

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, April 9th, 2015
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

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I Preliminaries

- 7:00 PM Call the Meeting to Order
- Roll Call
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Chairman’s Additions or Deletions
- Public Comment (10 minutes)
- Approval of Minutes
- Police Chief Bill Burke – New Candidates
- Budget Committee
- Roundtable
- Public Comment
- Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Landau called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:03pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

- Jack Cannon
- Joseph Hagen
- Stephen Landau
- Richard LeBlanc

Selectmen absent:

- Joe Castricone

Members of the Public present, at various times:

- Richard Antoine, Fire Chief
- Amanda Basnar
- Aaron Berube, Police Lieutenant
- Bill Burke, Police Chief
- David Fencer
- Chuck Heuer, Budget Committee
- Rhonda Lamphere, Budget Committee
- Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
- Leroy Scott
- Michael Weider, Budget Committee
- And other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Additions and Deletions

54
56 Nothing was added to nor deleted from tonight’s agenda.

58 *1.5 Public Comment*

60 Fire Chief Antoine stood and was recognized, stating that there were things about the CIP he wished
62 people to know. He stated that although it had been in place since 1992, it had expired in 2014 and
64 was no longer a live document; he did not believe it to be fiscally responsible that the taxpayers were
being asked to fund the CIP at the amount of \$500k. He added that he was in favor of the concept, but
that the Fire Department had suggested many pieces of equipment to be added to the CIP, and yet very
few had been accepted.

66 As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:08pm.

68 **II. Old Business**

70 *2.1 Approval of Minutes*

72 This subject was not addressed tonight.

74 **III. New Business**

76 *3.1 Police Chief Bill Burke – New Candidates*

78 Police Chief Burke and Lieutenant Berube appeared before the board to introduce Amanda Basnar and
David Fencer, two candidates for employment in the Chester Police Department

80 The employment process began last April; ~80 resumes were received, including one (1) Full-Time
82 Certified officer. That Officer and 11 others were invited to apply; tests and interviews cut that number
down to six (6).

84 One candidate was rejected due to an unsatisfactory background check; another took a position in
86 Atkinson for more money. Mr. Fencer and Ms. Basnar received extensive background checks and
additional interviewing; both passed, and are here tonight to continue the hiring process.

88 Mr. Fencer is a member of the Coast Guard Reserve (First Class Petty Officer E6), and interested in going
90 into Public Service in a small town. Ms. Basnar has an AA in Criminal Justice from NHTI, has held a
Police Department internship, and currently works in Security.

92 Chairman Landau moved to go into non-public session under RSA 91A:3 II (b), Hiring of a Public
94 Employee; Selectman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman
Castricone absent; so moved.

96 The meeting room was closed at 7:18pm. Police Chief Burke, Lieutenant Berube, and Mr. Fencer
98 remained in the meeting room.

100 Mr. Fencer departed the meeting room at 7:31pm. Ms. Basnar entered the meeting room at 7:43pm.
102 Ms. Basnar departed the meeting room at 7:50pm. Police Chief Burke and Lieutenant Berube departed
the meeting room at 7:52pm.

104 The meeting room was re-opened at 7:53pm.

106 Selectman LeBlanc moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Selectman Cannon seconded

the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Castricone absent; so moved.

108

Chairman Landau moved that the Board seal the non-public session for a period of two (2) years; Selectman LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Castricone absent; so moved.

112

Chairman Landau introduced Mr. Fencer and Ms. Basnar as Police Officers for the Town of Chester. They will be attending the Full-Time Academy from May through August 2015.

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Ms. Basnar, Lieutenant Berube, and Mr. Fencer departed the meeting at 7:54pm; Police Chief Burke returned to the Public.

118

3.2 *Budget Committee*

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Mr. Heuer, Mrs. Lamphere, and Mr. Weider appeared before the Board in order to discuss this year’s Warrant.

122

Unfortunately the Public Hearing had not been noticed in time for it to take place on Monday, April 13th, 2015; it cannot take place any earlier than Thursday, April 16th, 2015. It has been posted and will be held at the beginning of the Board of Selectmen’s meeting that day, from 7pm – 8pm. Selectman Cannon wished to confirm that this date would not cause a delay in getting the Town Report to the printer; it will not.

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Mrs. Lamphere reported the Budget Committee’s stance on support or non-support of the various Articles in the Warrant, adding that in some cases, the Budget Committee’s vote of non-support was because they had received no backup on a request. Selectman Cannon had been absent from last week’s meeting when the Board of Selectmen’s stance had been determined, so he provided his vote at this time as well.

