

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, September 29th, 2016
Municipal Complex
Draft Minutes**

I Preliminaries

- Call the Meeting to Order
- Roll Call
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Chairman’s Additions or Deletions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes
- Stevens Memorial Hall – Chimneys RFP – Tony Amato
- Spring Hill Farm Budget
- Susan Rand King – Granite State Communications
- Mike Oleson, Road Agent – Road Updates and Snow Removal
- Roundtable
- Public Comment
- Non-Public Sessions
- Adjournment

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
- Dick Trask

Selectman absent:

- Cass Buckley

Members of the Public present, at various times:

- Greg Bolduc, Fire Chief
- Myrick Bunker, Building Inspector
- Susan Rand King, President of Granite State Telephone
- Rich LeBlanc, Spring Hill Farm Trustee
- Chuck Myette, Conservation Commission Chair/Spring Hill Farm Trustee
- Michael Oleson, Road Agent
- Sean Purcell, Granite State Telephone Network Operations Manager
- Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
- Joanne Smith, Finance Director
- Jay Sweet, Spring Hill Farm Tenant
- Brad Wamsley, Spring Hill Farm Trustee, Chair & Treasurer
- And others unknown to the Recording Secretary

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

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Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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1.4 Additions and Deletions

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A meeting with Building Inspector Myrick Bunker and two non-public sessions under reputation were added.

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1.5 Public Comment

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

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II. Old Business

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2.1 Approval of Minutes

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This subject was not addressed tonight. There is a sheet in the Selectmen’s Office on which Selectmen can note their approval of past minutes.

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III. New Business

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3.1 Building Inspector Myrick Bunker/Stevens Memorial Hall – Chimney RFP – Tony Amato

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Chairman Landau said that Mr. Amato is sick and will not be at tonight’s meeting.

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Mr. Bunker joined the Selectmen at the Meeting table at 7:09pm. Chairman Landau, upon a quick review of an Invitation to Bid for Stevens Memorial Hall chimney repair, asked Mr. Bunker if he would be willing to rewrite the Invitation to Bid. Mr. Bunker agreed to do this rewrite.

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Chairman Landau noted that there had been a change with Mr. Bunker’s position with the Town of Raymond, NH, in regards to the sharing of the Building Inspector position. He gave the Board an opportunity to ask Mr. Myrick questions. The Board agreed to extend Mr. Bunker’s hours to four days a week for six more hours.

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Selectman Hagan moved to extend Mr. Bunker’s work week to a fourth day per week for an additional six hours, Chairman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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The Board agreed to schedule Mr. Bunker to be put on the agenda for October 13th, 2016.

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Mr. Bunker departed the Meeting table at 7:15pm.

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3.2 Spring Hill Farm Budget

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Mr. Myette, Mr. Wamsley, and Mr. LeBlanc, Trustees from the Spring Hill Farm, joined the Selectman and Ms. Smith at the Meeting table at 7:16pm.

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Chairman Landau noted that there has been some discussion and concerns expressed about the budget, with the 501(c)(3) Charitable Trust moving forward, and about how the Spring Hill Farm (SHF) will operate in the future with the money collected from the rent now coming to the Town, not going back into the Trust.

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Mr. Wamsley asked the Board to explain what the proposal is to the Spring Hill Farm, how much money

is going back to the farm, how does the money come back to the farm and what they need to do.

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Ms. Smith explained she confirmed the following information with the auditors. She noted that it is up to the Board of Selectman to give Spring Hill Farm an offer; the money is coming here and if they choose to give SHF money back it will be an amount up to \$10,000 per year. She said the Board would need to vote at a Selectman’s meeting, they would need to approve the decision to give money to SHF in the minutes with a motion and an affirmative vote, and then the Board can write the SHF a check.

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Ms. Smith explained that the figure of \$10,000 is based on the amount of rent that is being brought in from by SHF, and that that money is required to be funneled through the general fund. She noted there is an additional \$3000.00 budget item for SHF for maintenance in the general government buildings, with \$200.00 of those funds having been spent.

