

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, November 6th, 2014
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)
- Approval of Minutes
- Tax Rate
- Budget
- Warrant Articles
- Conservation Land Donation Acceptance
- Roundtable
- Public Comment
- 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 7:04pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

- Joe Castricone
- Joseph Hagen (arrived at 8:52pm)
- Stephen Landau
- Richard LeBlanc

Selectmen absent:

- Jack Cannon

Members of the Public present, at various times:

- Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
- Leroy Scott
- Dick Trask
- 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

There was one item added to the agenda: a non-public session on Reputation/Pending Litigation.
There is also a Purchase & Sale Agreement to be signed for a piece of conservation property.

54 *1.5 Public Comment*

56 Leroy Scott stood and was recognized. He stated that he had been at the Transfer Station today, and
 58 saw that work was ongoing. He hopes that the new roof will be on before it snows.

60 Mr. Scott also noted that there was still no action at Edwards Mill Dam, and asked if perhaps the Board
 62 should considering deferring the project for the winter. Chairman Landau stated that he had not yet
 64 heard back from the State, and this subject might need to be discussed with Town Counsel. The Town
 should be prepared to face litigation. Selectman LeBlanc added that if Remi-Sons wants to perform the
 work in the winter, they will do so; Mr. Scott is opposed to this.

66 Mr. Scott also noted the presence of ‘Do Not Enter’ signs at the Post Office, and did not remember
 68 hearing this subject discussed previously; he does not understand the need for such signs. Selectman
 LeBlanc stated that the sign by the mailbox had always been there, but it had been faded/obscured and
 was replaced, with the brush being cut back to facilitate its visibility. He reminded those listening that
 70 that driveway has always been one-way; one goes around the building by driving behind the Post Office.
 He added that the Library had expressed concern about pedestrians possibly being hit. Mr. Scott stated
 that he is most concerned about the mail truck’s access to the Post Office loading dock.

72 Dick Trask stood and was recognized. He stated that the American Legion’s Haunted House on
 74 Halloween drew about 150-200 visitors, and believe it was a success. He would like feedback and/or
 complaints; no complaints have been received.

76 Selectman Castricone offered a round of applause to those whose work made Halloween successful –
 78 Beth Swanson, the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the American Legion.

80 As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:13pm.

82 **II. Old Business**

84 *2.1 Approval of Minutes*

86 This subject was not addressed tonight.

88 **III. New Business**

90 *3.1 Tax Rate*

92 The Town has received DRA’s approval of its tax rate. The rate is up \$0.39 per thousand, from \$25.17
 to \$25.56. This can be broken down as follows:

94

Portion	Last Year	This Year	Change
Town	\$6.90	\$6.70	(\$0.20)
Local School	\$14.79	\$15.39	\$0.60
State School	\$2.44	\$2.39	(\$0.05)
County	\$1.04	\$1.08	\$0.04
Total	\$25.17	\$25.56	\$0.39

96 Per Town Clerk Gagnon, tax bills will be mailed out early next week, and will be due thirty (30) days
 98 after mailing. He congratulated Department Heads and the Board of Selectmen for helping to control
 costs, and will continue to work on reducing them. He noted that keeping things maintained – such as
 the Post Office – will help keep costs down in the long run. Selectman LeBlanc noted that Maintenance
 100 Supervisor Amato has drawn up a 7-year maintenance schedule.

102 3.2 *Budget*

104 Selectman Castricone wished to discuss salary increases, in general. He is floating two options:

- 106 1. \$0.15/hour town-wide flat rate increase for 9 months, October through June, and
108 2. Merit raises of up to 5% for 6 months, January through June.

110 or

- 112 1. Merit raises of up to 3% for 9 months, October through June, and
114 2. \$0.25/hour town-wide flat rate increase for 6 months, January through June.

114 He has prepared a draft evaluation form, more relevant to the Town than the one currently in use, that
116 includes goal setting. He suggested that the Board of Selectmen prepare reviews of the Department
118 Heads, and that Department’s liaison present the review to the Head. The Department Head or
Board/Committee is then responsible for reviewing his or her direct reports. The Board of Selectmen will
assign merit raise percentages. Seasonal employees are not part of this process.

120 Selectman Castricone would like this process completed before Budget Season begins, even if the Board
122 has to work on a Saturday. Chairman Landau posited that a good time for this process would be after
Town Meeting and before the beginning of the next Fiscal Year. Selectman LeBlanc opined that the
124 Board should give across the board increases this year, and use the new process next year; Selectman
Castricone disagreed, stating that across the board increases were given this year, which did not work
126 for everyone; he added that putting this process off for another year simply means that next year’s
Board will be in the same position.

128 Chairman Landau suggested that the full board discuss this issue; he will ask Administrative Assistant
130 Martin to re-send these documents to all members of the Board plus all Department Heads for their
input.

132 3.3 *Warrant Articles*

134 Administrative Assistant Martin has provided documentation on how to properly write a Warrant Article;
136 all Department Heads, including part-time and seasonal departments, will be provided with a copy.

138 Warrant Articles have already begun to be received.

State Education Funding

140 The first was submitted by Selectman Bruce Johnson from Webster, NH, about state education funding;
142 this was discussed at a previous Board meeting. Selectman LeBlanc finds the Article to be redundant,
as the State Legislature already knows that education funding is a problem. He suggested asking Vice-
144 Chairman Hagan if it was a meaningful Article.

