

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, October 22nd, 2015
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

2
4
6
8 **I Preliminaries**

- Call the Meeting to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Moment of Silence
- Chairman’s Additions or Deletions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes
- Joanne Smith, Finance Director – Tax Rate
- Planning Board, Proposed Non-Public
- Mike Oleson, Road Agent – Plow Contracts
- Rich Antoine, Fire Chief – Proposed Non-Public
- Roundtable
- Public Comment
- Non-Public Sessions
- Meeting Adjournment

10
12
14
16
18
20
22
24 *1.1 Call to Order*

Chairman Landau called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00pm.

26 Selectmen Present:

- Jack Cannon
- Joe Castricone
- Joseph Hagen
- Stephen Landau
- Dick Trask

32 Members of the Public present, at various times:

- Joanne Smith, Finance Director
- Michael Weider, Planning Board
- Brian Sullivan, Planning Board
- Evan Sederquest, Planning Board
- Mike Oleson, Road Agent
- Rich Antoine, Fire Chief
- Leroy Scott, Resident
- And other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

34
36
38
40
42 *1.2 Pledge of Allegiance*

Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Moment of Silence

44 A moment of silence was observed to mark the recent passing of Colonel Albert W. Hamel and Brian K. Healey, Sr.

46 *1.4 Additions and Deletions*

48 Selectman Trask suggested the addition of one (1) public session on measures to maintain the new flooring in the Multipurpose Room, and one (1) non-public session under Employment.

1.5 Public Comment

50 Opportunity to comment was given by Chairman Landau, however, as no Members of the Public wished to be heard, public comment ended at 7:04pm.

52 *1.6 Letter Announcing Retirement of Barbara Gagnon, Town Clerk*

54 Chairman Landau shared excerpts from a letter written by Barbara Gagnon, in which she announced her plans to retire from her position as Town Clerk, effective December 4th, 2015. Ms. Gagnon’s dedication and service to the Town has spanned forty years, and she will be greatly missed.

56 *1.7 Joanne Smith, Finance Director – Tax Rate*

58 Finance Director, Joanne Smith, announced that a rate of \$24.64 per \$1,000.00 of property value could be attained; rendering a fund balance of 12.68%, or \$235,000.00. This factors very favorably as a 4% rate decrease.

60 Chairman Landau moved to accept a new tax rate of \$24.64 per \$1,000.00; Selectman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

62 Ms. Smith indicated that work will continue to bring this rate into fruition.

1.8 Notice of County Tax

64 Chairman Landau acknowledged receipt of a letter from Rockingham County, dated October 16, 2015; stating the just portion due to the County to be an amount of \$520,912.00. Failure to remit amount due by December 14th, 2015, may result in penalty as stated in RSA 29-11.

1.9 Notice of FEMA Funds Received

68 Chairman Landau stated that an amount of \$38,679.32 will be received (either as check or direct deposit) from FEMA / NH DOS. This amount comprises total approved eligible costs.

70 *2.0 Settlement Proposal from Bank Attorney*

72 Chairman Landau announced receipt of a letter from an attorney of Peoples United Bank, requesting settlement in an issue involving the College. Prior correspondence shows an original amount of ~\$50,000.00 having been requested by the Bank, as they maintain to have been overtaxed. The Town’s attorney responded with an offer to settle this case with a one-time payment for \$10,000.00.

76 Selectman Hagan moved to reimburse Peoples United Bank in the amount of \$10,000.00. Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

78 Finance Director Joanne Smith left the room at 7:17pm to compile additional data to present later in the meeting.

2.1 Non-Public Session

80 As per appointment, Planning Board members Mike Weider, Brian Sullivan, and Evan Sederquest joined the meeting at 7:18pm.

82 Selectman Cannon moved to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a), Public Employees; the motion was seconded, the vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

84 The meeting room was closed at 7:20pm, members of the Planning Board named above remained.

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

86 The meeting room was reopened at 7:42pm.

88 Selectman Cannon moved that the minutes to the first non-public session, with members of the Planning Board present, on Public Employees, be sealed for an indefinite period; the motion was seconded. The vote unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

90 At 7:45pm, Mr. Weider, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Sederquest left the meeting; and Finance Director, Joanne Smith reentered.