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Ms. Smith continued to explain that any money going back from the general fund to SHF would be in the form of a check, and if done within the same fiscal year the revenue would not be recognized as revenue to the Town. She said if the money is not given back to SHF and kept by the Town, she has to report those funds to the Department of Revenue Administration as revenue to the Town; if the Town is not keeping the revenue and giving it back to SHF, Ms. Smith needs to know in order to prevent the collected funds from inflating the Town revenue and therefore affecting the tax rate.

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The Board, Ms. Smith and the SHF representatives discussed and debated how the SHF rent revenue would be handled. The debate covered many questions: Would the rent revenue stay as a line item in the budget or would a department be created called Spring Hill Farm? How would the SHF Trustees handle the general costs of operating the farm without access to the money? How would the SHF Trustees handle the many unexpected costs that can’t be budgeted for on a farm without access to the funds?

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Selectman Cannon said he wants the SHF to create a budget that they then use and submit at the beginning of the fiscal year. Mr. LeBlanc said that his understanding was that the money was being collected by the Town but was ear-marked for SHF. He said budgeting is difficult because you don’t know if you are even going to need to fertilize every year, or if the fence is going to need to be replaced that year. Selectman Cannon said that SHF needs to create budget lines for specific things that need to get done within that year. He explained that the rent revenue is not ear-marked for SHF and the rent revenue not used for the SHF budget lines remains in the Town’s budget.

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Chairman Landau explained that SHF when budgeting should list all their pieces of equipment, as other Departments do, with the amount budgeted that they think will be needed to maintain each piece of equipment, if the repairs go over the budget line then the Board of Selectman have to figure out how to handle the budget. He noted that the maintenance of the buildings is also the responsibility of the Town, the SHF only has to budget for farm operations. When asked by Mr. Wamsley what the SHF Board’s purpose is, Chairman Landau said they are to run the farm. Chairman Landau noted that now that they are a Charitable Trust, they can receive donations and apply for grants. Mr. Myette pointed out that those donations are not pouring in and that applying for a grant will also be difficult.

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Mr. Myette stated that what they are trying to decide is how best to do this process so that it meets the needs of the Town, meets the SHF’s needs of the Trust that is in place now, as well as retain the ability to purchase items that are unexpected without an ear-mark or budget line so they can still manage the farm with funds that are available.

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Mr. Wamsley presented the Board with spreadsheets he had created for the years 2013 – 2016 of the finances of the farm. He asked what happens with taxes when they are a Charitable Trust.

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Mr. Wamsley explained to the Board that there would need to be some unencumbered money that the

160 SHF would have access to for quick purchases.

162 The SHF tenant, Jay Sweet, came up to speak to the Board. He said that in the past it wasn’t clear who
164 maintained the buildings and the Trust had been spending a lot of the money to maintain the buildings.
166 Mr. Sweet noted that the house looks great, but, the barn will need a lot of work in the next couple of
168 years. He suggested that although it is a transition period right now, no rapid decision should be made
until a long term plan can be established. Mr. Sweet said everyone has been working hard to make the
farm better and that everyone should continue to work together.

The Board, SHF Trustees, and Mr. Sweet continued to debate whether the farm is a drain on taxpayers
or if the farm has saved the taxpayers \$300,000 a year. Mr. Myette said he hoped they could all work
together to do what is right with the farm.

Chairman Landau proposed they work out a plan, possibly creating a smaller committee made up of
Board Members, SHF Trustees, and Finance Director Smith, to work out ideas for the best way to handle
the budgeting and distribution of funds outside of the Board of Selectman’s meeting. He asked Ms.
Smith if she could get together with the SHF Trustees. She said yes.

The Spring Hill Farm Trustees and Mr. Jay Sweet departed the meeting at 8:08.

