

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT



Ryan M. McLane

October 21, 2025

Town Events and Town Hall News

TA Coffee Hour

Despite some dreary weather, I was still able to host my Town Administrator Coffee Hour on the 14th at Clark Farm Market. About half a dozen residents joined me for great conversation covering a range of topics — from MBTA Communities and residency requirements for Town committees to senior tax abatements and an engaging discussion about democracy and civility. I always enjoy connecting with residents and hearing their ideas and concerns. I plan to continue this series after the holidays, gathering more community input on how we can provide even better services in 2026.

Human Resources Report and Appointments

We are notifying the Board of the following employee appointments:

Town Administrator Appointments

Jessica Ritenhouse – Finance and Human Resources Assistant

Mark Cianci – Police and Animal Control Officer

HR Report from Assistant Town Administrator and HR Director Aubrey Thomas

Finance and Human Resources Assistant

We are pleased to welcome Jessica Ritenhouse as Carlisle's new Finance and Human Resources Assistant. Jessica joins us from the City of Amesbury, where she served as Payroll Clerk and Benefits Coordinator. She holds a Master's degree in Human Resource Management from Northeastern University and brings several years of experience in payroll, benefits administration, and financial operations. We are excited to have her join us on October 20.

Police and Animal Control Officer

Mark Cianci is our new Police and Animal Control Officer, who has started in the Police Academy as of October 14! He has been the Animal Control Officer for the Town of Chelmsford since August 2017, and has already frequently worked with Carlisle in the past with animal control issues. We look forward to having him join us once he completes the academy.

Police Officer Recruitment

We are continuing with a new round of candidate interviews and will report back with progress at the next meeting.

COAHS Van Driver Recruitment

We continue to welcome applicants for the part-time COAHS van driver role. This position offers a competitive hourly rate and the rewarding opportunity to provide transportation services to older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Department Updates and Information

Speed Limit Signs in the Town Center

We have received numerous questions and concerns regarding the recent changes to speed limit signs in the Town Center. Below is the official response from the Carlisle Police Department:

The Carlisle Police Department, in coordination with the Town of Carlisle, the Department of Public Works, and the town's Safety Committee, was made aware of speed limit signs that were not posted in accordance with the state limits. They have now been corrected to reflect the proper and enforceable speed limits. This correction enhances roadway safety via enforcement and promotes compliance in Carlisle. Our goal is to ensure that all traffic enforcement is conducted in accordance with Massachusetts' state law.

The Carlisle Police Department will also ensure to assist in working with the Town's Safety Committee to determine if there are official avenues to pursue a process to revert the affected speed limits back to the previously posted limits.

While many residents have correctly noted that the Town voted to adopt lower speed limits in certain areas, Carlisle's roadway density does not meet the thresholds required under State law to implement some of these reductions. As a result, six locations with incorrectly posted limits were restored to their proper designations by the Police Department and DPW, following guidance from the Safety Committee.

Below is the official response provided to residents who inquired about why these adjustments were made now, despite the Town Meeting vote intended to formalize the lower limits.

It is important to note that this is not a change. The enforceable speed limit has never changed, it was just posted incorrectly. In Massachusetts, speed is heavily dictated by housing/population density with most rural roads qualifying for the default 30-mph speed limit unless there is some exception, like a school zone. While we believe most agree that speed must be controlled in the center of Town, there is a due diligence that was never done to prove, despite Carlisle's density, that the speed limit can be reduced to 25. This would likely need an inspection from the state and/or some type of traffic study. When we asked about this, the state let us know that first we needed to post the limit correctly, then they would help us complete the necessary due diligence to petition for the change. Our Safety Committee is working closely with our Police Chief to make sure this is completed timely and that speed is properly enforced in the center for safety reasons.

And lastly, this was not done lightly. The Safety Committee met several times to discuss this and is

continuing their work to make the previous reductions permanent. Here is their recommendation to the Select Board:

In the meantime, the Safety Committee voted unanimously to bring Carlisle into compliance by moving the existing signage that allows the higher speeds closer to the town center as prescribed in the report. We see this as a first step, and we intend to push back on some of these speed limits with new information, starting with the portion of Concord St around the community farm school. We're also pursuing expansion of our school zone and the possible use of safety zones as other means of lowering speed limits in appropriate areas, but we are taking Chief Amendola and Deputy Chief Booth's advice to bring Carlisle into compliance before seeking these changes.

