

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday February 3rd, 2011
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Landau called the meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:18pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Chairman Stephen Landau
Jack Cannon
Gene Charron
Michael Weider

Absent:

Joe Castricone

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Geoffrey Barnett
Police Chief Burke
Steve Child
Aaron Mansur
Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
Carolyn Scott
Leroy Scott
Angie Sherwood - Town Finance Director

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Meeting Additions or Deletions - Chairman Landau added two non-public discussions relating to legal matters with the Town; depending on the time, there may be an additional non-public discussion regarding employee compensation.

7:21pm

1.5 Public Comment - none.

48 **II New Business**

50 **2.1 Review of the proposed Town budget for 2011/12**

Attending - Town Finance Director: Angie Sherwood

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The BOS reviewed certain areas in the proposed budget with input from Ms. Sherwood.

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56 • Town Administration: Ms. Martin provided the backup documentation to recommend a
58 reduction in the postage rental line from \$1400 - \$1175. Ms. Sherwood will do a cost
60 analysis on other postage machine vendors for the BOS. Grant Administration: this line
62 in the TA budget is for all the grant administration for the Town and Fire department.
64 Ms. Sherwood stated that having all the grant administration in one line means it is hard
66 to track the activity of the grant writing staff for the different departments.
Additional hours were not approved in the 2010/11 Fire department budget however the
68 Fire department administrative line has been overspent with the thought that the
70 money will come from the TA grant administration line. The Town has been having more
72 success being awarded grants but it is not okay for the Fire department to overspend a
74 budget line that was not approved at that amount.

66 • Town Clerk / Tax Collector: Ms. Sherwood provided the backup letter from the Town
68 Clerk explaining the need for an assistant clerk during the open office hours. The
70 assistant clerk would mean an additional \$2665 in the Town Clerk and the Tax
72 Collectors budget = \$5200 more per year. Selectman Charron thinks it is important for
74 these two departments to have someone who is trained to cover when the regular staff
76 are sick or on vacation. Selectman Weider understood from the BOS' meeting with the
Town Clerk (Ms. Gagnon) that the hours would increase with the addition of the third
78 position however the salary line would not be increased (1 hour of the Deputy Town
Clerk = 1.5 hours for an assistant clerk; hence more hours for the same hourly rate).
The idea is to keep as many of the Town department budgets flat this year. The BOS
80 decided to have the Town Clerk back in to explain the changes.

78 • Finance Department: Ms. Sherwood explained her request for additional hours for the
80 bookkeeper (increasing from 24 to 30 hours per week) which is an additional \$5616 per
year. Selectman Weider stated that the whole BOS needs to be present to discuss any
82 salary changes.

82 • GGB: the BOS decided to skip this department tonight because Selectman Castricone
(the department liaison) was absent.

84 • Cemetery Grounds Keeping:

Attending - Cemetery Trustees: Steve Child, Geoffrey Barnett & Aaron Mansur

86 The BOS and Cemetery trustees discussed their proposal for the cemetery grounds
88 keeping; the trustees have based it on as much information that they can gather from
the bills submitted over the last couple of years. The proposal includes 32 hours per
90 week of mowing for 40 weeks of the year at an estimated cost of \$24K. This would
include the fuel, equipment (blades, trimmer wire) and repairs to the cemetery
92 equipment as needed. Selectman Weider stated that last year, the grounds keeping cost
for the Town was \$15K; it was completed using the Town's equipment by the Building
Maintenance employees. Mr. Mansur stated that their proposal included bark mulch, leaf

removal etc. The cemetery salaries would increase to \$11,250 which would be for 32 hours per week at \$11 per hour. If the Town mower breaks, then the cemetery grounds keeping staff could cover the Town grounds keeping during that time. The BOS decided that they could not justify the \$24K for the cemetery grounds keeping however they appreciated the trustees' efforts in compiling the information. Ms. Sherwood is planning to track these costs closely next year so that the BOS can get transparency on the actual cost of this area in the budget. Selectman Charron stated that the budgeting process is extremely hard and the BOS faces many upwards pressures; the BOS knows what they can do and what they would like to do for the Town.

