

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, February 21st, 2013
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Landau called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:05pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Jack Cannon
Joseph Hagan
Stephen Landau
Richard LeBlanc
Michael Weider

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Rich Antoine - Fire Chief
Stuart Arnett - Better Future Alliance
Peter Bronstein - Soule, Leslie, Kidder Attorneys
Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
Leroy Scott
And other persons unknown to the minute taker

1.3 Agenda

OLD BUSINESS:

Approval of Minutes

NEW BUSINESS

Stuart Arnett - Better Future Alliance & Peter Bronstein - Soule, Leslie, Kidder Attorney
Rich Antoine, Fire Chief - Non-Public Session
Budget Overview
Warrant Articles

Roundtable

44 Adjournment

46 *1.4 Pledge of Allegiance*

48 Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

50 *1.5 Additions and Deletions*

52 Chairman Landau stated that the BOS would be meeting with a consultant from the Better Future Alliance regarding Chester College and there would be an executive session with Peter Bronstein, 54 the Town's real estate attorney regarding Chester College. Selectman Weider added one non-public session on reputation.

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1.6 Public Comment - none

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1.7 Member Comment - none

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II New Business

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2.1 Appointments:

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7:10pm

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Chester College - Better Future Alliance Consultant: Stuart Arnett

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Chairman Landau introduced Mr. Arnett. He is a consultant from the Better Future Alliance (BFA); his company has bid on the RFP for the consultant work related to Chester College. Mr. Arnett introduced himself, (the BOS had a copy of his resume), and he commended the BOS for looking at the Chester College property. The Better Future Alliance looks at potential properties on behalf of clients and gives them an unbiased viewpoint based on core values: money, market, people and place. They will help the BOS and ultimately the Town make the best decision possible regarding the property. The Better Future Alliance will include fact gathering, a site review, liability research, envisioning and value in their report for the BOS. The Better Future Alliance has employees that come from a municipal background so they understand the challenges facing the Town financially and they understand that this is not a typical thing for boards to be considering. Through experience the BFA has found that projects are dominated by one area of focus and often times this can lead to failure for the project. Hence the BFA will review if there is demand for the potential use of the site. One of their big projects was the mill redevelopment in Claremont NH. The Town of Claremont did invest in the redevelopment of the mills and a key factor was involving the public in the decisions / plans to make sure the project would fit their needs and be in demand (discovery and outreach).

86 Vice-Chairman Hagan asked if the BFA has worked on anything like Chester College; Mr. Arnett stated that they have worked on a campus plan with Colby Sawyer and Dartmouth however Chester is unique in that it is a closed college. The BFA have been seeing more of these situations due to the

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90 economy. Chairman Landau stated that he had spoken with the BFA and discussed ideas for the
Chester College campus in light of its prominent location in the center of the Town. Mr. Arnett
92 stated that the campus could become predominantly private or public. The BOS would like to keep
or possibly increase the tax base from the campus; the campus could also be a single use or multi-
94 use development i.e. educational facility or life care or a corporate campus for training with housing
and offices. The multi-use development would mean checking on the size of the septic, adequate
96 water supply and of course traffic flow and parking (sharing infrastructure). It is harder to find
one user for such a large development however it does allow for quality control and consistency.
Chairman Landau asked if the BFA would act as the middle man between potential co-developers;
98 Mr. Arnett said they would work with the community and Town going forward and potential
developers and interested buyers. Mr. Arnett stated that the time window for this report is very
100 short (due by April 1st) so if the BFA is awarded the contract then he would plan to meet with the
key stake holders next week. Selectman Cannon expressed concern that he was not clear on the
102 direction that the process was moving in - is the Town looking at purchasing, leasing or using the
property. Selectman Cannon is wary that the Town could inherit a potential marketing problem that
104 the college was unable to solve with no vision or potential suitors up to this point. He expressed
concern about taking on the extra costs and is worried that the Town might purchase the property
106 because they are worried about alternative uses that have been floated i.e. a correctional facility /
halfway house.

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Chairman Landau stated that the Town cannot afford to take something off the tax revenues at
110 this time especially with this being a large parcel of land in the center of Town. Chairman Landau
feels that the residents of Chester are passionate about this property and the BOS needs to
112 confirm what is affordable because there is no reason to pursue it if the property is too expensive.
He feels that the Town can put an offer on the table and bring it to Town meeting with a report /
114 presentation by the BFA and see what the taxpayers think. Selectman Weider agreed that it is up
to the public, the BOS will present a dollar amount with a conceptual plan of the properties
116 potential (municipal, private or public use.) Selectman Weider stated that it could be a community
center. The BFA report would show that the BOS has done their due diligence presenting the
118 information to the public; there will be a list of any liabilities, tax impact to the Town from the tax
loss; opportunities to generate revenues and the benefits to the Town with common areas. A long
120 term plan could be presented to the public with potential short term leases during the summer
vacation. Selectman Weider feels that the BFA is a good fit for this plan; he suggested looking at
122 the Town Master Plan; the Town is not looking to become a land owner or landlord. The interim
lessees could be interested in a lease to buy option which will keep some revenue flowing. Selectman
124 LeBlanc would like to see the purchase options and redevelopment potential with a marketing plan on
attracting potential buyers.