Town Clock Repair

The Town Clock is chiming once again after a brief pause for repair and preventive maintenance. A skilled team — Rob Koning (Clock Maintainer) and Mark Gibson (Repair Contractor and Carlisle resident) — worked proactively to complete the restoration, as detailed in the attached report.

The goals of the project were to:

- Return the striker to proper working order
- Redirect future wear from the irreplaceable cast-iron components to durable, low-cost bearings designed for long life.
- Minimize the need for ongoing maintenance such as oiling.
- Use stainless steel for all new outdoor components to prevent rust.
- Preserve the original appearance and craftsmanship of the mechanism as much as possible.

One of my favorite details from this repair effort is this remarkable fact:

“The bell strikes approximately 57,000 times per year. Over roughly 130 years of operation — about 7.4 million strikes — several of the moving surfaces had developed significant wear.”

It’s humbling to reflect on the generations of residents and staff who have heard those chimes over the decades — and inspiring to see today’s residents continuing to care for this timeless symbol of our community’s history.

Budget Updates

The Town’s financial forecast and preliminary capital planning model are now complete and under review by the Finance Committee. This planning effort is designed to inform budget guidance ahead of the formal launch of the FY2027 budget process. Although this annual tradition will not officially begin until after the Special Town Meeting, the process will shape much of the winter, with the first draft presentation scheduled for your December 16th meeting.

Attached to this report is a draft budget calendar. Key milestones include the release of the first FY27 budget draft in December, the Finance Committee’s “marathon meetings” in January, and two months of deliberations leading up to the publication of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Early indicators suggest that FY27 will present significant budget challenges. I am recommending that

the Select Board and Finance Committee prepare for an austere budget cycle.

Capital Project Updates

Elevator Modernization Project

Final bids for the project were received on Friday October 17th. These findings will be presented to the Select Board at your meeting on Tuesday.

Brick Building HVAC

Boston Mechanical is working with the Facilities Department to schedule the installation. Meanwhile, Sarah and the MFC have finalized a contract for additional building insulation, which will be funded through a Green Communities grant.

Town Hall Bathroom Renovation

The project has been reissued for bid with an expanded scope to include replacement of the plumbing impacted by the recent Town Hall emergency. Considering this, the MFC has agreed to fully fund the project, contingent upon receiving competitive bids.

Cemetery Mapping and Software Implementation

No new information.

Supplemental 2025 Road Maintenance

Paving will resume the week of the 20th and conclude the week of the 27th. Work to be finalized includes the following:

- Completing the grading on Pheasant Hill and applying the topcoat
- Applying the topcoat to Berry Corner Lane
- Complete the paving of the CPS Facilities Parking Lot
- Complete mill and fill of Acton Street

Community Preservation Act Projects

Banta Davis Track Rehabilitation

This project is now complete.

Diment Park Study

No new information.

Hydrology Studies – Greenough and Cranberry Bog

No new information.

Bog House Affordable Housing Feasibility Study

No new information.

Building Construction Projects

Library Renovation

No new information.

Police Station Renovation

Construction has begun in earnest with regular meetings commencing weekly. Your building Committee has assigned a weekly liaison, and the Committee will meet with the full construction team monthly. Lastly, for tracking, our OPM published a weekly report that is reviewed by all relevant parties.

Fire Station Renovation

Our renovation team to include members of the department hosted a successful open house on the 14th. Additionally, the team has put together a video tour of the station, allowing residents to see the primary drivers of the call for renovation.

[Renovation project site to include a link to the video tour](#)

DPW Building

While there are no current updates on this project, the Board should consider how to address it as a future initiative during the Fire Station Design presentations and discussions at the Fall Town Meeting.

Upcoming Discussion Topics

Personnel Policies: Following the Fall Town Meeting, Aubrey will continue presenting proposed updates and revisions to the Town's personnel policies.

Tax Classification Hearing: This annual presentation by the Assessing Director marks the informal close of the FY26 tax rate process and provides the Board with an overview of year-end financial matters. The primary focus will be the establishment of the FY26 tax rate.

