

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, December 29th, 2011
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Landau called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:10pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Jack Cannon

Joe Castricone

Stephen Landau

Michael Weider (arrived at 7:33pm)

Selectmen absent:

Joseph Hagan

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Richard Antoine, Fire Chief

Andy Higham

Michael Oleson, Road Agent

Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times

Leroy Scott

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

The following additions were made: one non-public session on Public Employees and one non-public session on Pending Litigation.

1.6 Public Comment

Leroy Scott stood and was recognized. He stated that it appears that a dry hydrant has been installed at Wason Pond, and recommended that "No Parking" signs be installed in front of it.

As no other members of the public wished to speak, Public Comment was closed at 7:12pm.

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II. Old Business

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2.1 Approval of Minutes, 12/15/2011

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December 15th, 2011: Selectman Weider moved that these minutes be approved as drafted; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; so moved.

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III. New Business

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3.1 Budgets

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3.1.1 Highway

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Road Agent Oleson was available to discuss these figures with the Board.

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01-4312-1-109, HSB Road Agent: Road Agent Oleson has increased this line, as he is currently overspent on the current year's line, and the year is not yet half over.

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01-4312-1-114, HSB Contracted Services: This line has been doubled, due to grants.

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01-4312-1-660, HSB Equip Repair & Maint: This line has been reduced to \$7500.

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01-4312-1-905, HSB Salt: This line has been raised by \$2k; the Town picked up another road last year, and two more are expected this year. Salt is expected to cost ~\$56/ton.

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01-4312-1-913, HSB Hired Equipment: This line has been raised, as the Town will need to hire a loader this year.

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01-4312-1-915, HSB Cold Patch: This line has been raised based on actual use.

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Overall, the highway budget has increased ~\$28k, which is 5%.

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Road Agent Oleson plans to ask for a \$6m Road Bond. Most of the planned roadwork is the same as in last year's Special Warrant Article #8, which failed to pass by one vote. No major road work has been done in 5 years, there are roads from the last road bond that were never finished, and many roads need to be re-engineered. Vice-Chairman Cannon asked how many miles of road are in Road Agent Oleson's plan; he will research and return with this answer. Road Agent Oleson stated that he realized that this was expensive, but that it was necessary to put money into the roads.

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Chairman Landau suggested asking for a larger, longer term bond, stating that the roads are Chester's largest infrastructure, and something that every resident uses on a daily basis. Road Agent Oleson has only chosen high-priority roads, but there are others that also need work. He suggested perhaps \$10-12m, and perhaps a 20-year bond to correspond with expected road life,

94 stating that his own road, for example, wasn't paved for 40 years after it was originally built.
Chairman Landau also noted that the beauty of a bond is that future residents will share in the cost
96 as well as the benefits of the roadwork. Chester has 63 miles of roads; Vice-Chairman Cannon
stated that the roads cannot be worked on in small increments, or they will never be caught up.
Road Agent Oleson also noted that most of the 'bad' roads are located in wet areas; DES will likely
98 need to be involved.

100 Insofar as funding was concerned, Selectman Weider pointed out that the Town would be saving
\$300k next year due to the \$3m Conservation easement payment expiring, although the Wason
102 Pond Dam and the rescue truck had been added. He also mentioned municipalities that borrowed
against their own Trust Fund, although Chester's Trust Fund of ~\$1m is insufficient for those
104 purposes. Vice-Chairman Cannon suggested that Finance Director Smith be asked to model a \$6m
and \$10m bond at 10 and 15 years. Selectman Weider suggested asking the school what large
106 purchases they had planned for the near future. It was noted that their rooftop HVAC units would
need replacing soon. Chairman Landau stated that the school was not yet paid off, and yet those
108 units would need replacing; apparently they had been installed open to the weather, as it was less
expensive. This was penny wise and pound foolish, and should not be repeated with the roads.

