

**Town of Chester  
Official Town Election  
May 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The Town of Chester election for officers and zoning amendments was held on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to act on Articles #1 through #6. The election was held at the Chester Multi-Purpose Room. The polls were opened at 7:00am. Moderator Michael Scott officially closed the polls at 7:00pm.

After the ballots were counted, the Meeting continued on Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 9:00am in the Chester Academy Parking Lot. Article #7 through #30 were taken up at that time. One hundred and forty-five voters were present.

The Moderator called the meeting to order at 9:00am and read the preamble. The Pledge of Allegiance was taken, and the Moderator explained the procedure for voting.

A motion was made to forego a second reading of the Articles in their entirety before voting; this motion was seconded. The vote was in the affirmative; **Warrant Articles will only be read once.**

Moderator Scott announced the results of Articles #1 through #6:

**Article #1:** To choose all necessary Town Officials for the ensuing year.

568 ballots were cast. The results of the election were as follows:

Board of Selectmen for 3 years:

(Vote for not more than 2)

Stephen O. Landau	-	285	*
Steven M. Couture	-	377	*
Michael D'Angelo	-	117	
Travis Grimm	-	210	

Road Agent for 2 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

Michael Oleson	-	455	*
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Budget Committee Member for 3 years:

(Vote for not more than 3)

Paul Edward Murphy Jr.	-	414	*
<i>Write-in votes:</i>			
Rhonda Lamphere	-	6	
Michael Doucette	-	3	
Travis Grimm	-	3	

There were additional write-in votes.

School Board Member for 3 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

Royal Richardson	-	406	*
Jeff Hickman Write-Ins	-	82	

Trustee of the Trust Funds for 3 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

Richard J. LeBlanc Jr.	-	423	*
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Library Trustee for 3 years:

(Vote for not more than 2)

Ronald Petrie	-	143	
Beth Swanson	-	453	*
Mary Beth Ditoro	-	307	*

Wilcomb Townsend Trustee for 5 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

Jocelyn G. Grady	-	452	*
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Great Hill Cemetery Trustee for 5 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

Christopher Joseph Carolan	-	431	*
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Great Hill Cemetery Trustee for 2 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

John T. Colman	-	451	*
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Village Cemetery Trustee for 3 years:

(Vote for not more than 1)

Jessie Mansur	-	8	*
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The School portion of the meeting was closed.

Moderator Scott congratulated the newly elected officials and requested that those interested in one of the open positions contact him at the break.

Moderator Scott then announced the results of Articles #2 through #7:

## **Article #2 – Internal Lots**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment #1** to the Town's Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

**Amend:** Article 2 - Definitions – by adding a definition for “Internal Lots”.

**Purpose:** To add a clarifying definition of “Internal Lot” as referenced in Table 1 and Section 6.12.2 – Internal Dimensional and Design Requirements with respect to Article 6 – Open Space Subdivision and Article 7 – Age-Friendly Subdivision.

**Yes 325 / No 174    Article #2 carries.**

## **Article #3 – Bed & Breakfasts**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment #2** to the Town's Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

**Amend:** Articles 2 – Definitions – by adding a definition of Bed & Breakfasts & 5.3.3 – Special Exception Uses – by adding 5.3.3.13 - Bed & Breakfasts.

**Purpose:** To allow Bed and Breakfast facilities by Special Exception in the General Residential and Agricultural District (Zone R1), and to add a definition in Article 2 - Definitions.

**Yes 401 / No 127    Article #3 carries.**

## **Article #4 - Fences**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment #3** to the Town's Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

**Amend:** Article 4.14.3.1 – Fences.

**Purpose:** To clarify that fences must be located on the fence owners' lots.

**Yes 460/ No 69    Article #4 carries.**

## **Article #5 – Open Space Subdivision**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment #4** to the Town's Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

**Amend:** Article 6 - Open Space Subdivision.

**Purpose:** To eliminate the unit-density incentive bonus for age-restricted housing, and commensurately increase the unit-density incentive bonus for workforce housing, to help the Town accomplish its fair-share obligation to address the Town's and State's critical shortage of workforce housing. This amendment is expected to benefit people of all ages indirectly, including seniors who wish to downsize. Workforce housing should not be confused with "low-income" housing. For example, to qualify for workforce housing in 2020, the 100% median area income limit was \$98,000 for a family of four.

**Yes 294/ No 213 Article #5 carries.**

### **Article #6 – Accessory Dwelling Units**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment #5** to the Town's Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

**Amend:** Article 9.4 – Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Requirements.

**Purpose:** To amend Section 9.4.10 by adding an exemption to Article 3.1.1.1 of the Town's Building Code, thereby removing the requirement of fire sprinkler systems for Accessory Dwelling Units.

**Yes 365/ No 146 Article #6 carries.**

### **Article #7 – Operating Budget**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended amount of five million one hundred fifty-six thousand one hundred seventy-three dollars (\$5,156,173) for the operating budget for the support of Town government for the payment of salaries and for the payment of statutory obligations of the Town. *Tally vote - 8 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain*. The Board of Selectmen recommends five million one hundred fifty-six thousand one hundred seventy-three dollars (\$5,156,173) by a *Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain*. This article does not include appropriations voted in other warrant articles.

	<b>BOS</b>	<b>BC</b>
<b>General Government</b>	\$ 2,332,072	\$ 2,332,072
<b>Public Safety</b>	\$ 1,487,204	\$ 1,487,204
<b>Highways, Streets, Bridges</b>	\$ 790,343	\$ 790,343
<b>Sanitation</b>	\$ 203,154	\$ 203,154
<b>Health &amp; Welfare</b>	\$41,214	\$41,214
<b>Culture &amp; Recreation</b>	\$300,979	\$300,979
<b>Conservation &amp; Eco. Dev.</b>	\$ 1,205	\$ 1,205
<b>Debt Service</b>	\$ 2	\$ 2
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>\$5,156,173</b>	<b>\$5,156,173</b>

Article #7 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion, but there was none.