FY2027 Budget: The Board will receive information on the Town's financial forecast and capital planning. Departments will then submit budget requests, leading to a draft budget presentation in December.

Town Administrator Evaluation: The evaluation process is scheduled to begin in December.

Approval Notifications

- We approved a rotary sign advertising the Carlisle Chamber Orchestra's Fall Concert. The sign will be in the rotary from October 25 to November 1
- We approved a rotary sign advertising the Carlisle Chamber Orchestra's Holiday Concert. The sign will be in the rotary from December 5 to December 12

Staff Recognition

I would like to recognize the following staff member their outstanding contributions to the Town of Carlisle:

Jim Hall

While my respect for Jim and the entire DPW staff is well known, Jim has truly gone above and beyond recently and deserves special recognition. Despite his demanding schedule, Jim completed a series of professional development courses to deepen his understanding of the Tree Warden role — a position traditionally held by Carlisle's DPW Director. He immediately applied this knowledge by developing a long-term tree removal plan and assisting residents with an emergency removal.

In recent months, Jim has also responded to dozens of resident and staff requests related to roads, trees, and debris, consistently improving Town services and enhancing public safety. Beyond these daily responsibilities, he continues to lead several major initiatives, including the cemetery mapping project, the supplemental road maintenance plan, coordination with external agencies on the Concord Bridge and utility company projects, and multi-year planning for road and culvert maintenance.

Simply put, Jim is irreplaceable — his dedication, leadership, and team-focused work ethic are a major reason why residents consistently describe Carlisle as a great place to live.

Upcoming Select Board Dates of Interest

- **October 27-29:** TA, ICMA Conference
- **November 2-3:** Fall Town Meeting
- **November 18:** Regular Select Board Meeting
- **November 20-21:** TA, MMMA Conference
- **December 2:** Regular Select Board Meeting
- **December 16:** Regular Select Board Meeting

Upcoming Select Board Meeting Draft Agenda

Coming soon!

Town Clock Striker Repair

September-October, 2025

Prepared by: Mark Gibson

Note: This document contains videos. Use “Slide Show” mode to play them automatically.

Striker Description

The bell striker consists of a 30-pound hammer, mounted on an axle, that strikes the outside periphery of the bell.

A long rod leads from a lever on the hammer down to the clock mechanism two stories below.