92 *2.2 Cost of Living Pay Increase for Town Employees*

94 Selectman Castricone moved that a fifteen cent (\$.15) pay raise be given to all Full- and Part-Time Employees of the Town; excluding seasonal workers, new hires, and those who have recently received a raise. Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. Selectman Cannon asked to amend the motion to indicate that a list of employees would be available for perusal at the following week’s meeting; 96 Selectman Castricone accepted this amendment. 98

Clarification was made that the raises will be effective retroactively to original proposal date of July 1st, 100 2015; and that three employees have recently received raises. Finance Director Smith stated her intention to submit said revisions in writing by early next week.

102 Chairman Landau suggested the item be moved along, asking if all other Selectmen were in favor, and the vote was unanimously in the affirmative; so moved.

104 Three percent (3%) was noted as a pay raise amount Town employees may currently receive, contingent upon performance evaluations.

106 Chairman Landau stated his hopes to expedite this process; Selectman Castricone mentioned that further discussion of employee pay will need to be done in non-public session. Chairman Landau agreed and indicated that he will have employee performance evaluations for next week’s session. 108

Finance Director Smith gladly agreed and expressed appreciation for these measures which, she stated, 110 “make budgeting so much easier”; she then left the meeting at 7:50pm.

2.3 Mike Oleson, Road Agent – Plow Contracts

112 Mike Oleson, Road Agent for the Town, entered the meeting at 7:50pm.

Road Agent Oleson outlined some concerns that may greatly affect the maintenance of the Town’s 114 roads this Winter. Plow crew members’ retirement and loss of equipment (two large trucks, two backhoes, and a 550) has compelled Road Agent Oleson to consider enlisting the services of owner- 116 operators.

118 Road Agent Oleson has foreseen difficulties providing incentives great enough to secure the most
desirable plow crew candidates: he proposed that the Town’s plow insurance requirements be lowered
120 from one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00), to five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) OR even to
three hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000.00) of general liability coverage. According to Road
Agent Oleson, other towns in our area only require \$500,000.00 level coverage; and if the Town is to
122 obtain qualified crew, compensation rates must be attractive and competitive.

Selectman Castricone inquired about the difference in cost among the various levels of insurance.
124 Chairman Landau asked if information was available on these prospective owner-operators’ driving
records, and if bringing them under the Town’s general liability policy could be an option. Road Agent
126 Oleson said he would find out about cost and driving records, but that these individuals each need their
own general liability insurance.

128 Selectman Cannon voiced concern that general liability coverage only protects the Town if an incident
were to occur on town property, and he asserted that auto liability stay at \$1 million because any
130 damage done on private property could become very costly very fast.

Road Agent Oleson reiterated that his priority is to prepare the town for what could be a very difficult
132 winter, and Chairman Landau agreed that arrangements must be made proactively and timely, so that a
compromise may be reached.

134 Selectman Trask requested copies of Declaration pages be submitted by prospective contractors, but
Road Agent Oleson responded that such information would need to be generated since these would be
136 new policies.

Selectman Cannon felt that abridgements should be made. Road Agent Oleson indicated that he would
138 try to retain prospective new crew members in the meantime, and that he would continue working on
this issue in the morning. At 8:12, Road Agent Oleson departed the meeting table and rejoined the
140 audience.

2.4 *Proposal to Share Building Inspector with Town of Raymond*

142 Selectman Trask introduced a proposal in which the Towns of Chester and Raymond share a Building
Inspector. He explained that he was in the process of exploring variations within the proposed contract;
144 including associated fees and billing arrangements.

Selectman Castricone inquired about how Raymond’s personnel policies compare with ours.

146 Chairman Landau, Vice Chairman Hagan, and Selectman Castricone shared concern that wording of
some of the terms were vague and needed specification; including whether notice of termination should
148 be submitted within thirty (30) days or sixty (60) days, and if a contingency date is needed.

