

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, April 4th, 2013
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

7:00 PM Call the Meeting to Order

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman's Additions or Deletions

Public Comment (10 minutes)

Stuart Arnett, Better Future Alliance

Approval of Minutes

Budget Committee - Review Budget and Warrant Articles

Roundtable

Public Comment (10 minutes)

Non-Public Session

Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Landau called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:09pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Joseph Hagen

Stephen Landau

Richard LeBlanc

Michael Weider

Selectmen absent:

Jack Cannon

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Stuart Arnett, Better Future Alliance

Ephraim Dobbins, Budget Committee

Chris Hadik, Budget Committee

Bonnie Healey, Transfer Station

Chuck Heuer, Budget Committee

Rhonda Lamphere, Budget Committee

Aaron Mansur, Cemetery Trustee

Patricia Martin, BOS Administrative Assistant

48 Michael Oleson, Road Agent
Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
Leroy Scott
50 Joanne Smith, Finance Director
And other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

52

54 *1.3 Pledge of Allegiance*

Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

56

58 *1.4 Additions and Deletions*

An appointment with Mr. Arnett was added, as well as two non-public sessions: one on employees and one to update the Board about a conversation with Town Counsel about Chester College.

62 *1.5 Public Comment*

64 As no members of the public wished to speak, Public Comment was closed at 7:11pm.

66 **II. New Business**

68 *2.1 Stuart Arnett, Better Future Alliance*

70 Mr. Arnett appeared before the Board to update his work on the Town's possible acquisition of Chester College.

72

The Alliance has visited the site and spoken with the educational institutions that are showing an interest in the property; they have also met with the realtor and their clients. They held a two-hour planning session with David Preece and Matt Monahan. There is potential for different zones on the site to be subdivided and developed differently at different times; they are looking at zoning. The front 5-15% of the property is the most important in terms of how it affects the Town's looks, traffic, history, etc. He has also spoken with People's Bank, who holds the mortgage; the bank does not wish to own the property.

80

The rear of the property is of more interest to prospective buyers due to the building placement, the water and septic, etc.

84 Selectman Weider reported that a potential buyer who would like to develop the dorms into a 55+ living facility, including Alzheimer's beds, came in front of the Planning Board last night with a conceptual.

88 Mr. Arnett will be glad to return to the Board at their convenience to report further on his progress; he will be happy to answer any questions they may have. He departed the meeting at 7:23pm.

92 **III. Old Business**

94 3.1 *Approval of Minutes*

96 This subject was not addressed this evening.

98 3.2 *Budget Committee*

100 Ephraim Dobbins, Chris Hadik, Chuck Heuer, and Rhonda Lamphere of the Budget Committee
102 appeared before the Board to discuss the Town's FY 2013/2014 Budget.

104 Selectman Weider, as Budget Committee liaison, gave the Board a brief recap of Monday night's
106 meeting, and stressed the need for backup data for the Warrant Articles; Finance Director Smith
108 had some documentation, and provided it to Budget Committee Chair Lamphere. The Board
110 informed the Budget Committee that they planned to vote on the Warrant Articles at next week's
meeting, April 11th, which caused an issue; the Budget Committee planned to vote on them this
coming Monday, April 8th, and will not do so until they know whether or not the Board plans to
support them. Considering that the Public Hearing is April 15th, the Board may need to hold an
additional meeting before April 8th.

112 Budget Committee Chair Lamphere praised Selectman Weider, stating that he was a valuable
114 liaison and that the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee were working together better than
this year in other years.

116 Some Budget items discussed:

118 *Executive Office:* Mr. Heuer is concerned about the Salary Pool request (01-4130-1-998),
120 referencing last year's request and subsequent mid-year raises that exceeded it. There was a
lengthy discussion about the need for competitive wages and the advisability of retaining current
employees vs. recruiting, training, and outfitting new ones.