110 Selectman Castricone asked if the Warrant Article could be worded to ensure that, if Road Agent
112 Oleson was not re-elected, his plan would still be carried out; it can, and this is the responsibility of
the Board of Selectmen.

114 Road Agent Oleson also expects to write a Warrant Article for new equipment - either a loader or a
116 backhoe, preferably new over used, and one for Fremont Road culvert replacement. Money for
other culvert repairs will be added to the budget.

118 There was some discussion about installing a second gas/diesel tank for the Highway Department to
120 use. Road Agent Oleson reported that the Highway Department used about \$10k worth of fuel on
an annual basis; having his own tank would allow the Town to save money on taxes. It would also save
122 the Town from paying a fuel supplement to plowers. They would come on duty with full tanks, and
fill up during the storm event with the Town's fuel; they would then leave with full tanks. Road
124 Agent Oleson demurred, stating that he believes this is illegal. The State does not allow this,
although Selectman Weider noted that many municipalities do. It was agreed that this is a grey
126 area, and Chairman Landau suggested getting an opinion from Town Counsel.

128 Road Agent Oleson departed the meeting table at 7:36pm.

130 *3.1.2 Ambulance*

3.1.3 Fire

132 *3.1.4 Forest Fire*

134 Fire Chief Antoine was available to discuss these figures with the Board. He noted, pursuant to Mr.
Scott's public comment, that he had already requested that "No Parking" signs be installed at the
136 dry hydrant at Wason Pond.

138 The Fire Department budget has been kept as flat as possible, with only minor changes up or down.

140 01-4215-1-350, AM Contract Med Serv: This increase is contractual.

142 01-4220-6-660, FD Vehicle Maintenance and 01-4220-6-661, FD Vehicle Repair: Selectman Weider
144 asked why these lines had remained flat; since the Town now owned two new vehicles under
warranty, and had disposed of the oldest ones, he believed it should have gone down. Fire Chief
Antoine stated that these number were based on actuals.

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01-4220-1-138, FIRE Grant Admin: This line was zeroed out, as the Board of Selectmen have taken
148 it over.

150 01-4220-1-635, FD Gas & Diesel: Selectman Weider asked why these lines were flat, considering
that they were overspent every year.

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Chairman Landau asked Fire Chief Antoine about bulk buying; they are doing this.

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Fire Chief Antoine has no planned Warrant Articles; equipment, overall, is in great shape.

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This year's grant went to buy a skid unit for the gator.

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There was some discussion about the Edwards Mill Dam. Fire Chief Antoine reported that he had
160 researched the automatic valve discussed at a previous meeting, and found it to be quite pricey.
However, Chuck Myette had suggested a more reasonably priced work-around. There are two valves
162 in the dam, one 18" which is newer and easy to operate, and one 24" which is older and more
difficult to operate. Mr. Myette's suggestion involved opening the 24" valve, and installing a flange
164 and pipe, with the open end of the pipe at the desired level of the pond. Therefore, as the water
rose above the desired level, it would go into the pipe and out of the valve. Selectman Castricone
166 had two suggestions: one, have a screen and sleeve on the pipe so that it would not clog and the
desired level of the pond could be adjusted at will, and two, use the 18" valve for the flange and
168 pipe, leaving the 24" valve available in case an emergency fast water dump was necessary.

170 Chairman Landau stated that while looking at the cribbing, it was noted that there is some leakage
at the bottom of the dam. Dam Engineer Chuck Corliss suggested that the cribbing should be
172 removed and the stone walls cemented. Vice-Chairman Cannon estimated that the work would cost
between \$25k - \$50k at the most; Selectman Weider would prefer that it be included in the
174 budget rather than in a Warrant Article. Fire Chief Antoine would prefer not to drain the pond
down to do the work now, as it was unlikely to refill in a timely fashion. Shawn Patenaude will need
176 to be consulted; DES might need to be involved. Chairman Landau stated that DES had already
approved the work.