Selectman Cannon and Chairman Landau questioned exclusivity of the proposed employee, and how
150 hours and scheduling between towns would be managed.

Selectman Trask stated that he will continue to obtain clarification on these items for further discussion.

152 2.5 *Replacement of Multipurpose Room Tables*

Selectman Trask addressed the topic of replacing certain tables in the Multipurpose Room. During a
154 recent visit in which he observed the floors to be “very nice”, Selectman Trask was approached by
Sharon DeLuca, Recreation Coordinator, concerning the likelihood that the round tables may eventually
156 damage the new floor. These tables have been in use for many years, and they are commonly “rolled

158 out” to expedite set-up. The problem is that a metal strip encircling the tabletops could easily gouge the
159 floors. Replacing these tables with new ones was suggested, with an approximate figure of one hundred
160 dollars (\$100.00) per each new table noted.

161 Chairman Landau agreed that proactively keeping the Multipurpose Room in good condition be pursued,
162 noting that sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00) was recently spent on flooring, and fifty thousand dollars
163 (\$50,000.00) on a new roof.

164 Selectman Cannon stated that he thought this issue had already been addressed; and Chairman Landau
165 and Vice Chairman Hagan responded respectively that some chairs with bad rubber and the old
166 bleachers were already discussed.

167 Selectman Trask asserted that to spend another thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) on new tables was a
168 sensible investment to preserve the new flooring; and that perhaps the old tables could be donated to
169 community group(s) such as the Lions Club, the Legion, or Stevens Memorial Hall.

170 All members agreed, and Selectman Castricone indicated that he would contact Recreation Coordinator
171 Sharon DeLuca to pursue replacing the tables with new ones.

2.6 *Upcoming Community Events*

172 At 8:36pm, Vice Chairman Hagan announced the upcoming Veteran’s Day Breakfast on November 11th,
173 from 8am – 11am. A Veteran’s Day ceremony and parade will also take place at the Chester Post Office.

174 A raffle is being held to benefit the Legion Post Heating Fund: tickets may be purchased from many
175 individuals; including Vice Chairman Hagan’s wife, and Selectman Trask.

176 2.7 *Lincoln Lane*

177 Chairman Landau addressed the need to establish a date to accept Lincoln Lane. This date must be
178 fourteen (14) days in advance in order to make it into the paper.

179 Selectman Cannon examined the calendar and offered some dates in December; Chairman Landau
180 moved that December 10th, 2015 be assigned to accept Lincoln Lane. The vote was unanimous in the
181 affirmative, so moved.

182 2.8 *Approval of Minutes*

Chairman Landau verified that members read the Meeting Minutes of October 1st, 2015.

184 Selectman Castricone moved the minutes of October 1st, 2015 be approved as drafted; the motion was
185 seconded. The vote was four in favor, Vice Chairman Hagan abstained as he was not present at said
186 Meeting; so moved.

2.9 *Public Comment*

188 At 8:42, Leroy Scott stood and was recognized. Mr. Scott expressed disappointment over the recent loss
189 of good fire fighters and police officers; and he urged the Board do their due diligence to avoid losing
190 additional qualified Town Employees.

3.0 *Non-Public Session*

192 Chairman Landau moved that the meeting enter Non-Public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a), Public
193 Employees; and the meeting be closed thereafter. The vote was unanimously in the affirmative, so
194 moved.

196 Per appointment, Fire Department Chief Richard Antoine joined the table. The meeting room was closed
at 8:44pm. Chief Antoine departed the meeting room at 9:00pm.

198 At 9:36pm, Chairman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public session; the vote was
unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

200 Chairman Landau moved that the Board seal the minutes of non-public session indefinitely; the vote was
unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

3.1 Meeting Adjournment

202 The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 7pm in the
Meeting Room.

204 Chairman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:39pm.

206

Respectfully Submitted,

208 Caroline Rose Wilson

210