The question was called; the vote was in the affirmative. **Article #7 carries.**

### **Article #8 – CIP Funding**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) to be added to the capital reserve fund known as the Town's *Municipal Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2013 Town Meeting.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.55
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 6 yes / 1 no / 2 abstain</i>

Article #8 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Charlotte Lester asked if the line for painting could be removed and the clapboards be replaced with vinyl, and what the cost would be.

Rhonda Lamphere stated that if the same amount of money was put into the CIP every year, it would not have an effect on the tax rate except for the first year. The amount was increased a couple of years ago. Now \$400,000 is being put in. By doing this, the other \$200k will be absorbed in the budget and will not have a tax effect. But a few years down the road, if \$200k more is put in, the tax rate will go up. In the future, raising and lowering the CIP number will have an effect.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #8 carries.**

### **Article #9 – CIP Projects**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred sixty-six thousand nine hundred four dollars (\$266,904) for the following projects:

Maintenance Department	Repaint Stevens Hall	\$68,000
Maintenance Department	Replace Stevens Hall Basement Steps	\$15,000
Police Department	Cruiser with Outfitting	\$52,456
Police Department	Personal Protective Equipment	\$10,000
Police Department	Body-Worn Cameras	\$16,885
Fire Department	Personal Protective Equipment	\$9,360
Fire Department	Expand Secondary Access Road into Parking Lot and Repave	\$40,203
Fire Department	Roof Upgrade	\$45,000
Highway Department	Annual Surveying & Engineering Services	\$10,000

and withdraw two hundred sixty-six thousand nine hundred four dollars (\$266,904) from the *Municipal Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund* created for these purposes.

This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7-a, IV, and will not lapse until the work is complete, or December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, whichever comes first.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.00
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 6 yes / 0 no / 3 abstain</i>

Article #9 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

A proposed amendment was received: To remove the first two line items from Article #9, which are repainting Stevens Hall, \$68,000, and replacing Stevens Hall Basement Steps, \$15,000.

Moderator Scott read the proposed amended article.

Kathy Guilmette said the original preliminary estimates were done prior to receiving the actual quote for the work on Stevens Hall. In the voter packet is a preliminary schedule that would put the amount for redoing all of Stevens Hall at over \$1 million. It is not appropriate to spend that much money on a project where there are no solid quotes and the full impact is not known. At this point, making that expenditure for one building, especially one with limited use, is not appropriate for the amount of funds that need to be raised. Therefore, the Budget Committee cut the two items that deal with Stevens Hall and recommend that Stevens Hall be considered as a separate entity.

Selectman Landau thanked the Town for reelecting him as Selectman. The original estimate, which has not been updated in a number of years, was \$68,000, which was carried by the Planning Board. The maintenance director, Paul Cavanaugh, was not employed with the town at that time and Selectman Landau was not a selectman.

The Town has hired Charters Brothers Construction to oversee the project. Stevens Hall is 110 years old and is on the National Historic Register. Not many Town halls exist in the Queen Anne style. None of the Selectmen are experts on buildings. So, they brought in a qualified architect. Qualified craftsmen were brought in to create an estimate. The roof has serious problems; the gutter system is old and failing. This is why the paint is peeling.

A point of order was brought up. Rhoda Lamphere said Selectman Landau was speaking beyond the scope of the amendment and confusing people.

Selectman Landau said that the money to do this work is being taken from a number of places. These two lines are portions of this project.

Moderator Scott clarified that the discussion is whether it is appropriate to remove these two line items.

Mike Weider said for clarity, the articles on the CIP are reviewed by the Planning Board. The amounts for these two line items are not correct. The Budget Committee asked that the numbers accurately represent the work to be done. The Budget Committee has no idea how

much the work will cost without a finalized budget.

Charles Myette recommended not voting for the amendment. The 300th anniversary is approaching, and the building needs to be repainted. The concrete has eroded on steps, which is a safety issue, and needs to be repaired. These repairs need to be done before the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary, so he suggested that the two line items be left in.

Charlotte Lister asked if the structural integrity of the building will be affected by removing these two line items. If so, the lines should be kept in. If not, the work should be done another year.

Mike Weider said the figure in the CIP for painting is not accurate. The cost would be \$100k if the building was only painted. If the existing paint is stripped first to remove the lead danger, it will add \$150k to the cost. These are estimates, not formal quotes. The Budget Committee has no paperwork that represents the cost of work that needs to be done.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **The amendment to Article #9 carries, and the Article now reads, in part:**

...shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of *one hundred eighty-three thousand nine hundred four dollars (\$183,904)* for the following projects:

<del>Maintenance Department</del>	<del>Repaint Stevens Hall</del>	<del>\$68,000</del>
<del>Maintenance Department</del>	<del>Replace Stevens Hall Basement Steps</del>	<del>\$15,000</del>
Police Department	Cruiser with Outfitting	\$52,456
Police Department	Personal Protective Equipment	\$10,000
Police Department	Body-Worn Cameras	\$16,885
Fire Department	Personal Protective Equipment	\$9,360
Fire Department	Expand Secondary Access Road into Parking Lot and Repave	\$40,203
Fire Department	Roof Upgrade	\$45,000
Highway Department	Annual Surveying & Engineering Services	\$10,000

and withdraw *one hundred eighty-three thousand nine hundred four dollars (\$183,904)* from the *Municipal Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund* created for these purposes...

Moderator Scott called for discussion on Article #9 as amended, but there was none.

The question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #9 carries.**

### **Article #10 – 300th Anniversary**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the capital reserve fund known as the *300th Anniversary Celebration Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2013 Town Meeting.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.01
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 8 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain</i>

Article #10 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Samuel Johnston said all taxes are collected by force. If you would not force someone at gunpoint to pay for something they are not willing to pay for, you should not ask someone else to do it for you.