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| 136 | Warrant Article | Budget Committee Vote | Selectman Cannon’s Vote |
|-----|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 138 | CIP | 6/0/0 | For |
| 140 | Fire Fighter | 0/6/0 | For |
| 142 | Re-Evaluation | 5/1/0 | For |
| 144 | Winter Maintenance | 6/0/0 | For |
| 146 | MPR Floor | 0/6/0 | For |

As the Board of Selectmen increased the amount of this Warrant Article and changed the expected funding, it was rewritten by Town Counsel as follows:

150

Special Warrant Article. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One hundred ten thousand dollars (\$110,000.00) to repair, replace, and renovate the floor in the Town of Chester’s Multipurpose Room and further to authorize the withdrawal of Twenty-thousand dollars (\$20,000) from the Municipal Complex maintenance and improvement Capital Reserve Fund established at the 2006 Town Meeting for that purpose, and further to authorize the transfer of up to Thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000.00) from the June 30, 2015 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2015 and the remaining amount of Fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000.00) to be raised through taxation.

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Chairman Landau reported that samples were taken of the MPR floor tile and mastic; no asbestos was

| | | | |
|-----|---|-------|---------|
| 160 | found. | | |
| 162 | Police Vehicle | 1/5/0 | For |
| 164 | Building Improvement Capital Reserve | 1/4/1 | Abstain |
| 166 | The Budget Committee’s stance is that this Warrant Article is unclear; Chairman Landau stated that it was Town Counsel who wrote it. The funding is intended for oil tank and line removal as mandated by | | |
| 168 | the State in order to bring the Town up to code. Mrs. Lamphere requested that the Article be rewritten. | | |
| 170 | Unanticipated Capital Reserve | 0/6/0 | For |
| 172 | The Budget Committee’s stance is that there is already \$8k in this fund; the Board disagreed, stating that some had been spent and the purpose of this Article was to bring it back up to \$10k. Mrs. | | |
| 174 | Lamphere had questions about some funds not being transferred as expected; the Budget Committee will revisit this question on Monday night. | | |
| 176 | 300 th Anniversary | 4/1/1 | For |
| 178 | PACT | 1/4/1 | For |
| 180 | Vice-Chairman Hagan spoke in favor of this Article, noting that Selectman Castricone had worked on this | | |
| 182 | Article with his committee comprised of Bob Grimm, Karl Knudsen, and Selectman LeBlanc, and that there was no tax impact. The Budget Committee responded that they had no backup for this Article. | | |
| 184 | Wason Pond Fence | 0/6/0 | For |
| 186 | Conservation Survey | 1/5/1 | Against |
| 188 | Bathhouse | 0/6/0 | For |
| 190 | Animal Control Officer | 1/5/0 | For |
| 192 | Trustees of Trust Funds | 5/0/1 | Against |
| 194 | Recreation Director | 0/6/0 | Against |
| 196 | Utility Tractor | 0/6/0 | For |
| 198 | The Budget Committee is willing to support a new mower, perhaps a zero-turn, but not a utility tractor. | | |
| 200 | They are of the opinion that the tractor’s horsepower, which they believe to be 18, is too small to power the attachments. Selectman LeBlanc disagreed, stating that the tractor’s horsepower is actually 25, not | | |
| 202 | 18, and that the Town will be able to save \$4k a year, for example, by using its brushhogger attachment. | | |
| 204 | Edwards Mill Dam | 0/6/0 | For |
| 206 | No further permits are needed for this work. | | |
| 208 | CIP - \$380k (new) | 6/0/0 | For |
| 210 | | | |

212 The Board discussed the original Article with Town Counsel, who recommended that it be split due to
the presence of Highway Block Grant funds, which can only be spent on Highway projects. The new
Article reads as follows:

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*Special Warrant Article. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three hundred
216 eighty thousand dollars (\$380,000.00) to be added to the capital reserve fund known as the Town’s
Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund established at the 2013 Town Meeting and to authorize
218 the transfer of Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) from the June 30, 2015 fund balance for
this purpose with the remainder of One hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000.00) to be raised
220 through taxation.*

222 CIP Highway Capital Reserve Fund 0/6/0 For
(new)

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The new Article reads as follows:

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*Special Warrant Article. To see if the Town will vote to establish a capital reserve fund under the
228 provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of funding road improvements as recommended in the Town’s
Capital Improvement Plan under RSA 674:5 and to raise and appropriate the sum of One hundred
230 twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000.00) to be placed in the fund. Said sum to come from the State of
New Hampshire Highway Block Grant and no amount to be raised by taxation. Furthermore to appoint
232 the Selectmen as agents to expend this fund.*

234 Normally the legislative body votes to draw down a CIP; this Article specifies that it is the Board of
Selectmen who does so. The Budget Committee would like that final sentence deleted, and if that is
236 done, they are willing to vote 6/0/0. Chairman Landau stated that the Board of Selectmen has always
controlled the Highway Block Grant, and that this Article was written by Town Counsel.

