

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Saturday, January 29, 2011
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

1.1 Call to Order

Vice Chairman Cannon called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 8:15 AM.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Jack Cannon
Michael Weider
Joe Castricone
Gene P. Charron

Selectmen absent:

Stephen O. Landau

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Angela Sherwood, Finance Director
Leroy Scott

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chairman Cannon led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. New Business

3.1 Budget Review and Discussion by the Board of Selectmen

Vice Chairman Cannon stated that the sole purpose of today's meeting is for a budget review. He proposed to the Board that they go through each budget and discuss if they have a desire to make adjustments. Vice Chairman Cannon hoped that the Board could keep discussions brief but expedient and as thorough as possible.

Finance Director Angela Sherwood provided spreadsheets from each department and some additional explanatory documentation from the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Assessing Department, Police Department, and General Buildings budgets.

Vice Chairman Cannon proposed starting from the top to the bottom as follows:

48

Executive – 01-4130-1

50

52 Discussion fell on “Contract Minutes” tracking to \$8,000 rather than the budgeted amount of
54 \$6,000. Pat Martin commented that the original intent of the “Salaries Minutes” line was to
56 include one of the minute takers who is now charged under “Contract Minutes.” The Selectmen
58 suggested reducing the “Salaries Minutes” line to \$2000 and increasing the “Contract Minutes”
to \$8000 to correct for actual charges.

56

01-4130-1-110 EX Contract – Minutes increased by \$2000 to \$8000.

58

01-4130-1-111 EX Salaries – Minutes reduced by \$1000 to \$2000.

60 This brings to the total Executive Budget to \$25,674.00.

Town Admin. – 01-4130-2

64 The “Grant Administration” appropriation has been used less than expected. The Board directed
66 that Erin be contacted to clarify if there are grants to be written for later on in the year. Also,
68 Selectman Weider stated that Planning Board should be charging back time spent on grants to the
“Grant Administration” line as well. The Board adjusted the line to \$8400.00 pending
clarification requested.

70 “Copier Lease” has shown increases in the costs and is adjusted to \$4500.00. Pat Martin will
bring backup to the Board for Thursday’s discussions.

72

74 “Postage” line is for the mailing of the Town Report. There had been discussion that the Report
76 would not be mailed this year which accounted for the reduced amount requested in the TA
78 budget. However, the Board is sending the Town Report out to the residences and leaving Post
Office box residents the opportunity to pick one up at the Post Office, thus saving some costs in
the postage. The “Postage” line is adjusted to \$1300 to account for anticipated increased postal
rates and mailing the Town Report to all Chester homes.

80 “Postage Meter Rental” has increased and the line is adjusted from \$1100 to \$1400.

82 “Town Report” line to be discussed on Thursday following obtaining of quotes from Printers.
84 Selectman Weider suggested that Pat Martin request a two-year contract rate as a possible
86 savings to the Town. The Board would like to get a quote for the same number of reports as we
printed last year.

86

01-4130-2-200 TA Grant Administration reduced by \$2600 to \$8400.

88

01-4130-2-431 TA Copier Lease adjusted to \$4500.

01-4130-2-625 TA Postage adjusted to \$1300.

90

01-4130-2-630 TA Postage Meter Rental adjusted to \$1400.

92 **Town Clerk – 01-4140-1**

94 Discussion with the Town Clerk yielded a request that an Assistant Clerk be added to help with
the additional duties and to fill the Deputy Clerk's position when unable to be present. Angela
96 Sherwood stated that the wish is for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector to have two people in the
office so that she is not alone when her office is open to the public. The Finance Director was
98 asked to provide information on the number of hours worked by the Deputy Clerk and current
Assistant. She looked up the current time sheets and there were 13-14 hours for the Deputy
100 Clerk and none for the Assistant. The Board asked Angie to sit with Barbara and see if the Town
can absorb some of the hours from the Deputy Clerk's line into the request for the Assistant.
102 With clarification, this discussion is to be continued on Thursday night.

104 Otherwise, the Board expressed confidence in the Town Clerk's figures and so there are no
adjustments pending further discussion on the salary lines.

106

Elections – 01-4140-2

108

No issues with presented budget.