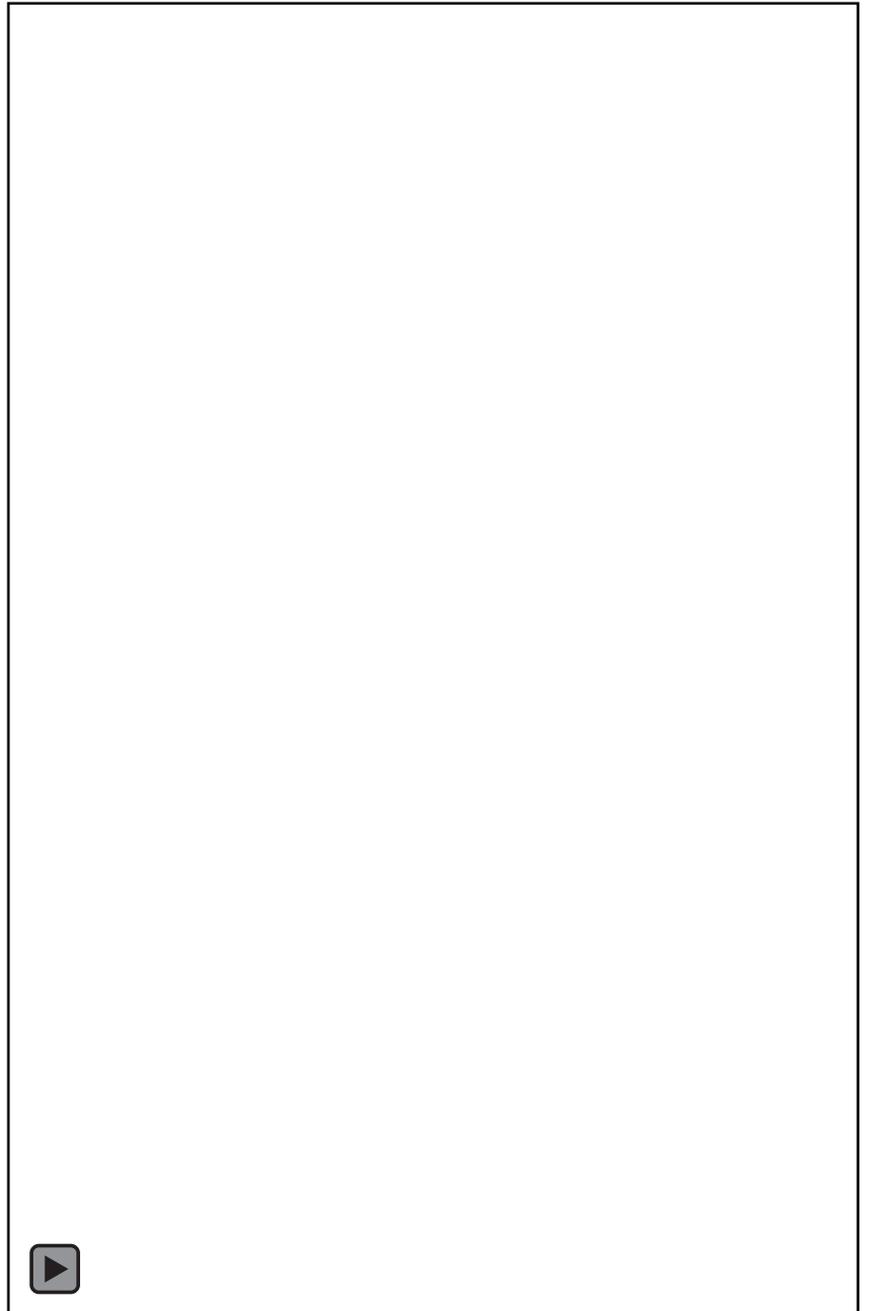
To ring the bell, the clock mechanism pulls the rod, then releases it, causing the hammer to raise and then drop onto the bell.

Initial Findings

The bell strikes approximately 57,000 times per year. Over ~130 years of operation (about 7.4 million strikes), several of the moving surfaces of the mechanism had developed severe wear.

