Rob Adams RE: Appointment to the Cultural Council
2) Reappoint Zorah Miller.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to appoint Rob and Mary Ann Adams to the Cultural Council and to reappoint Zorah Miller to the Cultural Council. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

The Council decides how to distribute a yearly grant to community artists and projects. The application for the grant is online.

Administrators Report:
1) Tennis Court Construction update
The court is fully in. The tables and benched have been dropped off. The planting needs to be done in the spring. The quotes for the planting and soil prep are coming back high. If there are no lower quotes, they may need to lessen the scope. Pruning and grass can be done this year. Andy Mueller did the landscaping design. Sarah is checking with additional landscaping contractors. If the cost is over a certain threshold Sarah would need to do an RFP process. Sarah suggested that they could do the planting as a Town in the spring.

2) Update on shared services meetings for Fire, Ambulance and Police
There was a meeting on shared services and Buckland voted to not go forward with it.
An idea is to combine Ambulance with the Fire District, to start small with Rowe, Colrain and Heath. Residents are not aware that there may not be timely ambulance service if something is not done soon. Fire Department will have Fire and EMS trained people. Ambulance is currently not considered an essential service, but Charlemont's demographic suggests that it is needed. Sarah will talk to Berkshire East to see if it's something they can contribute to. Wilder suggested contacting Bear Swamp as well. Ambulance calls for the river are predominantly from non-guided tubers. They will need to give a presentation to residents at Town meeting and talk to the Finance Committees and Select Boards to come up with options. Northfield has done something similar and have shared their budget.

3) Grant award for Tower Road Intersection $765,000 – Vote to sign paperwork
Charlemont was awarded a MassWorks grant for $765,000 for the intersection of Tower Road and 8A. The slope will be fixed. Trucks get caught in the turn, an engineer looked at it and recommended changing the grade to make it safer.

4) Clean Energy Permitting – Local Government Representative Designee
There is a new fast track timeline required for clean energy permitting. The State now requires all the permitting to be done simultaneously and/or within a year otherwise it will be automatically approved. Sarah suggested that the Boards secretary be the contact person. A lot of the land is in APR, so the odds of Charlemont getting projects are not that high. Sarah and Star can work together to get all the requirements for the permits in one place.

Wilder Sparks made a motion to designate Star Atkeson, Boards' secretary, to be the contact person for the clean energy permits. Kim Blakeslee seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda items (Discussion/Vote):

1) Police Chief

a) Vote on contract for New Police Chief

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to vote to approve the police employment contract as written. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Kim would like to change the amount of bereavement time employees receive, but that is a handbook policy change. Sarah will put it on the agenda.

b) Start date for Police Chief

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to have police start date be November 1st, 2026. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Vote to include Smith Vocational as a preferred Technical School with Franklin County Technical, due to Lottery system for admissions.

Sarah explained that students are not likely to get into Franklin County tech, as Charlemont is not a member town, and member towns get preference in the lottery system. The Town is supposed to provide a tech school option. Smith Vocational is the same price as Franklin County Tech. If both schools are listed as "preferred" students can apply to both and have a better chance of getting a spot.

Wilder Sparks did not second Kim Blakeslee's motion to include Smith Vocational as a preferred school. He is not prepared to vote yet because he doesn't understand all the dynamics. It was requested by Mohawk; Sarah will put it on the next agenda.

3) November 3 Election Warrant- approve signing in order to post.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to sign the November 3rd Election Warrant. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

** 4) Mass DEP Grant Paperwork for Transfer Station Recycling Dividends and new swap shop building.

The transfer Station was awarded the annual RDP points for composting. 9,000. This year plus 8,000 to do a swap shop. The current building is rotting. Jan Amin fills out the paperwork for Charlemont.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to approve the grant paperwork for the swap shop. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Approve and Sign:

1) Minutes of September 28,2026

   Wilder Sparks made a motion to approve and sign the Minutes of September 28th as written. Kim Blakeslee 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. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Kim Blakeslee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34. Wilder Sparks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Documents viewed in meeting:

SB Agenda October 19, 2027

SB Minutes from September 28, 2026

Email from Tinky Weisblatt (Hawley) to Sarah Reynolds re: Arts Council Appointments dated Oct 3, 2026

Letter from Eric Paley, Sec. of Economic Development to SB Chair Bellows re: Charlemont - Charlemont-Route 8A an-00223 ($765,000 grant receipt from MassWorks)

Police Chief Employment Contract, 9 pages

Mass DEP Grant Paperwork for Transfer Station Recycling Dividends and new swap shop building.