3.3 Susan Rand – Granite State Communications

Fire Chief Greg Bolduc, Susan Rand King, President of Granite State Telephone and Sean Purcell joined
the Selectmen at the Meeting table at 8:09pm. Ms. King presented a proposal for an updated telephone
system called a Hosted IP Telephone Service for the Town. She noted that the existing telephone
agreement, which was signed five years ago, expires in April of 2017, and that the telephones currently
used by the Town are at least 15 years old. Ms. King gave an overview of the history of the Granite
State Communications, as well as, an overview of the new system she is proposing. She explained that
there are many benefits to the new system, including flexibility, unlimited number of phones, call
waiting, call transfers to outside phones and a cost savings to the Town. Ms. King said it would take
about a month to get the new system installed.

Ms. King said she will put together a proposal for the Board that compares the current costs of the
Town’s telephone system and the cost of the Hosted IP Telephone Service. She is going to give a
proposal of the costs with the initial fixed costs for installation both rolled into monthly costs and a
proposal of the costs with the fixed costs broken out of the monthly charge.

Fire Chief Bolduc, Ms. King and Mr. Purcell departed the meeting at 8:35pm.

3.4 Mike Oleson, Road Agent – Road Updates and Snow Removal

Mr. Oleson joined the Selectman at the Meeting table at 8:35pm. He gave an update on various aspects
of the Road Agent work stating that:

- Pulpit Rock Road has had the wear course put on it. The shoulder leveling is done,
and the delineators are up and in the spring they will put the wear course on it. He
said then that road will be done and the road can then come off the CIP.
- He has mowed about 90% of the roads in Town and is done mowing for the season.
- Harantis Lake Road culvert was replaced.
- Much cutting of brush has been done for sight visibility.
- Complaints about the dirt roads, but, can’t grade because of lack of rain. He said they
have been just flattening out until they get some rain.
- Snow plowing – problem getting plow trucks lined up for the season. He said they
have enough trucks for a small storm but don’t have enough for a big storm. He is

214 considering buying a plow out of budget, which would then be a Town plow. He wants
215 to possibly increase the guarantee on the big trucks to possibly entice drivers. Mr.
216 Oleson noted he thinks that the Town should invest in their own heavy duty truck with
217 heavy duty equipment because there is such a shortage of plow drivers. He said
218 everywhere towns are short plow drivers. Chairman Landau suggested Mr. Oleson
219 come back to the Board with some figures on a vehicle. Selectman Hagan asked who
220 he thought they would be able to get for drivers. Mr. Oleson recommended using
Town employees or other Town residents.

222 **IV. Selectmen’s Business**

224 *4.1 Roundtable*

226 *Selectman Cannon:*

- 228 • Nothing to report.

230 *Selectman Trask:*

- 232 • Nothing to report.

234 *Selectman Hagan*

- 236 • Nothing to report.

238 *Chairman Landau:*

- 240 • He updated the Board on the status of a trailer at the Transfer Station, noting he had
242 received a phone call from the Transfer Station manager stating that the Transfer
Station wanted to keep possession of the trailer.
- 244 • Health Trust has a Public hearing notice that at 5:30pm on October 14, 2016, they will
246 have a discussion at 25 Triangle Park Drive, Concord, NH on plan updates and coverage
lines.

248 *4.2 Public Comment*

250 As no members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 8:52pm.

252 *4.3 Non-Public Session*

254 **Chairman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public sessions under RSA 91-A:3, II(c)
reputation, RSA 91-A:3, II(c) reputation, RSA 91-A:3, II(e) legal; Selectman Hagan
256 seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

258 The meeting room was closed at 8:52pm.

260 The meeting room was re-opened at 9:30pm.

262 **Chairman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Selectman Trask
seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

264 **Chairman Landau moved that the minutes to all non-public sessions during this meeting be
sealed indefinitely; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the**

266 **affirmative; so moved.**

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V. Adjournment

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Chairman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting; Selectman Trask seconded the motion.

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The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:41pm.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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C. Molly Qualters
Recording Secretary