

TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
TOWN COMMISSIONERS' WORKING MEETING
March 25, 2025 – 6:00 PM
Town Hall, 241 Market Street, and via Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

In attendance – Board Members: President Renee Capano, Vice President Robert Rinehart, Richard Mahan, Jackie Akers, Tom Costanzi; Town Staff: Ken Hamilton, Mary Culver, Julie Campagna (via Zoom); Public: Sasha Lukovenko & Kim Danna (Solar Simplified), Caitlyn Joy (Ramaker).

The meeting was called to order by President Capano at 6:02 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mary Culver.

OLD BUSINESS

Veteran's Park Bathroom Update – Ken Hamilton

The bathroom renovations are complete and all new fixtures, including paper towel dispensers, have been installed.

NEW BUSINESS

Cemetery Information Management System (CIMS) – Caitlyn Joy, Ramaker

Ms. Joy provided a brief demo of CIMS, explaining that the system can be tailored to meet the specific needs of each cemetery manager. It integrates all data provided by the cemetery manager, or they can manually enter the information. The public can access cemetery data via computer or mobile device, viewing available plots, occupied plots, plot types, and other grave-related information. The system also allows for unlimited grave markers for the cemetery manager's reference. CIMS can help create deeds from scratch using templates provided by the manager. Additionally, it features a map view that can be printed or shared as an image, providing all necessary data to locate plots. Reports for burials, sales, and other cemetery-related data are available. The system has three options:

- Platinum: Full package, including all features.
- Gold: A more flexible option with a user-built map, offering a balance between functionality and customization.
- Light: A simpler version with just records and a database, lacking a map feature.

Training is unlimited, starting with a 2-hour session and ongoing support at no extra cost. The system can be made available to the public when ready. The burial search feature can be activated when the cemetery manager is ready to make records public. All levels of CIMS allow for marking of veterans.

The \$25,000 allocated for CIMS comes from a trust that was specifically gifted to the town for cemetery management. With the Commissioners expressing interest in the Gold option, there will be a remainder of \$1,700. Ms. Campagna will incorporate this remainder into the budget.

Community Solar Program - Sasha Lukovenko & Kim Danna, Solar Simplified

The Community Solar Program offers energy savings to residents through a large-scale solar installation where multiple participants—such as individuals, businesses, or nonprofits—share the benefits of the solar power generated. Participants do not need to own or install solar panels

themselves; instead, they receive savings through bill credits or reduced electricity costs based on their share of the energy produced.

If the Town enters into a marketing services agreement, Solar Simplified will launch an educational campaign to inform residents about the program. In turn, the Town will receive \$50 for each resident who enrolls, and participating customers can save 10% off their Delmarva bills. The program is particularly beneficial for low-income households, offering savings of 15-20%. There are no fees, long-term commitments, or installation requirements.

The commissioners expressed some concerns about the validity of the program but will take additional time to consider it before making a decision.

Permitting and Resident Inquiry Tracking Options – Ken Hamilton & Mary Culver

Ms. Culver and Mr. Hamilton participated in two demonstrations: GoGov and Hi5s.

GoGov is our current app provider, and their add-on modules offer an integrated solution for residents to submit requests via both app and website. It features GIS capabilities, allows users to upload images, view status reports, and facilitates communication between staff and residents. While residents can make online payments, this system operates separately and incurs higher fees – a credit card transaction incurs a \$3.00 fee alongside a 3% convenience fee. The platform enables residents to track the progress of their inquiries and permits, providing a checklist tailored to the specific requirements for each type of permit. Additionally, inquiries and permits are automatically assigned to the relevant staff based on their nature. The annual cost for GoGov is \$4,800 for Citizens Requests and \$6,240 for Permitting, bringing the total to \$11,040 per year. Note that GoGov raises its prices by 7% each year.

Hi5s is our current webmaster. This option utilizes our existing website to create fillable and submittable PDFs for various forms, including zoning, park rental, and boat ramp permits. Residents can submit requests through the website or app, and while we can manage and track everything internally, there would be no resident-facing tracking. The interface is basic but allows us to generate reports for tracking and financial purposes. Although Hi5s would enhance the Town Staff's experience, the resident submission process would remain mostly unchanged aside from the fillable forms. The Hi5s proposal is a flat fee of \$6,500 for the project, with no ongoing yearly costs.

President Capano asked Ms. Culver to contact Hi5s for a detailed breakdown of services offered.

Post Office Steps Repair – Ken Hamilton

President Capano noted that the steps have been in disrepair for some time, and DPW performed a temporary fix to ensure safety. Mr. Hamilton stated that DPW and McGuirk will work together to repair the steps with rebar and concrete.

Draft FY2026 Budget – Julie Campagna

The draft budget was provided to the commissioners, and Ms. Campagna asked them to review it and provide any comments.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

C-Dock Town Pier

Pump-out: A grant will be pursued to ensure compliance.

Vending Machines: Current vending machines will remain, with plans to explore options that provide bait and ice in the future.

Interns for Stormwater

Plans to hire 1-2 interns for stormwater management, funded through a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant. These interns will help with planting and planning efforts for one year.

Police Protection

A budget of \$40,000 has been allocated for 40 hours of patrol per month. The proposal aims to reduce patrol hours from 477 hours to 224 hours per year, concentrating patrol efforts primarily from April to October, with no patrols scheduled from November to March.

Light Pole for Events

Mr. Hamilton proposed purchasing a light pole to be connected to our portable generator, which would be a more cost-effective solution for event lighting compared to buying a permanent light.

PERIOD OF PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

There being no further business, **Commissioner Akers motioned to adjourn at 7:24pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Costanzi. Carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted by Mary Culver, Assistant Town Administrator