146 Chairman Landau quoted Colonel Benton’s opinion that although a sales or income tax ‘sounds good’
because it lowers property Taxes, those funds go to the State, not the Town. And one might be
148 understandably loath to send one’s money to the State when they are not necessarily financially
prudent. It is unclear what Mr. Johnson’s plan is – lottery, gas tax, restaurant tax? It was also noted
150 that the School portion of the tax rate is ~2.5 times higher than the Town portion, and the Board has no
control over those numbers.

152 Selectman Castricone suggested that this Warrant Article is better suited to the School Board, and it will
be passed along.

154

Transfer Station (Funding)

156 The second Warrant Article is to address a question raised by the Transfer Station operator. Currently
158 funds from the Cell Tower rental, and recycling income, go into the General Fund. If those funds were
instead given directly to the Transfer Station, could they then go without a Town Budget?

160 Selectman Castricone believes this is unwise. What would happen if the revenue received was not
162 enough to cover the Transfer Station’s needs? That budget covers employee salaries and would
negatively impact these employees’ livelihood should funding be insufficient.

164 Chairman Landau opined that it would be nice to link the Transfer Station budget with its revenue; in
166 fact, it would be useful to see this for all departments. Finance Director Smith will be asked if she can
add a revenue line to Departments that generate revenue during the budgeting process.

168 Emergency Management (Hot Water System)

170 Selectman LeBlanc queried whether it is better to wait until the current system fails, or replace it pro-
172 actively. He believes that an on-demand hot water system might cost more up front, but would save
money in the end. Selectman Castricone stated that this system was already planned for in this year’s
174 budget. However, because of the overruns on the Post Office project, Maintenance Supervisor Amato
does not believe that there will be enough money.

176 Chairman Landau suggested writing a Warrant Article for this system with the understanding that it
178 could be pulled at Town Meeting should sufficient funds remain at the conclusion of this year’s budget.
There was some disagreement as to whether or not a new hot water system could be put into the CIP.
Chairman Landau believes that it can, as it would be a new system; Selectman Castricone believes that
it cannot, as it is a maintenance item.

180

Police Department ('Sally Port')

182 Selectman Castricone stated that money in a fund for the Police Department 'Sally Port' is in the wrong
184 account, and a Warrant Article needs to be written to move these funds and put them towards
maintenance – they could cover hot-topping the parking lot and removing the old oil tank.

186 Selectman LeBlanc also queried why a roof could not be built over the 20' wide aisle between the annex
188 and Police Department. This would give the Police access to the rear double doors, allowing them to
bring prisoners in that way rather than through the front door. Selectman Castricone stated that this
would be a problem with Building Codes, as the roof would not be able to be attached to the other
190 roofs. Chairman Landau suggested asking the Town Engineers for their input. Could this sort of work
be included in the CIP?

192

Trustees of the Trust Funds (CIP Fees)

194 The Trustees of the Trust funds would like to know if the Town would vote, under RSA 35:9, to let the
196 Trustees pay for financial management services for CIP funds with CIP funds. Finance will need to be
consulted.

198 Building Maintenance

200 At some point in the future, the Post Office and Library roofs will need to be replaced and Stevens Hall
will need to be repainted. Maintenance Supervisor Amato is compiling a list of maintenance needs. Will
these jobs be able to go into the CIP?

202

3.4 *Conservation Land Donation Acceptance*

204

206 The Conservation Commission has received a donation of an 8-acre parcel of land off of Gardner Road.
There are minor restrictions; a Public Hearing was held. The Commission paid the donors \$5,100 for the

208 value of the timber on the property. The land will be posted as the “David A. Sanborn Memorial Conservation Land”.

210 Selectman Castricone moved to sign the Conservation Easement for the acquisition of the David A
212 Sanborn Memorial Conservation Land; Selectman LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was three in
favor with Selectman Cannon absent and Vice-Chairman Hagan yet to arrive; so moved.

214 **IV. Selectmen’s Business**

216 *4.1 Roundtable*

218 *Selectman Castricone:*

- Nothing to report.

220

Selectman LeBlanc:

- Nothing to report.

224 *Chairman Landau:*

- A legal matter to do with Assessment was settled, and will be public knowledge in 30 days.
- There was some discussion about a solar farm ‘example’ to be built on Ledge Road for public perusal. Perhaps one could be built on top of the old landfill. These solar farms can either be purchased, or leased from the builder.

230 *4.2 Public Comment*

232 As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 8:28pm.

234 *4.3 Non-Public Session*

236 Chairman Landau moved to go into non-public session under RSA 91A:3 II (a) Public Employees, (c)
238 Reputation, and (e) Pending Litigation for two items; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The
vote was three in favor with Selectman Cannon absent and Vice-Chairman Hagan yet to arrive; so
moved.

240

The meeting room was closed at 8:29pm.

242

Vice-Chairman Hagan arrived at 8:52pm.

244

The meeting room was re-opened at 9:12pm.

246

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

250 Selectman LeBlanc moved that the Board seal the first non-public session, on Reputation and Pending
252 Litigation, for an indefinite period; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in
favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

254 Selectman Castricone moved that the Board seal the second non-public session, on Public Employees,
for a period of six (6) months; Chairman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with
256 Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

258 **V. Adjournment**

260 The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, November 13th, 2014 at 7pm in
the Meeting Room.

262

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

266 The meeting was adjourned at 9:13pm.

268

270 Respectfully Submitted,

270

Debra H. Doda