238

Police Communications Equipment 6/0/0 For

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Budget

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The Budget itself was the last item of the Warrant discussed. The Budget Committee stressed that they
244 had not touched base salaries, but had removed some funds from the Salary Pool; they also deleted
overtime from the Police Department, due to the fact that two officers were being hired. The Board
246 objected to that removal, stating that the new officers will not be available to patrol on their own until
they have completed the Academy and Training, which can be as much as eight months from their date
248 of hire; therefore, overtime still will be needed in the upcoming Fiscal Year.

250 Chairman Landau expressed concern that items being cut were issues of public safety, such as clearing
snow from roofs. He is unwilling to cut money now in order to put it away for later.

252

The Budget Committee’s budget is \$3,898,140; the Board of Selectmen’s is \$4,119,051, a difference of
254 ~\$220k. Chairman Landau asked if the Budget Committee would be willing to ‘split the difference’, and
add an additional \$110k to their budget while the Board of Selectmen deleted \$110k from theirs;
256 Selectman Cannon spoke in favor of this idea. Vice-Chairman asked Mrs. Lamphere if she thought the
Budget Committee as a whole would support such a thing; she thought that they would. However, if the
258 two groups cannot agree, each will present its budget at Town Meeting and the Town will decide. Mr.
Weider stated that he would prefer to bring a unified budget to Town Meeting. Vice-Chairman Hagan
260 suggested making the Highway and Police budgets whole first, and then finding other places to change.

262 Vice-Chairman Hagan took this opportunity to note that he believed that Mr. Heuer’s “1%” comment
made at this week’s Budget Committee meeting (“people in the 1% don’t have a problem with tax

264 increases”) was unseemly and an ad hominem attack directed at him. Mr. Heuer denied this; Chairman
266 Landau added that as Welfare Liaison, he is well aware of the need in Town and keeps it in mind when
budgeting. Mrs. Lamphere stated that the Budget Committee had not taken any funding from the
Welfare line items.

268
270 Mr. Weider spoke in rebuttal of the comments made by Fire Chief Antoine at this evening’s Public
Comment. He stated that the CIP does not expire. The Matrix has been updated, Table #15 has been
272 updated, the Master Plan is in the process of being updated based on the Community census, the Police
and Fire Departments methodology is complete, and a Public Hearing will be held. People are welcome
274 to attend a Planning Board meeting should they wish to hear correct information. Mrs. Lamphere added
that the potential for lost revenue is tremendous.

276 Mrs. Lamphere asked about Warrant Articles that neither the Board of Selectmen nor the Budget
278 Committee are supporting; why are they even in the Warrant? Chairman Landau responded that it was
the Town’s right to discuss these Articles and decide whether to vote for them or against. Conversely, if
280 both the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee were in unanimous support of these Articles,
would that mean that the Town would not get to vote on them?

282 Mr. Heuer, Mrs. Lamphere, and Mr. Weider departed the meeting table at 9:10pm.

284 **IV. Selectmen’s Business**

286 *4.1 Roundtable*

288 *Selectman Cannon:*

- Nothing to report.

290

Selectman LeBlanc:

- Nothing to report.

294 *Vice-Chairman Hagan*

- He congratulated Mrs. Lamphere on her granddaughter’s acceptance to the Naval Academy.

296

Chairman Landau:

- Please note the following important dates:
 - Tuesday, April 14th is the last day for the Supervisors to post the Checklist,
 - Friday, April 17th is the last day that a Public Hearing may be held on the Budget,
 - Monday, April 20th is the last day to post a Public Hearing notice for bond articles over \$100k, and
 - Monday, April 20th is the last day to post a Public Hearing notice on establishing a Special Revenue fund.
- A meeting sponsored by the State of New Hampshire is scheduled for Monday, April 13th, 2015 at the Derry Municipal Center; Finance Director Smith or a member of the Board of Selectmen should attend.

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4.2 Public Comment

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As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 9:11pm.

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V. Adjournment

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The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 8pm in the Meeting Room, following the Budget Public Hearing, which will begin at 7pm.

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

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Debra H. Doda