Chris Hadik thanked everyone who has supported this article eight times in the past. Events are being planned to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There is a Gala dinner dance in October at LaBelle Winery in Derry. Tickets are available online at [chesternh300.org](http://chesternh300.org), at the library and in the Town Clerk's office. Proclamation Day will be held in May 2022. The organizing committee welcomes volunteers to help with these events. They can contact any member of the 300<sup>th</sup> committee if interested.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #10 carries.**

### **Article #11 – Steeple Repair at Chester Congregational Church**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the purpose of helping to defray the expense of structural work on the steeple of the Chester Congregational Church which houses the Town Clock. The actual amount of said donation is to be conditioned upon the Congregational Church raising an equal amount of funding between Town Meeting of 2021 and Town Meeting of 2022. The amount donated will not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000).

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.03
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 8 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain</i>

Article #11 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Lynn Rockwell represents the Chester Congregational Baptist Church and Meetinghouse Project. The steeple houses the clock and the bell. The community will match this \$25k with donations to provide \$50k to save the Chester skyline. They are close to their goal after years of diligent work by the committee. This will be the last warrant article for this issue. Preservation Timber Framing will do the work this year. She asked the legislative body to donate to this project.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #11 carries.**

### **Article #12 – Historic Building Capital Reserve Fund**



Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund known as the *Historic Building Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2020 Town Meeting. Further to authorize the transfer of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) from the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 unassigned fund balance for this purpose with no amount to be raised from taxation.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.00
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Not Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 4 yes / 4 no / 1 abstain</i>

Article #12 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

An amendment was proposed to add \$150k to the amount. This will not increase taxpayer costs.

Selectman Landau said the Town has a building that is part of the skyline. It was given to the Town, not purchased. If repaired, the roof will be good for 200 more years. There is an estimate, although some of the figures might turn out to be lower. If the Town does not begin the work now, the cost to save the building will increase in the future.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative: 83 yes, 40 no. **The amendment to Article #12 carries, and the Article now reads, in part:**

...shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of *five hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$550,000)* to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund known as the *Historic Building Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2020 Town Meeting. Further to authorize the transfer of *five hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$550,000)* from the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 unassigned fund balance for this purpose ...

Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Rhonda Lamphere said the Board of Selectmen received the proposal on Wednesday but has not had the opportunity to discuss it. She agreed that repairs need to be done, but not at a cost of over \$1 million. The 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee will decorate the building for the celebration. There needs to be a plan before any money is spent. The leaks will need to be repaired before the building is painted. She strongly urged the legislative body to vote down this article. There is \$40-50k in a capital reserve fund to start repairing the leakage in preparation for painting in the future. She recommended not adding \$400k to this fund without a solid plan.

Moderator Scott corrected Ms. Lamphere. The figure is now \$550k, not \$400k.

Mike Weider said the unassigned fund balance is not free money; it is taxation money that has been set aside. There is no plan in place. The quote was received on Wednesday. Chester works hard to not have debt, so he asked the legislative body to think about how they spend their money.

Mat Stover said the notion that there is no tax impact is wrong. No one would take a significant portion of their savings and spend it on a potential black hole without a plan. He encouraged the Board of Selectman and the Budget Committee to scrutinize this and come back with a plan in the future. Ten years ago, 25% of what was paid in taxes went to the Town and Town projects and 75% to the schools. Today, it is 39.6% to the Town and 60% to the schools. He would like more clarity and transparency and discipline as to what is being done on the Town side.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the negative. **Article #12 as amended fails.**

### **Article #13 – Fire Department Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to establish a *Fire Department Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund* under the provisions of RSA 35:1 II for the purpose of funding the replacement of Fire Department Apparatus costing over \$250,000, and to raise and appropriate the sum of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) to be placed in this fund and to authorize the transfer of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) from the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 unassigned fund balance for this purpose with no amount to be raised from taxation. Selectmen are not to be made agents to expend this fund; expenditure from this fund will require future warrant article.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.00
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 7 yes / 0 no / 2 abstain</i>

Article #13 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Chuck Myette said the fire department equipment periodically needs to be replaced and updated. They have already identified a pumper that will need to be replaced soon, which will cost several hundred thousand dollars. This article is to put aside money to do this work in the future.

Mike Weider said this article was put in to start planning now to avoid a large one-time charge in the future. It is good planning to put aside funds now to have money available and not have to go into debt or issue a bond to purchase equipment in the future. The fire department is doing a good job maintaining the equipment and planning for the future.

As there was no further discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative. **Article #13 carries.**

### **Article #14 – Highway CIP Funding**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) to be added to the capital reserve fund known as the *Highway Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2015 Town Meeting with one hundred forty-four thousand five hundred ninety-seven dollars (\$144,597) which is the anticipated grant amount this year from the New Hampshire Highway Block Grant to be used to offset this appropriation and the remainder to be raised through taxation.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.84
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 4 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 6 yes / 1 no / 2 abstain</i>

Article #14 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Mike Oleson said this is funding that is used every year to do major road projects in Town. It does cost the taxpayers money, but it is built into the tax rate.

As there was no further discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative.  
**Article #14 carries.**

### **Article #15 – Highway CIP Projects**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) for roadwork in the Town of Chester and withdraw seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) from the *Highway Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund* created for these purposes.

This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7-a, IV, and will not lapse until the work is complete, or December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, whichever comes first.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.00
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 4 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 7 yes / 0 no / 2 abstain</i>

Article #15 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Mike Oleson said he worked with the Planning Board, the Selectmen, and the Town Planner on this plan. He intends to complete the Candia end of North Pond Road with these funds. He has enough left over to finish what was started last year. He plans to begin working on four or five other roads this year.

As there was no further discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative.  
**Article #15 carries.**

An intermission was called.

Selectman Chuck Myette presented the James Gullo Volunteer of the Year awards to Victor Chouinard and Kristina Snyder. They have worked tirelessly on conservation projects, particularly this last year when many activities were shut down.

Mr. Chouinard has put together several conservation easements. He oversaw many projects. There were issues at Wason Pond with beavers, so they came up with the ideas to put in culverts and a beaver deceiver to make sure the pond areas are not flooded.