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Vice-Chairman Hagan asked how long it would take to go from the plan through the marketing and
128 sale of property; Mr. Arnett stated that there is no finite number for this answer. In the meantime
the taxpayers would be responsible for the loss of tax revenues and upkeep of the current
130 properties. Mr. Arnett stated that the BFA report would help answer questions for the BOS and
public which will hopefully lower the risk for the Town. Selectman Cannon is okay with utilizing the
132 consultants if it results in an impartial opinion.

134 **7:55pm**

136 *2.2 Executive Session - Soule, Leslie, Kidder Attorneys at Law: Peter Bronstein*

138 Selectman Weider made a motion to accept the proposal from the Better Future Alliance to move
140 forward with the Chester College redevelopment and reuse plan; Selectman Cannon seconded. All
members of the BOS were in favor; so moved.

142 Mr. Arnett was asked to sit in on the Executive Session with Mr. Bronstein. A letter will be sent to
the other companies that were competing for the same contract as the BFA.

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8:15pm

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Chairman Landau made a motion for the BOS to come out of the Executive Session; Selectman
148 LeBlanc seconded. All members of the BOS were in favor; so moved.

150 *2.3 Appointments:*

152 **8:17pm**

154 *Fire Department - Chief Antoine*

156 Selectman Cannon moved that the Board go into two non-public sessions under RSA 91A:3 II (a)
158 compensation and RSA 91A:3 II (c) reputation. Vice-Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote
was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved. Chief Antoine joined the BOS for the non-public
sessions.

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9:40pm

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Selectman LeBlanc moved that the Board come out of non-public sessions; Vice-Chairman Hagan
164 seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

166 Selectman Cannon moved that the minutes from both non-public sessions be sealed indefinitely;
Selectman LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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2.4 Budget Overview:

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The BOS discussed having an additional meeting to finalize the 2013-14 budget requests; the BOS
172 still needs to see a budget in writing from the Highway Department not just the 3% across the
board budget increase requested by the Road Agent. **The BOS will meet at 3pm on Saturday
174 February 23rd.**

176 **III Selectmen's Business**

178 *3.1 Roundtable*

180 *Chairman Landau:*

- 182 • Chairman Landau stated that the large Highway Truck has a problem with the ABS brakes;
the Road Agent is dealing with this. The Road Agent has not got any further with Ford
184 regarding the F550; Chairman Landau has spoken with the Town attorney and they stated
that there needs to be a discussion with Ford regarding the value of the truck and that the
186 Town should not renew the lease because it is unreliable and the Town needs it in working
order. The Town wants an amicable outcome however they need resolution.
- 188 • Chairman Landau presented a resume for office coverage for Ms. Martin when she is out of
the office.
- 190 • The check that the BOS has been waiting on has finally been received.

192 *Selectman Cannon:*

- Nothing at this time.

194 *Selectman LeBlanc:*

- 196 • Selectman LeBlanc advised the BOS that the stove in Stevens Hall is not repairable
however Chairman Landau has found a restaurant company that would like the stove but
they do not want it taken apart; he will contact them to arrange pickup. The new stove is
198 due in 2 weeks.
- 200 • The BOS reviewed the RFP for the MPR roof; there are some updates to be made before it
can go out. Selectman Weider stated that the auto liability needs to be \$1million not \$100K;
he would like Jeff Adler (the Town engineer) to confirm that the roof structure can take
202 the weight of any extra insulation; the scope of work included inspection of the roof and
repair to any damaged areas and the replacement of the insulation in those areas but it
204 should probably be added all over the roof. Another change is to list a ship's ladder (with a
specific rating / weight limit listed) being added to the wall on the roof for access to the
206 roof.
- 208 • The new security cameras are in for the MPR room, kitchen and recreation office / walkway.
The maintenance department is considering using the monitor in the BOS closet for the
camera pictures; Boston Systems would hook it all up to the Police department. A sign will be
210 added to the side door of the MPR room stating no access.
- 212 • Selectman LeBlanc is working on the annual state inspection for the security systems / panic
buttons.

214 *Vice-Chairman Hagan:*

- Nothing at this time.

216 *Selectman Weider:*

- Nothing at this time.

220 *3.2 Public Comment - none*

222 **The next meeting of the BOS will be Thursday February 28th at 7pm.**

224 *3.3 Non-Public Session*

226 **10:10pm**

228 Chairman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public sessions under RSA 91A:3 II (e) litigation
and RSA 91A:3 II(c) reputation. Selectman LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in
230 the affirmative; so moved.

232 **10:25pm**

234 Chairman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public sessions; Selectman LeBlanc
seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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Chairman Landau moved that the minutes from the non-public session on litigation be sealed for a
238 period of six months while the non-public session on reputation be sealed indefinitely; Selectman
Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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Selectman Weider made a motion to approve the proposed salary increase for the Town employees
242 as discussed with the adjustments effective January 1st through June 30th, 2013. Selectman
Cannon seconded; all members of the BOS were in favor. So moved.

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IV Adjournment

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Chairman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting; Vice-Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The
248 vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

250 The meeting was adjourned at 10:35pm.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Sarah E Scanlan