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Road Agent Oleson stood and was recognized. He stated that the cribbing had been built in his
180 shop many years ago, after former Fire Chief Red Dolloff had discovered a 'blister' at the base of
the dam; the original plan had been that the cribbing would be installed and cement poured around
182 it, but there was not enough money, and the plan had been put on hold.

184 Fire Chief Antoine departed the meeting at 8:18pm.

186 *3.1.5 Fireworks*

188 01-4587-1-100, Town Fair Fireworks: Nothing has been submitted, and there are no changes. This
190 line remains at \$6,800.

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3.1.6 Animal Control

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This budget will be discussed in conjunction with the Police Department budget.

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IV. Selectmen's Business

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4.1 Roundtable

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Vice-Chairman Cannon

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- The Comcast contract is due to renew in 2013. He is unsure of how long the negotiation period is, and it includes public hearings; should the Board contact Comcast now? Chairman Landau stated that PACT usually handled the Comcast situation, but Vice-Chairman Cannon was under the impression that Hilary Hall had turned it over to the Board. Selectman Castricone will contact Ms. Hall.

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Selectman Weider:

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- He telephoned Coppola-Rockburn to ask about a multi-year contract; they will get back to him.
- Town Counsel Diane Gorrow looked at the Fred C Church service agreement and made some small changes on termination compensation. He has an additional change; the health insurance percentage is listed as 10%, and he believes it should be 3%. It is still unknown what the salary survey would cost. Nothing has been awarded to either broker as of yet.
- He and Finance Director Smith are working on budgets, and will send electronic copies to all Selectmen.
- The audit is currently taking place.
- The Town has received a letter from Wadleigh-Starr which referenced the December 8th Supreme Court opinion that a session in which a Board reviews written advice from counsel cannot be made non-public unless counsel themselves are present.
- Primary Elections will be on January 10th, 2012. All Selectmen have volunteered to man the polls at various times during the day.

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Selectman Castricone:

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- The new Maintenance person has provided a copy of his log, and is getting much done. There are trees over the propane tanks which must be removed; a tree removal service has been contacted. Selectman Weider would prefer that they be trimmed rather than removed. Chairman Landau asked that it be confirmed that all trees were on Town property; he would also like the abutter to be notified.
- Some trees in front of the Municipal Complex were removed for safety reasons. This was done by the Highway Department. Something else more suitably sized will be planted there; a landscape architect will make suggestions.

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232 *Chairman Landau:*

- 234 ● The Town has received donations: an anonymous one for \$500 for the clothes closet, and \$1000 from Granite State Telephone for the food pantry. Selectman Weider recommended that thank-you notes be sent where possible.
- 236 ● Chester will be hosting the Area Selectmen's meeting on February 16th, 2012 at 7pm at Stevens Hall. Some additional topics suggested by the Board were fuel assistance and education funding.
- 238 ● The Town has received a letter from Town Counsel Diane Gorrow about restoration of involuntary merged lots. This will have to be noticed; Vice-Chairman Cannon suggested posting the second page of Town Counsel Gorrow's letter. Selectman Weider pointed out that this issue was a result of last year's Town Meeting Article #3.
- 240 ● Online Election Training is available. All members of the Board except for Selectmen Hagan
- 242 have already taken this training, which is actually geared towards ballot counters.
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246 *4.2 Public Comment*

248 As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 8:55pm.

250 *4.3 Non-Public Session*

252 Chairman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91A:3 II (a), Public Employees, and RSA 91A:3 II (e), Pending Litigation; Vice-Chairman Cannon seconded the motion.

254 The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; so moved.

256 The meeting room was closed at 8:56pm.

258 The meeting room was reopened at 9:15pm.

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

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Chairman Landau moved that the minutes to each non-public session be sealed for an indefinite period; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; so moved.

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V. Adjournment

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

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272 The meeting was adjourned at 9:17pm.

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Respectfully Submitted,

276 Debra H. Doda