Ms. Snyder spearheaded the fishing line receptacle project at Wason Pond. She is working on growing milkweed gardens to address the issue of declining monarch butterfly populations. She co-hosted Pollinator Pathway programs for planting plants to create more pollen. She has done a number of Zoom presentations with the Squam Lake Science Center. She created and erected the sign at Wason Pond to identify the beaver lodge. She manages the Conservation Commission page on the Chester Town website. She also organized a wildlife photo contest and a dandelion contest, which is now underway.

Mr. Chouinard thanked everyone for coming out and said, "This is democracy at its finest." He thanked the citizens of Chester for their ongoing support of the Conservation Commission. Much of the work they do is for the future.

Ms. Snyder explained the dandelion contest. They have prizes purchased from Chester businesses. She invited the public to attend the Conservation Commission meetings on the second Tuesday of each month and reminded the townspeople that they are welcome to join the Commission.

Moderator Scott resumed the Town Meeting at 10:37am.

#### **Article #16 – Revaluation**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the Town's *Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2009 Town Meeting in order to prepare for the next Town revaluation in 2024.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.02
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 4 yes / 1 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 7 yes / 0 no / 2 abstain</i>

Article #16 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

As there was no discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative. **Article #16 carries.**

#### **Article #17 – PACT**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty-six thousand dollars (\$36,000) for the purpose of providing public, educational, and governmental access television in the Town of Chester. Said funds to be withdrawn from the Special Revenue Fund known as the "*PACT*" Fund established at the 2003 Town Meeting, separate from the General Fund, and funded by Comcast subscribers in the Town of Chester. If passed, this article will have no tax impact.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.00
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 3 yes / 2 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 6 yes / 2 no / 1 abstain</i>

Article #17 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion, but there was none.

As there was no discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative. **Article #17 carries.**

### **Article #18 – Police Department OHRV**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty thousand six hundred nine dollars (\$30,609.00) for the purchase of a Side-by-Side OHRV with Accessories, Upfitting, and Trailer and withdraw thirty thousand six hundred nine dollars (\$30,609.00) from the *Police Special Detail Special Revenue Fund* established at the 2001 Town Meeting for this purpose with no amount to be raised by taxation.

Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.00

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen* Tally Vote – 4 yes / 1 no / 0 abstain

*Not Recommended by Budget Committee* Tally Vote – 2 yes / 6 no / 1 abstain

Article #18 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Victor Chouinard spoke in favor of the article as the chairman of the Conservation Commission, which voted unanimously at the May meeting to support this article in light of its environmental and conservation impact. During the time he spends in the woods inspecting parcels for prospective purchases and enjoying the outdoors, he sees evidence of activities that are not favorable to the principles of land conservation and protecting the environment. He finds evidence of vandalism, illegal dumping (often of hazardous waste), tree cutting, property damage caused by ATVs, illegal trespassing by motorized vehicles, illegal shooting, firepits, and more. Conservation markers are being used for target practice and have been destroyed. Hundreds of steel ammunition casings have been found near the wetland areas. Trees are being shot at with the intent to cut them down. Rounds are being fired directly into the wetlands. Erosion problems are prevalent.

In the early spring, state trails are closed to motorized vehicles. Town and privately owned property are used illegally year-round. The wildlife is impacted by the noise. There is the potential for accidental death of ground-nesting birds and reptiles, many of which are endangered. He asked the legislative body to support the police's request to purchase this tool to help them do their job. It will serve as a deterrent and enable them to enforce existing laws. It is not a frivolous purchase.

Steve Demers said he does not see a reason to purchase this equipment. It will need to be maintained and officers will need to be trained on its use, which will cost more than \$30k. The OHRV can only be used for a few weeks during the summer months, so they will probably need to purchase a snowmobile. He said if the problems are occurring on the power lines, they could use a pickup truck. This is a waste of money.

Jeff LeGault said he is not totally opposed to the purchase, but he believes it is the wrong tool

for the job. He recommended purchasing a quality ATV and camouflaged game cameras. An OHRV will not be able to chase people on dirt bikes and ATVs as it is too big and can only be used in certain areas.

Kristina Snyder said she cannot emphasize enough the destruction she sees walking through the woods. Vehicles charge through the wetlands, through the power lines, and through private property. Vulnerable habitat is being destroyed, and endangered and protected species are being impacted. The vehicles are disturbing nesting animals, causing them to abandon their nests. It is also a safety issue. Eversource has reported that people are shooting at the power lines. This purchase will allow the Police Department to effectively do their job.

She said this has a zero tax impact. She is heavily involved with the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game and attends their monthly meetings. There are only 30 conservation officers for the state of New Hampshire. They cannot be here when illegal activities are occurring, but the Chester Police Department can be. The Fish and Game chief law enforcement officer says they cannot do this alone; they need to tie in local law enforcement. The only way to safely patrol and catch violators is to provide officers with similar equipment. She asked that the legislative body help the species and the habitat that they are supposed to be stewards of. This is an effective tool to do that.

Nathaniel Rockwell encouraged the townspeople to vote yes. He has lived next to the power lines for 30+ years and had no problems with ATVs in the past, as the volume was low. Eversource upgraded the lines and now there is more traffic. The numbers increased dramatically last year. ATVs fly over the embankments. He is scared to walk down the power lines. This is not the only thing the Town is doing to try to alleviate this problem. Eversource put up gates and no-trespassing signs. People go around the gates and trespass on his property. He has no problem with off-road vehicles when they are appropriately used.

Mike Weider said the funding is not zero cost to the Town. The money is derived from police officer special duty assignments. The Town is reimbursed for the cost of the officer and the remainder goes to the police department. The Budget Committee wants the funds to be used to offset the cost of cruisers. The police department and the Board of Selectmen have used it to offset the cost of other items in the past, such as cameras and equipment. The Fish and Game Department has jurisdiction over this area. The conservation officers want to pass their obligation to the Town. The state is paid taxes to fund these programs. Last year was an unusual year. The power line upgrades will end. The Planning Board pushed for the gates, not Eversource.