110

Finance Admin. - 01-4150

112

Finance Director would like to add hours to the Accounting (Bookkeeper) line. Planning
114 Department anticipates Finance Department having increased work regarding impact fees and
Angie stated she would like to consolidate material orders (office supplies) to see if we can cut
116 some costs there. The Selectmen asked Angie to bring in a break down of the Bookkeeper's
activities to justify the request.

118

Selectman Charron commented that it should be noted that it is not for the Planning Department
120 to be making decisions about the anticipated increased activities of another department for the
purpose of budgeting; rather, this falls under the direction of the Selectmen.

122

Budget Committee – 01-4150-3

124

No adjustments.

126

Tax Collector – 01-4150-4

128

Same discussion as with Town Clerk budget regarding Salaries and request for Assistant Clerk
130 hours. This will be revisited on Thursday, 2/3/11.

132 **Treasurer – 01-4150-5; 01-4150-6**

134 No adjustments.

136

138 **Assessor – 01-4152-2**

140 Salaries and added line “AS Educational Increase” to be part of the overall compensation
discussion.

142

Legal – 01-4153-1-320

144

146 The Selectmen adjusted this line to \$55,000 taking note that they had lowered this line two years
ago and while the Town has been lucky that there has been no major litigation, they overspent
the line the year before and it looks like we are going to overspend this year. Therefore, the line
148 was adjusted to bring it back to \$55,000.

150 **Benefits**

152 The Selectmen requested that the Finance Director supply information for the budget request
based upon the current information so they can get a current view of the figures. A general
154 discussion ensued regarding the figures for this year and how the Selectmen did not ask the
employees to absorb the increase in the health insurance rates. In the budget request for next
156 year, the projected increase of benefits for next year should be shown so that the Board has a
check on what to expect and the budget is not “underwater.”

158

160 Selectman Charron updated the Board on what is going on in Concord regarding Group I and
Group II benefits and Vice Chairman Cannon requested that Angie add a line in anticipation of
going to the other insurance company. Selectman Weider asked that the deductibles be built into
162 the health line.

164 **Planning – 01-4191**

166 The additional request is removed for general discussion on compensation. Budget total is at
\$45,814.

168

Zoning – 01-4193

170

No adjustments.

172

Buildings – 01-4194

174

176 The GB Maintenance Supervisor should be zeroed out since that position is no longer in
existence and it should no longer be funded. Finance Director Sherwood reported that they were
still allocating a portion of that line to maintenance personnel. The Selectmen do not want
178 allocations to one employee to be split by two lines. Selectman Castricone stated that he would
like to bring the Salary Maintenance up to full-time. A discussion about what benefits would
180 have to be added by moving a position from part-time to full-time ensued. Finance Director
stated that NH Retirement is at 6%. Selectman Weider stated that he believed the Town gets
182 more value out of 2 part-time positions versus full-time. Vice Chairman Cannon stated that in
the summer, the Town could hire a college or high-school student for added help. Selectman

184 Weider commented that he liked that suggestion and asked Selectman Castricone to provide what
the Town is going to get out of it if the position was changed to full-time.

186

The GB Repairs & Maintenance budget was discussed and Selectman Castricone stated that they
188 were getting ready for upgrading the alarm system, to bid for the wall, finish the MPR for use as
an emergency shelter, and getting estimates for preventative maintenance of the boilers and
190 electrical, the PD hot water tank, removal of the highway tank, Post Office painting, and the
MPR doors (replacement cost \$16,000). Selectman Castricone said that he would bring a list for
192 Thursday's Meeting.

194 For the preventative maintenance for the boilers, the Board asked for a 2-3 year maintenance
contract quote.

196

Selectman Castricone will determine which projects are coming out of this year's budget and
198 what ones are to go into next year's request. Backup data is needed as well.

200 Pat Martin reported that for this Spring we have an agreement to do some maintenance work at
the Post Office. The signed agreement is in the Selectmen's office with a copy to Maintenance
202 for the work the Town has agreed to do.