The first of these were the bearings supporting the hammer, shown in this video. The original round holes in the cast-iron brackets had worn into an oblong shape.

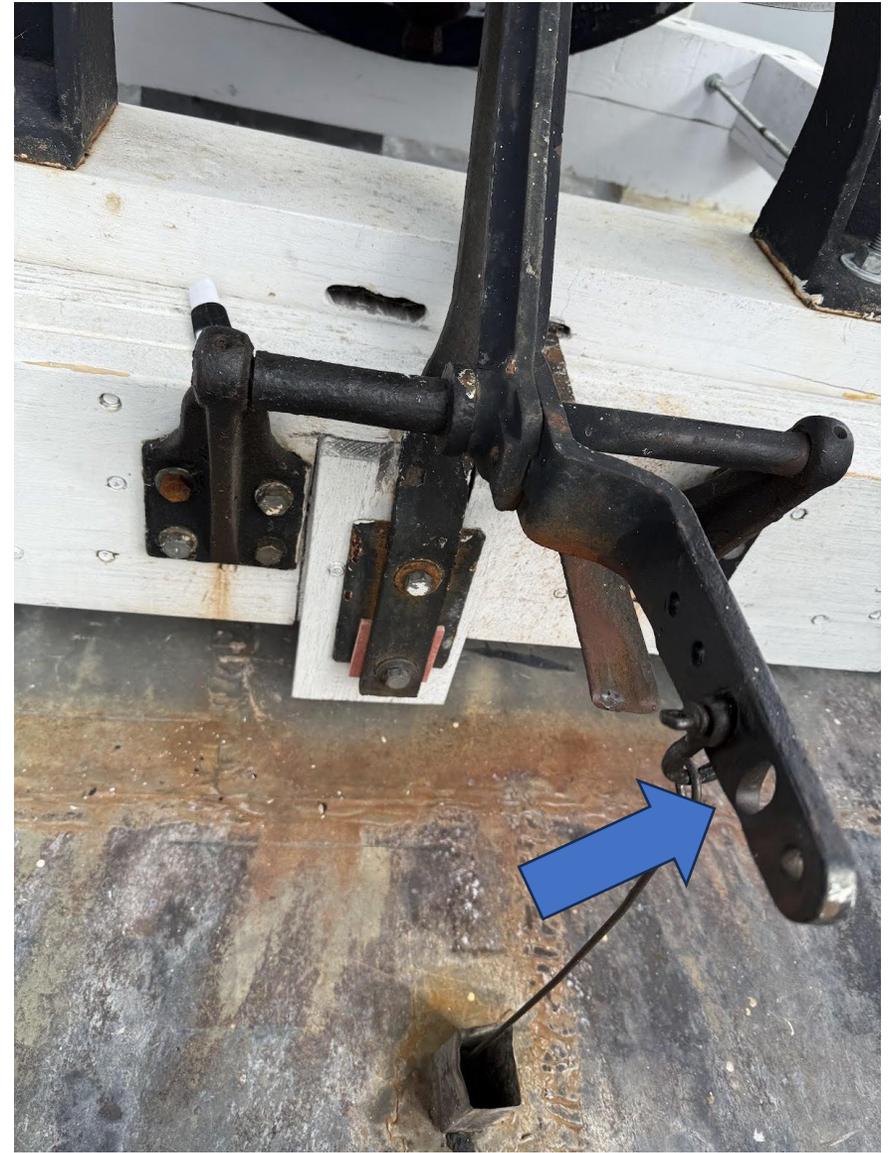
In addition to compromising the bracket and shaft, this also causes the hammer to be misaligned.