Mr. Weider said this is money that could be used for other items. They would not need to put money for cruisers into the CIP if this money was used for that purpose. This will be another piece of equipment to maintain. If an officer is hurt, it will incur a worker's comp premium. He is not against the police department doing their business. He believes other agencies need to be asked for help as that is what they are there for.

Harold Gardner has been a resident for over 20 years. He is amazed that the Town wants to push responsibilities off onto other people. The Town has grown and needs to be more self-sufficient. Chief Berube has done the research on this purchase. If the legislative body supports

the police department, they should support the police chief.

Steve Couture said these are Town properties and the Town has responsibility for them. Stewardship is challenging. If Chester is fortunate enough to have the police department and the Conservation Commission to ensure that stewardship occurs, those organizations should be supported.

Mike Oleson said he has dealt with some of these issues and has had to put up gates. The highway department and road agent support this warrant article 100% and he hopes the legislative body will support it as well.

Bob Packard said he was an ATV rider for years before his accident. Chester is a rural community and people should be able to enjoy their community. Giving the police department a piece of equipment to police this property is a godsend. Most people who ride ATVs support and follow the laws 100%. It is the ten percent who do not that cause trouble.

Mike Weider said he is a stickler for accurate information. What was brought to the Budget Committee was the issue of patrolling power lines, not conservation easements or conservation land. They were told they need to support the residents that live on the power lines. Any other information presented today was not part of the original discussion. No one disagrees that these things are important. The State should handle these issues. He is not against purchasing tools for the police department. If the purchase had been brought to the Budget Committee as an actual cost to the Town as a tax impact, he probably would not be having this conversation.

Mielle Riggie said there are many property owners who own land that borders Class VI roads beyond the power lines. They are affected as well. She and her husband do not walk near the power lines due to the illegal activity occurring on Class VI roads. She and her husband are in strong favor of purchasing this vehicle as they are aware of how difficult it would be to access these areas to help someone in need. They are a property away from the power line, yet hear gunshots, see the piles of shells, the littering, the damage, and how close the shooting is to the Boy Scout camp. She urged the legislative body to vote for this purchase.

Andrew Myrick wanted to address the misinformation presented, so performed a demonstration. He called the Fish and Game Department, only to hear a recorded message that they are closed on the weekends, so are unavailable to address any issues.

Gene Charron is a former police officer. People with dementia disappear. Children get lost in the woods. It is time-consuming to look for them. He hears explosions at night and does not know where they come from. Trail bikes used to be the biggest problem as they could not be caught with a vehicle. This is a piece of equipment, and he believes it should be supported. If they could look at something less costly, that would be preferable, but he truly believes the police department needs this piece of equipment. He suggested the next time something is brought before the Budget Committee; they should understand exactly what is needed and why. He said, "There is crazy stuff going on in the woods." There might be illicit activity as well. It is very important to have access so as to end this activity.

Alex Bartels said the Fish and Game Department office might be closed, but anyone can call the

Rockingham County dispatch and they will contact an officer, who will get back to you. He has had them arrive at his house within two hours of a call. He said Mr. Myrick's demonstration was invalid.

Police Chief Berube thanked the citizens of Chester for coming out and said, "This is what makes the Town of Chester special." He apologized to the Budget Committee if this purchase was misrepresented. They could have called him and asked him about it; a couple of members did. This is a tool that will be used to address many issues the Town has had year after year. He acknowledged that great points were made for and against the responsibilities of the Fish and Game Department.

He said this issue has been presented to the Board of Selectmen for several years in a row. The police department backed off two years ago to see if other departments would give them the ability to address these issues, but that has failed. There is an officer on every other weekend for the Fish and Game Department. A two-hour response is not normal; they usually follow up within a week. It is not the police department's intention to use this only for the power lines. They want to provide a service. The Town has evolved so much, it needs to be self-sufficient, although they do need assistance from larger agencies.

Regarding the questions about the cost, this tool was picked out specifically. The chief called other departments and asked about the pros and cons in their ATV programs. The main issue is transport. An officer cannot transport a detainee or someone who is injured without a four-seater. Their ultimate goal is to be able to transport people and avoid the liability of walking someone out of the woods.

The police department has been dealing with this issue for years. It is an issue that they cannot combat without resources. This item is in the special detail line. Those funds could offset the purchase of a cruiser but if the need for details dries up, there will be no funds to pay for a cruiser. The Chester Police Department has jurisdiction over the Town of Chester. It is their job to improve the quality of life for people impacted by this issue. The biggest deterrence is presence. They have zero presence out there now.

Several years ago, the police department used this line item to purchase radios as they are critical items. The existing radios were older than some of his police officers. Radios are their first line of defense and the only way they can get in touch with each other. A lot of thought has been put into this purchase. The OHRV is not strictly to patrol the power lines. It is to service the Town. Training is included, so is free.

Jeff LeGalt said if you call 911, they will dispatch an officer or the Chester police. An OHRV is not the correct tool. The Fish and Game Department uses ATVs. This is what the police department needs. This is a small piece of property that needs to be patrolled and a small group of people are violating it.

As there was no further discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative.  
**Article #18 carries.**

## **Article #19 – Master Plan**



Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the *Town Master Plan Capital Reserve Fund* established at the 2019 Town Meeting.

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.02
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 7 yes / 1 no / 1 abstain</i>

Article #19 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion, but there was none.

The question was called; the vote was in the affirmative. **Article #19 carries.**

### **Article #20 - Winter Road Maintenance Fund**

Special Warrant Article. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred five thousand dollars (\$105,000) to be added to the expendable trust fund known as the *Winter Road Maintenance Fund* established at the 2006 Town Meeting and increased at the 2017 Town Meeting for the purpose of plowing, salting, sanding, and general winter road maintenance in the Town of Chester. The Winter Road Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund shall not exceed one hundred five thousand dollars (\$105,000).

Estimated Tax Impact:	\$0.14
<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
<i>Recommended by Budget Committee</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 6 yes / 2 no / 1 abstain</i>

Article #20 was read.