204 Vice Chairman Cannon stated that he was pleased with the maintenance/restoration work that has
been completed at Stevens Hall; but he reminded the Board that in the Spring thaw, we had a
206 large pieces of paint fall off the outside front of the building. He is bringing this up now for us to
take heed that this might happen again this Spring so that the Town would have to be on top of
208 that. The question was raised as to whether the original contractor was responsible for the paint
falling off. In any event, the "GB Repairs & Main (Steven's)" line was raised from \$4000 to
210 \$5000 to anticipate the cost of paint and primer for touch up work if needed.

212 Vice Chairman Cannon asked if there were any other maintenance issues for Stevens Hall. It
was discussed that the kitchen could use some repairs; and Pat Martin added that the Town has
214 architectural plans for the restoration of the front porch. Selectman Castricone will take a look at
the plans for a future discussion.

216

"01-4194-1-650 - GB Groundskeeping" is deferred for discussion with the Chair present next
218 Thursday, 2/3/11.

220 Under "GB Furniture and Fixtures," Pat Martin asked if two fire-proof file cabinets could be
considered as she is concerned about some of the records in the Selectmen's office. It was
222 estimated that a used fire-proof cabinet would cost about \$750.00. The "01-4194-1-750 GB
Furniture and Fixtures" budget request was increased by \$1500 to \$2100. Backup data will be
224 provided.

226 The "GB Wason Pond Dam Inspections" budget amount is requested at \$1.00. It is believed that
an \$800 inspection fee may be needed. Chairman Landau may speak as to why the line is at
228 \$1.00.

230 **Stevens Hall – 01-4194-2**

232 “01-4194-2-411 STVNS Heat/Oil/Propane” adjusted to \$6500 from \$7000.

234 **Cemetery – 01-4195-1**

236 Deferred to Thursday, 2/3/11 Meeting.

238 **Insurance – 01-4196-1**

240 Deferred.

242 **AD – 01-4197-1**

244 No adjustments

246 **Police Dept. – 01-4120**

248 Salaries to be reviewed pending an analysis of overtime and to take a view at what we think we
250 need including part-time and full-time staff. On the overtime analysis brought forth at this
252 Meeting for discussion, Finance Director Sherwood offered that the figures for previous years
254 were skewed because of how the data was entered as ½ instead of 1-1/2. A discussion about
vacation time that is not taken and how it is going into earned time is to be revisited. It is
becoming an unfunded liability.

256 Selectman Weider voiced that vacation time was meant for the employee to have time off, to get
258 out of the work environment and to come back refreshed. Selectman Charron added that the
business of police work is tough enough to begin with; thus, he agrees that vacation time is
needed to be taken.

260 In regards to the part-time staff, the Board would like to see a certain amount of expectation of
262 how many hours a month worked for the position and to be continued as a part-time officer in
Town. If not, do we need part-time officers in the department or full-time? The intent for having
part-time staff is to eliminate or reduce the need for overtime.

264 The Board would like to have a discussion with the Police Department as to what are the policies
266 for Part-time staff and the requirements of part-time staff. The Board asked the Finance Director
to meet with the Police Chief and do an analysis for Thursday’s meeting.

268 **Ambulance – 01-4215-1-350**

270 No adjustment – The Town of Chester has a contract with the Town of Derry.

272 **Fire Dept. – 01-4220**

274 The Salaries are to be discussed following an analysis by the Finance Director and the Fire

276 Chief.

278 “FD Electricity” has a substantial increase in the requested amount. Backup is requested for the
280 “01-4220-1-410 FD Electricity line.”

Forest Fire – 01-4221

282 No adjustments.

284 In general, the Board would like to see a backup file so that the justifications for the requests are
286 based upon the actual figures. Selectman Weider stated that the budget requests are to truly
288 reflect costs as either anticipated or actual, if known. Finance Director is to provide a book with
all the backup data on the budgets.

Building Inspector – 01-4240

292 Selectman Weider will be bringing in data for this budget on Thursday, 2/3/11.

Emergency – 01-4290-1-430

296 No adjustment.

Highway – 01-4312

300 The “01-4312-1-109 HSB Road Agent” stipend increase request was discussed that the Road
302 Agent stipend was not for an elected party to increase but for the townspeople to decide. The
discussions on compensation, again, would be discussed at a later date.