122 *Legal:* The \$75k requested includes the utilities lawsuit.

124 *Benefits:* The Budget Committee would like the health-insurance-eligible library employee to
126 contribute to the cost of his own health insurance, as other Town employees do. Chairman Landau
noted that the Library Trustees are in charge of that employee, and they would have to make that
128 decision. However, should there be a disagreement, the Board could simply reduce the Library's
budget by the \$1,500 in question.

130 *Buildings:* The Gas/Oil/Diesel request (01-4194-1-639) has gone up 38%; Selectman Weider
132 believes it might be overspent this year. Mr. Heuer asked about line 01-4194-1-840, which is for
painting the Post Office; he would prefer to see this as a Warrant Article. The Board disagreed,
134 noting that the building should have been painted at least ten years ago and is in great need of
attention. The price also reflects the need for lead paint abatement/encapsulation. Selectman
136 LeBlanc opined that the building is not historical, and in his opinion, for the same price, the building
could be vinyl sided and the windows replaced.

138

140 *Cemeteries:* The Cemetery Fund Warrant Article was discussed, as was Great Hill Cemetery; the
142 auditors would prefer to see all cemetery funds under Town control and part of the budget. There
144 was some discussion about line 01-4195-1-744 for \$4,700 - these are the funds referred to in the
Warrant Article. Aaron Mansur stood and was recognized. He stated that Cemeteries would
prefer to get away from Perpetual Care, as General Maintenance would cover the entire cemetery,
not just particular plots.

146 *Police:* The Budget Committee reduced the Gas/Oil line (01-4210-3-635) from \$37,900 to \$27k,
148 based on their extrapolation of the current actuals. The Board was not comfortable with that
reduction, and a compromise of \$31,000 was reached.

150 *Ambulance:* The Town is close to an agreement on this line.

152 *Highway:* the Budget Committee has reduced the Plowing line (01-4312-1-902) from \$175k to
154 \$170k, and the Salt line (01-4312-1-905) from \$70k to \$64k, after performing some calculations
156 based on 3-year actuals. Road Agent Oleson, who was present, spoke in defense of the original
158 requests. He noted that some road conditions have deteriorated to such an extent that he is
160 unable to plow the roads bare, and thus must use additional salt to keep the ice down; he also
reported that prior years' salt price was artificially low, based on a penalty the State had against a
vendor, and that salt prices were likely to skyrocket this summer. He has experimented with a
product named "Ice B'Gone" which was more environmentally friendly, and requires less product,
but it is also more expensive.

162 *Transfer Station:* Line 01-4324-2-120, for a roof over the dumpsters, has been zeroed out and
164 moved to a Warrant Article. Tipping fees have been reduced from \$68k to \$56,200.

General Assistance: There was a lengthy about this entire section of the budget. According to
166 BOS Administrative Assistant Martin, who is also the Welfare Administrator, Wilcomb Townsend
is covering more fuel needs, which frees up some General Assistance money to go elsewhere. She
168 foresees a need for more rent assistance (01-4442-1-440) and it was agreed to increase that line
from \$18k to \$22k. Telephone (01-4442-1-341) was reduced from \$400 to \$375, Electricity (01-
170 4442-1-410) was reduced from \$4,500 to \$3,500, and Fuel (01-4442-1-411) was reduced from
\$4,000 to \$2,000. The bottom line request for this department remains at \$30k, a decrease of
172 21.975% from last year.

174 *WP Caretaker Cottage:* This department's name is inaccurate; the electricity line (01-4535-1-431)
176 covers the store and exterior lights, not the cottage.

178 *WP Bathhouse:* The Repairs & Maint line (01-4540-1-430) is for a new roof.

180 *Library:* The requested new employee has been removed from the Library's line (01-4550-1-100)
and placed in a Warrant Article.

182 *Patriotic:* The funds in this request (01-4583-1-600) are to repair the cannons.