- Police Department:

Attending: Chief Burke

Selectman Weider asked the Chief if \$13K in the overtime salary line is going to be enough to cover 6 full-time police officers during training, court time and sick / vacation days. Chief Burke believes that based on the historical data \$13K should just about cover the overtime line for 2011/12. There are 2270 hours per year that need to be covered by the seven part-time officers which means 324 hours per year for each part-time officer; this equates to one weekend per month and 2 weekly shifts per week. Vice-Chairman Cannon asked Chief Burke if the department has a policy that holds the part-time officers to these weekly and monthly commitments. Chief Burke stated that most of the part-time police officers have full-time jobs and family commitments so it is hard to pin them down for specific time commitments to the Chester PD. The part-time officers help alleviate the need for the overtime salary line as long as they pull their weight in shifts for the Chester PD. Selectman Weider stated that the full-time police officers need to get their rest otherwise giving them additional hours (at the overtime rate) means they are getting burnt out and tiredness is not good in this profession. Chief Burke will look at the overtime figures again with Ms. Sherwood and check that \$13K is going to be enough coverage for the overtime salaries. The BOS would like to see the part-time officers used to their full capacity.

Chief Burke stated that the PD was planning to have another CIP warrant article for 50% of the cost of a police cruiser. Ford is ending the production of the Crown Victoria police cruiser with a March 1st deadline for the new orders to be completed by August 2011. Chief Burke would like to have the option of another Crown Victoria before production ends and he has spoken with Hillsboro Ford and they will accept a letter of intent to purchase the vehicle (based on the CIP warrant article being passed) and therefore they will order the car for production based on this letter. This vehicle will replace the 2005 police cruiser; last year's new cruiser will become the primary cruiser and the 2009 cruiser will be the secondary cruiser (to keep the mileage down.) Selectman Weider advised Chief Burke about the BOS review of master lease agreements which would replace the CIP plan for Town vehicles. The BOS needs details on the current vehicle fleet from each of the relevant departments so that the cost of the master lease agreement can be calculated for comparison to the current CIP plan and maintenance costs etc.

Chief Burke passed around a draft letter of intent to Hillsboro Ford for the Crown Victoria purchase based on the contingency that the warrant article passes; the letter was approved as written by the BOS; it will be prepared on Town letterhead and mailed out ASAP.

- 140 • **Fire Department:**
142 The BOS requested a comprehensive analysis of the Fire department salary lines which
144 they received from the Chief Antoine. Vice-Chairman Cannon stated that he would like
146 time to review the documentation prior to any recommendations. The BOS discussed the
148 lack of a master plan for the Fire department vehicle replacement; the Town is in the
150 running for a new fire engine through a grant program. Some of the additional costs in
152 the proposed Fire department budget include the annual rental of a storage shed and
154 additional costs for an additional dispatcher (as stated in the ambulance contract
156 between Derry and Chester). Chairman Landau advised the BOS that the Chester Fire
158 Association has picked up the sponsorship of the Chester Scouts at no cost to the Town.
160 Selectman Weider asked Ms. Sherwood how the Fire department revenues were going;
162 they are estimated at \$10K.
- 164 • **Building Inspector:** the new building inspector has requested a cell phone at \$200 /
166 year for use in the field on Town business.
- 168 • **Transfer Station:** Chairman Landau advised the BOS that there has been some snow
170 getting in to the transfer station therefore plywood has been purchased and added to
172 prevent this happening at a cost of \$1500 from the current year's budget.
- 174 • **Highway Department:** The BOS advised the road agent that they were not in favor of
176 the road agent stipend increasing.
- 178 • **Benefits:** this line has been prepared using existing salaries and LGC health insurance
180 plan; NH retirement has increased from 11 - 16% depending on the Town department.
182 Ms. Sherwood gave the BOS a handout on the benefits for their review.
184 The BOS discussed the health insurance options; Chairman Landau stated that LGC has
never been approached by MVP to become a health care plan option for municipalities.
LGC is passing along a \$66K increase in the cost of health insurance for the Town's
employees in 2011/12; (this increase does include two additional employees added in the
last fiscal year). Sometimes covering part-time employees can reduce the rate for the
Town however that is not an option for Chester. The BOS discussed the option of a
consultant performing the analysis on health insurance plans because it is so in-depth
and involved and confusing to do it yourself. The BOS discussed whether they could
carry a half year with LGC until an analysis is complete. The consultant could bring the
BOS options to meet the coverage needs that the Town employees require.
- **Revenues:** Ms. Sherwood stated that the anticipated revenues are lower than the actual
revenues for 2010/11 because the revenues from motor vehicle registrations, dog
licenses and building permits are up. Selectman Charron stated that NH has a deficit of
\$800 million; hence Towns have to practice frugality and not rely on the State funding.