A motion was made to move the article to the table and seconded. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #20 was tabled.**

### **Article #21 – Discontinuance of North Pond Road Capital Reserve Fund**

Shall the Town vote to discontinue the *North Pond Road and Route 102 Intersection Capital Reserve Fund* created in 2010.

<i>Recommended by Board of Selectmen</i>	<i>Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain</i>
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Article #21 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion, but there was none.

As there was no discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative. **Article #21 carries.**

### **Article #22 – Discontinuance of Carkin Street**

Shall the Town vote to discontinue that portion of Carkin Street that abuts Donna Street and lies between Tax Map 5-71 and Tax Map 5-70, identified on the letter and petition dated March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from Hamblett & Kerrigan, and containing 12,406 square feet or 0.28+ acres of land. Said property will revert to the abutters who will be responsible for any surveyors' fees associated with the lot line adjustment.

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen      Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain*

Article #22 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Russell Quintal said he bought his property as a foreclosure but did not realize there was a paper cul de sac in front of his house. The former owner received a waiver from the Zoning Board to build a garage and front porch on this part of the property. This could be a problem for a future owner since no one knows who owns this part of the property. He realizes he and his neighbor will pay more taxes, which is fine. He asked the legislative body to vote for this article to discontinue the road.

Fran Bechtold said she did not know a paper cul de sac existed and has owned her property for 32 years. If she needs a permit to build something in the future, she may not be able to do so due to the proximity of the Town property to her property. It also might become an issue when she decides to sell the property. She would appreciate the legislative body's support for this article.

Mike Oleson said he is not against the transfer of this property. His concern is that this could create a problem with clearing snow because there will be nowhere to push it. If this article passes, he would like a provision in the plan that allows snow storage so the highway department will be able to move snow.

Mr. Quintal said the road is not maintained. The previous owner asked the Town not to plow this area since it would leave snowbanks that would be difficult for him to move. He is concerned this might cause a problem later and cost the Town money. Mr. Oleson said he would need a provision made so the Town can easily remove the snow from that end of the road.

Charlotte Lister said she does not understand why Mr. Quintal wants to do this, and she wants to ensure that the Town does not discontinue the entire street.

Russell Quintal said with due respect to Mr. Oleson, the Town does not take care of the road. He has to remove snow himself. He has no problem adding a provision for snow removal. He is willing to cut brush and pave a section to make room to push the snow onto his property.

Mike Oleson said he has no problem with the transfer of the property. He wants the Town protected so they do not have to bear the extra cost with a future owner who might not allow them to push snow onto the property. He will need an agreement about the snow storage, or he is not in favor of this article.

As there was no further discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative.  
**Article #22 carries.**

## **Article #23 – Rescinding of 2013 WA #20**

Shall the Town vote to rescind the provisions of RSA 31:95-c to restrict 100% of revenues from the sale of cemetery lots to expenditures for the purpose of cemetery maintenance. Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special revenue fund to be known as the *Cemetery Maintenance Special Revenue Fund*, separate from the general fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the general fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of the revenue. Ballot vote required.

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen*      *Tally Vote – 4 yes / 1 no / 0 abstain*

This is a ballot vote.

Article #23 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Charlotte Lister said she was confused by Articles #23 and #24. She is not opposed, but she is not sure how they relate.

Rhonda Lamphere recommended that this article be tabled. She is not clear what it is doing. She would like to see this set up similar to the PACT fund and put into a special revenue fund. The cemetery trustees could come forward with a maintenance budget, which would be funded out of this fund.

Town Counsel Gordon Graham said this article will rescind the adoption that occurred in 2013 of a restriction on revenues from the sale of cemetery lots being placed into a special revenue fund for cemetery maintenance. There are complications with accounting for the special revenue fund. Articles #24 and #27 will establish separate trusts for the separate cemeteries in Town and allocate any revenue the Town receives from the sales of cemetery lots into separate trusts – one to benefit the Village Cemetery trust fund and one to benefit the Great Hill trust fund. This clarifies the way cemetery revenues generated by the sale of lots are accounted for and discontinues the existence of the cemetery maintenance special revenue fund.

Rhonda Lamphere asked if by voting for this article, will something be set up similar to the PACT fund, where the budget is presented to the people each year and funded out of money collecting from the sale of lots. She believes this is how it should be set up.

Gordon Graham said this article is the first step in the process. It discontinues the proceeds from the sale of lots being deposited into the special revenue fund. A lot of work has been put into designing a system to correct the allocation of cemetery resources. This is designed to discontinue the existing special revenue fund. Any funds currently in the special revenue fund will be placed in the Town surplus. Under Articles #24 and #27, if they are adopted, a fund will be created into which the proceeds from the sale of lots will be placed. The fund created by Article #24 may be expended by the Board of Selectmen as the appointed agents. Funds in the Great Hill Cemetery Maintenance Fund created by Article #27 can be spent by the vote of both

the cemetery trustees and the Board of Selectmen as the appointed agents.

Rhonda Lamphere asked if this article passes, will the funds that the Great Hill Cemetery Trust is holding be turned over to the Town for the unassigned fund balance. Gordon Graham said this has nothing to do with the Great Hill Cemetery trust. It has to do with the Town's cemetery maintenance special revenue fund. They are separate funds.

Rhonda Lamphere asked if a new fund will be set up by the next article. Gordon Graham said there will be.

Rhonda Lamphere asked why the Board of Selectmen and the cemetery trustees are being made agents to expend instead of the trustees needing to return each year with a budget and fund out of that fund.

There was no further discussion.

Rhonda Lamphere moved to table this article and it was seconded. The question was called and the vote was in the affirmative: yes 69, no 39. Article #23 was tabled, but discussion of Article #23 continues below.

#### **Article #24 – Restating of 2013 WA #20**

Shall the Town vote to establish a *Village Cemeteries Expendable Trust Fund* pursuant to RSA 31:19-a and RSA 289:2-a, allowing all future proceeds received from the sale of cemetery lots managed by the Village Cemetery Trustees in the Town of Chester and any interest gained thereon, for the maintenance of these cemeteries; and further to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from this fund.