184 *CTV21:* These lines have been zeroed out and moved to a Warrant Article.

186 There was some discussion about large maintenance activities being rolled into the budget rather
than placed into Warrant Articles. Mr. Heuer is concerned that the Townspeople do not notice
188 these items unless they are pulled out and addressed separately; he would like them pointed out
during Town Meeting. He would also like to see Statements of Work, Requests for Proposals, bids,
190 specs, etc. for all large expenditures.

192 Selectman Weider moved to bring forward the FY2013/2014 budget as amended to \$3,453,468;
Selectman LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon
194 absent; so moved.

196 Some Warrant Article items discussed:

198 *New Capital Reserve Fund:* The intent is to use this fund for roadwork this year should it pass.
The \$300k would be funded by \$100k from the June 30th 2013 unassigned fund balance and the
200 remaining \$200k from taxation. The Block Grant would be part of this.

202 *Salt Shed Debris & Buildings:* Road Agent Oleson stood and was recognized. He noted that he was
requesting two buildings, a shed and a pole barn. The shed would be 28' x 36', attached to the Salt
204 Shed, with a foundation; it would be used to house the truck he is requested in another Warrant
Article. The pole barn would be 24' x 50' and used to hang the sanders and house the loader that
206 he is requesting in another Warrant Article. Each would cost ~\$50k to build; the remaining ~\$50k
in the Warrant Article is to begin to remove the 3-4,000 yards of debris and fill materials from
208 the Salt Shed area which was put there by the previous Road Agent. It was suggested that the
Warrant Articles to purchase the truck and loader be put onto the Warrant ahead of the one for
210 the buildings. It was also suggested that the Road Agent use as much of the Town's equipment and
employees as possible to move the debris and fill themselves rather than hiring a contractor to do
212 so. Road Agent Oleson stated that if both requested pieces of equipment were approved, this
would certainly be possible.

214
Skid Steer: The Town was unable to procure any grants after the 2010 Warrant Article, and only
216 \$1,559 was donated. They are currently looking at a Volvo Skid Steer, which would have a \$0.017
tax impact, and there are no legal ramifications to proceeding with it. Next year, a Warrant
218 Article would need to be written, discontinuing the 2010 Warrant Article in question. Budget
Committee Chair Lamphere would prefer that this Warrant Article be deleted, stating that there
220 was another article for the Transfer Station already.

222 *Cemeteries:* Budget Committee Chair Lamphere expressed disapproval of this Warrant Article,
but apparently the Auditors requested it, and the Attorney General's office wrote it. Finance
224 Director Smith was asked to telephone both the Attorney General's office, and the auditors, to
clarify. Selectman Weider is concerned that should it fail, the Cemetery Trustees will be short
226 since the \$4,700 in question was removed from their budget.

228 *Multi-Purpose Room Roof:* There is some concern that the low bid received, for \$29k, is not
authentic. The bidder has been invited to attend a Board of Selectmen's meeting, but the Board
230 feels it is unlikely he will attend. The Warrant Article should be left at \$50k.

232 *Loader:* The designation "2012" will be deleted. A quote for \$125k was in hand; the Warrant
Article is for \$135k. Road Agent Oleson stated that the quote is from January and believes there
234 will be a price increase by July. Should this Warrant Article and that for the Skid Steer pass, the
Board of Selectmen will attempt the purchase both as a bulk buy, with the input of Road Agent
236 Oleson.

238 *Truck:* The designation "2012" will be deleted. Road Agent Oleson stated that the quote is for a
Peterbilt, which is \$5,200 more than an International; he had specified a Peterbilt due to the fact
240 that the existing building in which it might be stored is narrower than his requested new building,
and the Peterbilt's cab is narrower. This will replace the old black truck. Mr. Hadik believed that
242 \$185k was an adequate amount, and not too much.