Initial Findings

The second area of severe wear is at the arm where the rod connects.

The mounting hole is worn almost all the way through.



Repair

The goals of the repair were:

1. Return the striker to correct operation.
2. Move future wear from the irreplaceable cast-iron parts to easily-replaceable low-cost bearings. Oversize these to be as long-lasting as possible.
3. Minimize need for future maintenance (oiling, etc.).
4. Use stainless steel for all new outdoor components to prevent rust.
5. Preserve the original appearance of the mechanism to the greatest degree possible.

Repair

The typical repair for wear of this kind is to install bronze sleeve bearings impregnated with oil. However, this requires good alignment of all parts in operation.

In this case, the bearing brackets are lag-bolted to a wooden board located outside in the elements, and thus subject to expansion and movement over seasonal temperature and humidity changes.

To address this, stainless-steel spherical bearings were chosen, which can accommodate misalignment without binding or wear.

Repair

After removal from the tower, the brackets and lever arm were stripped of paint and glass-bead blasted to remove rust and prepare for machining.



Repair

The brackets were bored on a milling machine to accommodate the spherical bearings.



Repair



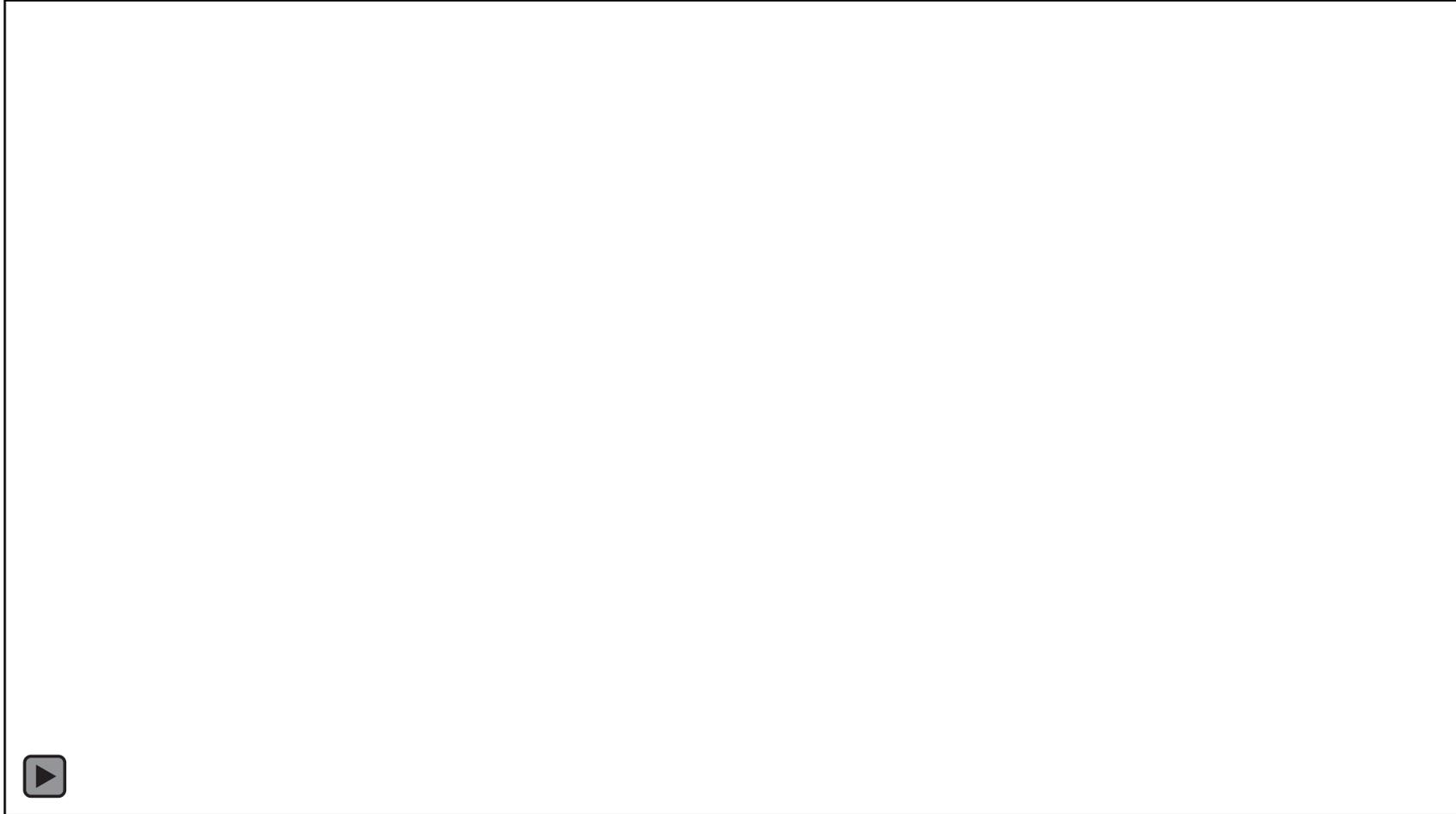
Bracket with spherical bearing installed

Repair

The hammer's axle bearing surfaces were also severely worn. Unfortunately, the axle could not be removed from the hammer without risking damage to it, so the entire assembly was mounted and turned with an unconventional setup:



Repair



(video)

Repair

The turning operation resulted in a round end, concentric with the original, and sized to the inside diameter of the new spherical bearings:



After machining



With bearing installed

Repair

The wear in the lever arm was caused by direct metal-to-metal contact. To repair this permanently, a sealed roller bearing was chosen. The hole was filled with a metal-bearing epoxy. The new bearing will be supported by the original cast-iron, so the epoxy is only for appearance.



As found



After bead-blasting and filling with epoxy

Repair

Similar to the brackets, the rod was bored to accommodate the roller bearing.

Once the bearing is installed, there will be no further wear on this part.



Repair

Appropriate spacers (also stainless-steel) were machined to center the clevis on the bearing.



Repair

The cast-iron parts were primed and painted with rust-inhibiting paint, and bearings installed.



Actuator Rods

The existing rods were several pieces of 3/16" steel, repaired several times by looping together by hand. The places where these loops touched became non-lubricated wear surfaces and had begun to wear through.

To address this, the rods were replaced with properly-coupled 6' sections, with the top section made of stainless steel since it operates outside.

A new clevis was purchased for the top of the rod to match the bearing and installed with stainless-steel hardware as well as a custom-made adapter to connect to the new rods.



Actuator Rods

The lower rod end was in serviceable condition and was retained in the interest of originality. However, the clevis uses a non-standard thread, so the threaded portion was retained and an adapter machined to connect this thread to the new rods.