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen*      *Tally Vote – 5 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain*

Article #24 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Rhonda Lamphere said because the previous article as written in 2013 restricted funds to be put into the special main revenue fund, there is now no funding available for Article #24. She believed it was appropriate to table this article and bring back two new articles next year to try to accomplish what the trustees are trying to accomplish.

Rhonda Lamphere moved to table Article #24 and it was seconded. The question was called and the vote was in the affirmative. Article #24 was tabled, but discussion of Article #24 continues below.

#### **Article #25 – Change in Town Meeting Date**

Shall the Town vote to effect a change in the date of the annual Town Meeting so that the first session for choice of Town Officers elected by an official ballot and other action required to be inserted on said official ballot shall be held annually on the second Tuesday in May, and the second session for the transaction of other business on a date set by the Selectmen, effective

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen*      *Tally Vote – 3 yes / 1 no / 1 abstain*

Article #25 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Rhonda Lamphere said two years ago, the Board of Selectmen brought an article forward to move the Town Meeting from May to March. Last year, the meeting was postponed due to COVID. She asked if the Town could try a March meeting for one year.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the negative. **Article #25 fails.**

### **Article #26 – 78 Raymond Road**

Shall the Town vote to accept the donation of approximately 28.2 acres of land and buildings therein known as Tax Map 5 Lot 20 with an address of 78 Raymond Road on terms to be negotiated by the Board of Selectmen; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto.

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen*      *Tally Vote – 4 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain*

Article #26 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Chuck Myette said this property has been brought before the Town in the past. It is adjacent to the school and the fire department building. The owner would like to donate the property in exchange for an appraisal for federal tax purposes. It is a historical property built in 1820 consisting of 28 acres and a house. It is one of the only properties in size within the Town area adjacent to the school, the recreation areas, and the fire department. The house is dated but is ADA compliant. It has been closed for a few years, so will need work. The property has wetlands, which will not be developed.

The potential for this property is safety and room for the Town as it grows. There is only one exit at Chester Academy. There is no parking at the existing police department location, and it is a difficult place to redevelop. There are six to eight acres on Route 102 that could be used for a future home of the police department or other municipal buildings. The property could be used for ball fields, hiking trails, cross-country trails, recreation, administrative functions/offices, or professional offices. The house could be renovated to house the historical society, a senior center, or a community center. If the Town does not accept the donation, the property will be sold and there will be no other adjacent property available.

Mike Weider said this has been brought to the Town many times and the Town had decided not to move forward with it. There will be a loss of revenue of \$17k a year if the donation is accepted. If the Board of Selectmen wants to raze the building and preserve the land, it would be acceptable, but there is no plan. Stevens Hall is not utilized now. This will give the taxpayers another property to maintain. He is not opposed to preserving the land for future use. The school has no use for the building or has no interest in the property. This is a way for the owner

to work something out for his own benefit, but it is not the right thing for the Town.

Mat Stover said the property has been on the market for 18-20 years. No one in the private sectors believes it is worth buying or investing in. The Town should recognize that, so they should not be in a rush to do anything with this. The real cost is assuming the liability. The Town would lose the annual tax revenue. It is an old building that needs work. The school obtained an estimate of over \$400k in the past to renovate the property. He does not see an urgency to do this until a plan exists.

Mat Stover moved to table Article #26. The vote was in the affirmative: 83 yes, 40 no. **Article #26 is tabled.**

### **Article #27 – Petitioned Warrant Article - Great Hill Cemetery Maintenance Fund**

Shall the Town vote to establish a trust fund under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a to be known as the *Great Hill Cemetery Maintenance and Future Expansion Fund* for the general maintenance and future expansion of said cemetery. Pursuant to RSA 289:2-a, this fund is to be funded by the sale of future lots. Further to name the board of Great Hill Cemetery Trustees and the Board of Selectman as agents to expend from this trust.

Article #27 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

John Colman said the only money the Great Hill Cemetery Fund trustees have is in the perpetual care fund, which can only be used for the perpetual care of the lots/graves. In 2016, they used ground-penetrating radar on the balance of the cemetery not being used and found ledge. The Town will probably need a new cemetery within 12-15 years unless excavating is done. They could remove the topsoil and blast, which was done in part of the cemetery years ago. A full grave requires 54" of topsoil; there is only 10".

This article will start a new fund for general maintenance and the future expansion of the cemetery. It will not cost the taxpayer anything as it will be paid for by the sale of lots. There is \$234,000 in the perpetual care fund, which will sustain them for a long time. Expenses are generally around \$6-10k a year, plus, it will gain interest.

The new fund would be handled by the trustee of trust funds, just as the perpetual care money is now. This would be a joint fund run by the trustees and the Board of Selectmen.

Rhonda Lamphere said that in an effort to make clearer the three cemetery-related warrant articles, after consultation with Town Counsel, she urged everyone to vote in favor of this article and also asked the moderator to take Articles #23 and #24 off the table so they could be reconsidered.

A motion was made and seconded to remove Articles #23 and #24 from the table. The vote was in the affirmative: 44 yes, 43 no. **Articles #23 and #24 were removed from the table.**

A resident asked if it was permissible to have a motion that untables, tables, or votes on two items at the same time. Moderator Scott said it saves time, so it is permissible. He would

entertain a motion to vote for them separately, but no one made the request.

A motion was made and seconded to delay the vote on Article #27. The vote was in the affirmative. **Discussion on Article #27 is delayed.**

**(discussion on Article #23 continues)**

Rhonda Lamphere said she wanted to be certain that before any major upgrades occur at the cemetery, the trustees will have to explain it to the Town and let the taxpayers be part of the decision. The money comes from the sale of lots, but the cemetery belongs to the residents. After consulting with Town Counsel, she urged the legislative body to pass this article as written.

As there was no further discussion, the question was called, and the vote was in the affirmative. This was a ballot vote: 26 no, 77 yes. **Article #23 carries.**

Moderator Scott said he would entertain a motion to take Articles #24 and #27 out of order, to deal with Articles #28 and #29 first.

