

CHARLESTOWN BUDGET COMMISSION
Open Meeting/Regular Meeting
Minutes

FEBRUARY 13, 2026
9:00 a.m. Council Chambers

TOWN HALL
4540 South County Trail
Charlestown, RI 02813

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kenefick called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. In attendance Mike Marcelynas, Joseph Dolock, Town Treasurer Patrick Gormley, Town Administrator Jeffrey Allen and Administrative Assistant Susan Shea. Absent were Greg Plunkett and Council Liaison Stephen Stokes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Marcelynas and seconded by Mr. Dolock to table the February 6, 2026 minutes in order to add a sentence addressing the discussion regarding the potential increase of beach pass fees. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

SENIOR CENTER - 800

Present was Director Michele Vekakis.

Ms. Vekakis gave an overview of what has been happening at the Senior Center.

The department expects to receive a van through a rural development program via RIPTA, with funding structured as an 80/20 split, requiring the Town to cover 20% of the cost. The budget includes new expenses for a part-time driver, as well as fuel and maintenance for the van.

GIS – 455

G.I.S. Coordinator Steve McCandless was present.

Mr. McCandless gave an overview of the Breachway Dredging Project.

The computer portion of the drone was recently upgraded. This year, he is requesting a capital expense item in the amount of \$30,000 to replace the receiver. The upgrades are expected to provide a long-service life.

Waste Water Management – 660

Matt Dowling was present and provided a brief summary of recent activities within his department.

He reported that Charlestown is a leader in local watershed management.

His operating costs have an increase of 5%.

Information Technology – 445

IT Director Chris Pancaro was present and discussed what his department has been doing over the past year.

Mr. Pancaro explained that municipalities have been experiencing a significant number of phishing scams, particularly targeting zoning and planning departments. In these instances, fraudulent invoices for application fees are sent to residents and made to appear as official Town documents. He has posted public notices on the Town's website and social media platforms to alert residents to the scam.

Treasurer Gormley stated, while Mr. Pancaro was still present, that he wanted to call the Commission's attention to Central Services – 490. He noted that the Communications line item has decreased by \$10,000 over the years.

Town Planner – 480

Town Planner Sean Henry was present and provided a synopsis of his department's activities since he was hired in February 2025, following the retirement of the previous Town Planner. He noted that e-permitting is now required pursuant to state law, which has necessitated amendments to the Planning and Zoning regulations to ensure compliance with the new mandate.

The BC set a future meeting date of Thursday, February 19th from 9:00 a.m. to Noon and will be reviewing the Revenue section of the budget.

Central Services – 490

Advertising (4935) has decreased slightly due to the number of advertisements previously required for Charter changes. The Town Clerk is exploring the option of publishing a brief public notice for lengthy ordinance amendments that directs readers to where the full proposal can be reviewed. This approach would result in significant savings in advertising costs.

Debt Service – 990

Mr. Dolock questioned whether there was an opportunity to reduce costs by refinancing any of the town's outstanding bonds. Mr. Gormley reviewed the bonds and concluded that the current market financing rate is higher than the rate on any bond so there would be no benefit.

Capital – 990
Transfers Out – 995

Mr. Gormley proposed creating a new fund to support a five-year capital plan for facilities, which would cover necessary and major updates and repairs to our town buildings.

Treasurer Gormley stated that this year they plan to consolidate two unassigned funds into a single fund totaling \$400,000. This fund will serve as a maintenance line for major building projects, such as new roofs, windows, and other significant repairs.

Future Meetings

The Commission will meet on the following dates:

February 19 (revenue and expenditures, outside agencies)

February 23 (outside agencies)

February 26 (outside agencies and final wrap up)

Ms. Shea will contact the outside and local agencies and offer them the three dates mentioned above to choose from.

At 11:20 a.m. Mr. Marcelynas moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Dolock seconded. Motion carries.

Date Approved: March 9, 2026

Susan R. Shea, CMC
Administrative Assistant