Re-Installation



Re-Installation



Back In Service



(video)

CARLISLE BUDGET CALENDAR



Fiscal Year 2027

Approve Budget Calendar Select Board	October 9, 2025
Present 5-Year Capital Plan Present Financial Forecast Budget Goals Select Board Finance Committee	October 23, 2025
Send Departments and Boards Guidelines Town Administrator Finance Director	October 24, 2025
Open Town Meeting Warrant Select Board	November 18, 2025
Department/Board Budgets Due Departments and Boards	December 3, 2025
Town Administrator's Budget Town Administrator	December 16, 2024
Department Meetings with Finance Committee Finance Committee	Early January, 2026
Close Town Meeting Warrant Select Board	February 10, 2026
Select Board Warrant Article Review Select Board	February/March/ 2026
Select Board Warrant Article Recommendations Select Board	February/March 2026

Public Budget Hearing Select Board Finance Committee	March 24, 2026
Finalize and Sign Town Meeting Warrant Select Board	April 14, 2026
Post Town Meeting Warrant Town Administrator	April 15, 2026
Town Meeting Mailing to Residents Town Administrator Town Moderator	April 15, 2026
Town Meeting Motion Booklet to Printer Town Administrator	May 13, 2026
Annual Town Meeting	May 17, 2026
Annual Town Election	June 2, 2026

Gretchen Gallimore

From: Kathy Chick <kchick@ccorch.org>
Sent: Friday, October 3, 2025 4:20 PM
To: Gretchen Gallimore
Subject: Re: Online Form Submittal: Reserve Town Property for Private Signs

Reserve Town Property for Private Signs

Use this form to request approval to place a private sign in the Rotary, Town Common, or other Town-owned land. Town Common requests must also be approved by the First Religious Society. Other Town-owned land may require permission of an associated public body.

The Select Board/Town Administrator will typically approve a display period not longer than one week, with a possible renewal for a second week. Only two private signs at a time, no larger than 2 feet by 3 feet, may be displayed in the Rotary. In order to place a private sign in the right of way in front of a residence or business, one must obtain the permission of the property owner.

Name	Carlisle Chamber Orchestra
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Email Address	kchick@ccorch.org
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Address	35 Suffolk Lane
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City	Carlisle
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State	MA
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Zip Code	01741
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Phone Number	978-758-6228
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I'd like to place a sign on the...	Rotary
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If "other", on what Town land would you like to place your sign? *Field not completed.*

Date(s) of Reservation 10/25/2025 7:00 AM - 11/1/2025 11:00 PM

All Day Yes

Size and Type of Sign 2 ft X 3 Ft

Organization and Purpose Carlisle Chamber Orchestra

Language FALL CONCERT - Carlisle Chamber Orchestra
Saturdsy November 1 @ 8:00 pm at the Carlisle
Congregational Church

Attach File *Field not completed.*

Terms of Use Yes

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Carlisle Chamber Orchestra
Kathy Chick
kchick@ccorch.org
978-758-6228

Gretchen Gallimore

From: Kathy Chick <kchick@ccorch.org>
Sent: Friday, October 3, 2025 4:22 PM
To: Gretchen Gallimore
Subject: Re: Online Form Submittal: Reserve Town Property for Private Signs

Reserve Town Property for Private Signs

Use this form to request approval to place a private sign in the Rotary, Town Common, or other Town-owned land. Town Common requests must also be approved by the First Religious Society. Other Town-owned land may require permission of an associated public body.

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Name	Carlisle Chamber Orchestra
Email Address	kchick@ccorch.org
Address	35 Suffolk Lane
City	Carlisle
State	MA
Zip Code	01741
Phone Number	978-758-6228
I'd like to place a sign on the...	Rotary

If "other", on what Town land would you like to place your sign? *Field not completed.*

Date(s) of Reservation 12/5/2025 7:00 AM - 12/12/2025 11:00 PM

All Day Yes

Size and Type of Sign 2 ft X 3 Ft

Organization and Purpose Carlisle Chamber Orchestra

Language HOLIDAY CONCERT - Carlisle Chamber Orchestra - Friday, Dec. 12 8:00 pm at the Carlisle Congregational Church

Attach File *Field not completed.*

Terms of Use Yes

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Carlisle Chamber Orchestra
Kathy Chick
kchick@ccorch.org
978-758-6228