A motion was made and seconded to take Articles #24 and #27 out of order. The vote was in the affirmative. **Articles #24 and #27 are taken out of order. Articles #28 and #29 will be dealt with first.**

**Article #28 – Petitioned Warrant Article - Indigenous Peoples Day**

To see if the Town will vote to change our national holiday called Columbus Day and rename it Indigenous Peoples Day in the Town of Chester in order to honor Native Americans, our country's first inhabitants.

This article was moved and seconded.

An amendment was presented to delete the reference to Columbus Day and instead celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day on August 19. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Oliver Ford said he posed the amendment because state representatives have a bill in the system establishing August 19 as Indigenous Peoples Day, following international recognition of indigenous people throughout the world. It makes no sense to have a holiday on a separate day if this bill passes. It does not diminish his interest in recognizing the Native American contribution to what has become our nation. He supports the amendment.

Gene Charron said this has been done before. The individuals proposing the amendment are sincere. He has a problem with changing a holiday at the Town level. He agrees that there should be a day of recognition for indigenous peoples. It is important to remember that we all are Americans. He supports the amendment.

Ron McKinnon said he is not opposed to having an Indigenous Peoples Day but does not want to remove Columbus Day. He asked a Native American friend, who said a day should be created for his people.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative: 57 yes, 37 no. **The amendment to Article #28 carries, and the Article now reads:**

To see if the Town will vote to *establish August 19<sup>th</sup> as* Indigenous Peoples Day in the Town of Chester in order to honor Native Americans, our country's first inhabitants.

Moderator Scott called for discussion on Article #28 as amended.

Oliver Ford raised the question of educating children correctly. They are still taught that Columbus discovered America. Others discovered America before Columbus. A day is needed to honor Native Americans.

Ann Podlipny was the initiator of this article. She is part of an indigenous group in New Hampshire who feel that their voices will not be respected unless Columbus is written out of the national celebration. Columbus was responsible for the genocide of millions of people. Cities and towns should be able to officially change this holiday. Twelve states and numerous towns in New Hampshire have recognized Indigenous Peoples Day instead of Columbus Day. This would provide a good opportunity for people to learn the history of their shared homeland. The legacy of indigenous people is intimately tied to the land.

Chris Perfetto Jr. said Indigenous Peoples Day should be celebrated. Elementary school students are taught about Columbus. The Town of Chester should not celebrate a holiday for someone responsible for mass genocide. Children should not be lied to in the classroom because they will learn to question the education system.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #28 carries.**

### **Article #29 – Petitioned Warrant Article – New Hampshire Resolution for Fair Nonpartisan Redistricting**

By petition of 25 or more eligible voters of the Town of Chester to see if the Town will vote to urge that the New Hampshire General Court, which is obligated to redraw the maps of political districts within the state following the federal census, will ensure fair and effective representation of New Hampshire voters without gerrymandering.

Additionally, these voters ask the Town to urge NH General Court to carry out the redistricting in a fair and transparent way through public meetings, not to favor a particular political party, to include communities of interest, and to minimize multi-seat districts.

Furthermore, as the New Hampshire State Constitution, Part 2, Article 11 allows towns of sufficient population to have their own state representatives, not share with other towns, for the Town of Chester to petition the NH General Court for its own exclusive seat in the House of Representatives properly represent the Town's interests.

The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice from the



selectmen to Chester's state legislators, informing them of the demands from their constituents within 30 days of the vote.

Article #29 was read, moved to the floor, and seconded. Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Patrick McLaughlin said the Constitution entitles towns to their own unshared representative. The Town of Chester is large enough for its own representative. Article #29 asks those who are redistricting the state to follow the state constitution. The Town's representative lives in Chester but represents other towns as well. This article requests what the Town of Chester is entitled to: its own representative in the future.

Russ Norman said the Town needs its own representative. The expense of sending mailings to three towns is horrendous and time-consuming. If there were a representative for Chester, they would only focus on Chester.

Gene Charron said state representatives perform a lot of work that people do not see. Chester qualified some years ago for a single representative. The Town needs a representative who will answer their phone and return your calls.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #29 carries.**

**(discussion on #24 continues)**

Moderator Scott called for discussion.

Rhonda Lamphere said that under the advisement of Town Counsel, she asked that the legislative body support Article #24. She will look for details next year to see what the cemetery trustees and the Board of Selectmen are doing with the cemetery funds.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #24 carries.**

**(discussion on Article #27 continues)**

John Colman said in the present layout, there are 525 graves. Out of that, 220 lots have been sold, so there are 305 available. If they continue selling lots at this rate, there are 16.9 years left before they will have to decide whether to take care of the ledged area, which is roughly 1.23 acres. It would be expensive to move topsoil and blast the ledge. Fill could be brought in to build up the topsoil to 54", but it would probably rival the cost of blasting. More lots were sold last year than normal. The Town has expanded greatly. There is no expense to the taxpayers, so he hopes the legislative body will support this article.

Rhonda Lamphere urged the legislative body to support this article.

Discussion being ended, the question was called. The vote was in the affirmative. **Article #27 carries.**

## Article #30 – Reports

To hear the reports of Agents, Auditors, and Committees of Officers heretofore chosen and pass any vote relating hereto.

To transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

There were no reports.

Dianna Charron moved to untable Article #26; this motion was seconded. The vote was in the negative.

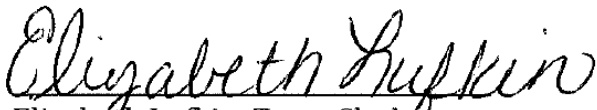
As there was no further business, it was moved to adjourn the Meeting until the second Saturday in March 2022; this motion was seconded. The question was called; the vote was in the affirmative.

The 2021 Chester Town Meeting was adjourned at 1:14pm.

Moderator Scott thanked the people that made this meeting possible and the tremendous work that was put into organizing it. He also thanked the citizens of Chester for coming out and participating.

A True Copy.

Attest:

  
Elizabeth Lufkin, Town Clerk

Minutes taken by Beth A. Hangeli