The next meeting of the BOS will be on Thursday February 10th at 7pm.

III Selectmen's Business:

3.1 Round Table

Vice-Chairman Cannon

- Vice-Chairman Cannon added one more non-public discussion relating to reputation.

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- Vice-Chairman Cannon stated that the Town dump truck is in for another repair to the sanding mechanism. Mr. Oleson (the road agent) advised Vice-Chairman Cannon that a stainless steel insert can be purchased for the truck bed which can be transferred to a different vehicle which would eliminate the need to repair the sanding mechanism. Mr. Oleson believes he can fund the insert from this year's budget (at an estimated cost of \$8K); however he needs the BOS approval because it would be outside of the Town's bid policy for equipment purchases. Selectman Charron stated that the Town cannot be without a sander in the current weather conditions. The BOS decided that if the repair of the existing sander is going to cost over \$2500 then it is time for the new insert to be purchased; this purchase can be made from the current budget not from the Winter Road Maintenance Fund.

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Selectman Weider:

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- Selectman Weider advised the BOS that he is meeting with the assessor next week regarding the revaluation. Then Mr. Marsh will be scheduled for a BOS meeting in a non-public discussion. Selectman Weider spoke with Ms. Packard in the Assessing department regarding the MRI oversight program - the time period needs to be changed on the specification then the warrant article can be put forward to counsel for review and then submitted for the BOS to review.
 - Mr. Roy, the new building inspector, needs some assistance with reviewing correspondence between previous BI and residents. He would like to follow up on violation notices that are outstanding. The BI has two meetings scheduled with Town counsel; the transition assistance from MRI has now finished for the BI.

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Chairman Landau:

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- Chairman Landau referenced a letter from the Fire Chief to the Town Maintenance department advising them that the flat roof on the Town offices could be compromised with the weight of snow on it and that it needs to be cleared. Chairman Landau stated that there is a big area to clear on the offices and the MPR room which may not be done before the next snow arrives on Saturday however he will work with the maintenance department and advise Selectman Castricone (as the GGB liaison) to get help for this project. The Fire Chief can provide a ladder and safety harnesses for the staff involved. Vice-Chairman Cannon asked Chairman Landau to check with LGC to make sure any seasonal workers (used from the Transfer Station) are covered by workers compensation / liability insurance if they do this work on the roof. Vice-Chairman Cannon asked that there be at least two individuals working on this project at one time - for safety reasons.
 - Chairman Landau asked the BOS for their input on the bid for the website update; the BOS has no issue with this bid.
 - Chairman Landau asked the BOS for their input on the price for two fire proof file cabinets for the Town offices; the BOS has no issue with this bid.

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3.2 Public Comment - none.

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9:40pm

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236 Chairman Landau moved that the Board go into a Non-Public session under RSA 91-A: II, (e).
236 pending or threatening litigation against the Town and RSA 91-A: III (c) reputation. Selectman
236 Weider seconded the motion. The roll call was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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10:15pm

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242 Selectman Charron moved that the Board come out from their Non-Public session. Selectman
242 Weider seconded. The roll call was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

244 Selectman Weider moved that all the non-public meeting minutes be sealed indefinitely. Chairman
244 Landau seconded. The roll call was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

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IV Adjournment

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250 Chairman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:17pm Selectman Weider seconded. The vote
250 was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

252 Respectfully Submitted,
252 Sarah Scanlan

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