244 Budget Committee Chair Lamphere would like the Loader and Truck Warrant Articles changed to
Special Warrant Articles so that the funds raised would be required to be spent on the items
246 requested, and nowhere else. Selectman LeBlanc found that request to be insulting.

248 *Police Cruiser:* Formerly Police Cruisers were \$32k; this request is for \$40k. The Budget
Committee would like to see backup for the \$8k increase.

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252 *Building Improvement:* This fund currently contains \$30k. Selectman LeBlanc suggested that as
the underground oil tank will need to be dug up in a few years, the Town should install the new one
and its lines aboveground rather than under. He estimated the cost would be ~\$50k. Selectman
254 Weider suggested asking for \$10k this year rather than \$25k, and final-funding it with another
\$10k next year; all were in agreement, and the Article will be amended.

256
258 *Unanticipated Maintenance Fund:* This Article will be deleted.

260 *Asphalt:* Road Agent Oleson noted that he had originally asked for \$500k, which would put a wear
course on Shepherd Home and Fremont Road; \$200k will do Shepherd Home only. Chairman Landau
suggested letting the Townspeople decide whether or not to raise it to \$500k at Town Meeting.

262
264 *Transfer Station Roof:* This will pay for itself in 10 years or so, saving the Town ~\$6k each year.
Chairman Landau has bids and will provide them to the Budget Committee.

266 *Library Employee:* Budget Committee Chair Lamphere noted that the Library is doing a lot of
expansion of hours, and would recommend that they see how that works this year before hiring a
268 new employee.

270 *PACT:* The requested figure of \$7,881 is from last year; Finance Director Smith has not been
given an updated figure for this year.

272
274 With nothing further to discuss, Finance Director Smith and the Budget Committee departed the
meeting at 11:00pm.

276 **IV. Selectmen's Business**

278 *4.1 Roundtable*

280 *Selectman Weider:*

- 282 • The Highway Department's budget for winter maintenance is overspent, and the monies in the Winter Maintenance Fund are needed. Selectman Weider moved that the Trustees be requested to draw down the Winter Maintenance Fund by \$85k in order to cover the Town's winter maintenance costs; Vice-Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.
- 286 • The Auburn and Chester Building Inspector agreement is in hand. Wadleigh Starr will be representing both sides, which was acceptable to all. Selectman Weider moved that the Agreement to have Wadleigh Starr represent both Auburn and Chester in the Building Inspector Agreement be signed; Vice-Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

292 *Selectman LeBlanc:*

- 294 • Selectman LeBlanc noted that the Town is trying to decide whether or not to continue with the Public (not the Government or School) TV Station; it was just shut off this past week. People watching should let the Board know.

296

Vice-Chairman Hagan:

- 298 • Nothing to report.

300 *Chairman Landau:*

- 302 • There will be a Scenic Byway meeting on Saturday, April 6th, at 9:00am in the Meeting Room.
- The Board will meet at 3:30pm Saturday afternoon to vote on the Warrant Articles.
- 304 • There will be a PTA Dinner Dance on Saturday, April 6th, at 6:00pm in the Multi-Purpose Room.

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4.2 Public Comment

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310 Leroy Scott stood and was recognized. He asked if paper ballots would be available at Town Meeting; Chairman Landau noted that this was the responsibility of the Supervisors of the Checklist.

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As no other members of the public wished to speak, Public Comment was closed at 11:05pm.

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4.3 Non-Public Session

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318 Chairman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91A:3 II (a) Public Employees, (j), Confidential Information, and (d), Real Estate; Selectman Weider seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

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The Meeting Room was closed at 11:06pm.

322

The Meeting Room was re-opened at 11:32pm.

324

Chairman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Vice-Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

326

Chairman Landau moved that the minutes to each of the three non-public sessions be sealed for an indefinite period; Selectman Weider seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

330

332 **V. Adjournment**

Chairman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting; Vice-Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

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The meeting was adjourned at 11:34pm.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Debra H. Doda