304 The large increase in the “HSB telephone” line was questioned and the Finance Director
explained that the increase is for the addition of the Internet at the Highway Garage.

306 The “HSB Plowing” line was discussed and decided that the Board would leave the line at
308 \$180,000 as requested believing that it was budgeted for a normal, contractual increase.
310 Selectman Weider pointed out the Budget Committee would be looking at a 10-year average and
adjust for inflation.

312 The “HSB Salt” line was questioned as well as the “HSB Asphalt” line in that the Board would
like to have some discussion about the lines; perhaps, they should be higher. The “HSB Asphalt”
314 line was increased to 100,000 given the deteriorating conditions of the roads and the lack of the
Bond Article for the much needed road repairs not passing at Town Meeting last year.

316 “HSB Hired Equipment” was brought back to the \$40,000 level from the request of \$45,000.

318 The analysis of bond payments versus a lease agreement or purchase is to be provided by the
320 Finance Director.

322 **Street Lighting – 01-4316-3-410**

324 No Adjustment.

326 **Transfer Station – 01-4324**

328 Majority deferred to Thursday, 2/3/11. Directed that the TS Illegal Dumping line be moved to the Executive budget as it is not an expense of the Transfer Station.

330

Landfill – 01-4325-1

332

No adjustment.

334

Animal Control

336

Adjust to \$1.00 from \$1000 requested.

338

WR Other Health Agencies – 01-4419-1

340

No adjustment.

342

GA General Assistance – 01-4442-1

344

No adjustment.

346

Welfare Intergovernmental - 01-4444-1

348

No adjustment.

350

Recreation – 01-4520-1

352

354 Selectman Weider questioned the \$15,000 in the “Rec Summer Wages” line. He stated that the intent was for the Recreation programs be able to pay for themselves and the Town would subsidize the children, not the wages paid to the summer staff. The intent was for the Town to be providing a grant to the children who were unable to afford the program and not the other way around. He suggested that the liaison attend a Recreation Meeting to discuss this. Since the Chair is the liaison to Rec., further discussion was deferred following the recommendation that the summer wages line be reduced to \$10,000 with the idea that the program fee would be raised instead.

362 The “REC Electricity” line needs backup data as to why it was increased so much.

364 **Wason Pond – 01-4530-1**

366 No adjustments.

368 **Caretaker Cottage – 01-4535-1**

370 No adjustments.

372 **Bath House – 01-4540-1**

374 No adjustments.

376 **WPAC – 01-4541-1**

378 No adjustments.

380 **Library – 01-4550-1**

382 No adjustments. A loss of funds has been realized due to the Trust Fund not doing as well as anticipated. The Library is operating well and the increase is to compensate for the loss of monies coming in from the Fund.
384

386 **Patriotic – 01-4583-1**

388 No adjustment.

390 **Historical Society – 01-4584-1**

392 Based upon the actuals, the Selectmen adjusted the “HS Telephone” line up to \$250.00.

394 **CTV 21 – 01-4585-1**

396 No adjustments.

398 **Chester Senior Citizens – 01-4586-1**

400 No adjustment.

402 **Town Fair Fireworks – 01-4587-1**

404 The \$200 shortfall from the actual expense is due to an expected \$200 donation. No adjustment.

406 **Conservation – 01-4610-1**

408 No adjustments.

410 **Loan Principals – 01-4711-1 & Interest – 01-4721-1**

412 Road Bond ends in 2014, Conservation 2012, Rescue Truck 2014. The Board asked Angie to put together a schedule for further discussion.

414
416 Following the review of the budgets, Finance Director announced that she had some “bad news”
418 regarding the Town’s rating with Moody. She said that they removed the Town in June 2009 and
a new rating is required with a \$5600 fee. The Board directed Angie to get copies of the letters
they said they sent us in 2009 so that we could determine why the rating was dropped.

420 **Adjournment:**

422 There being no further business, Selectman Weider motioned to adjourn. Selectman Castricone
424 seconded the motion, vote was unanimous with Chairman Landau absent. Meeting adjourned at
10:45 AM.

426 Respectfully Submitted,

428
430 Patricia Martin, Recording Secretary
& BOS Administrative Assistant