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**Town of Chester
Budget Committee
Draft Minutes
February 12, 2018**

33 **I. Meeting to Order**

34 Vice Chair Rhonda Lamphere called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM on Monday,
35 February 12, 2018.

36 **II. Pledge of Allegiance**

37 Vice Chair Lamphere led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

38 **III. Attendance**

39 Budget Committee Members:

40 Vice Chair Lamphere

41 Brian Shankey

42 Brennan Holmes

43 Chuck Heuer

44 Becky Owens

45 Liaisons:

Selectman Stephen D'Angelo

Absent:

Chair Michael Weider

Mike Romick School Board

33 **IV. Announcements by the Chair –**

34 **V. Member Comments-**

35 **VI. Public Comment –**

36 **VII. BOS Update – Selectman Stephen D'Angelo**

37 Thought that the budget books would be available for Friday.

38
39 Vice Chair Lamphere shared that this should not be a working document, and does not want it to
40 be sent forward if other changes may be coming up. Some decisions still need to be made, and
41 that could be happening on Thursday.

42
43 Selectman D'Angelo - Some department heads still need to complete their budget, due to
44 changes in personnel. Also, they are still waiting on the ambulance contract. These changes are
45 holding up completion, but they hope to be done soon.

46 **VIII. School Board Update**
47 **IX. Other Committee Updates –**
48 **X. Minutes –**

49
50 January 23rd –

51 **Mr. Shankey made a motion to accept the minutes of January 23, 2018 as**
52 **written. Dr. Owens seconded the motion. All in favor.**

53
54 January 29th –

55 Please switch Mr. Romick from the liaison section to the absent section as that is
56 when he was on vacation.

57
58 Line 134 – add “they may stay because of other considerations such as”

59
60 **Mr. Heuer made a motion to accept the minutes of January 29th with changes. Mr.**
61 **Holmes seconded the motion. All in favor.**

62
63 February 5th – Change the date to February 5th

64
65 Line 95 – change what Mr. Heuer said

66
67 Introduce Dr. Lockwood as Superintendent Lockwood, and Mr. Richardson as School
68 Board Chair

69
70 123 – Haggart not Haggard

71
72 13. Member comments – line 245 – fix what Mr. Heuer said

73
74 248 – after PD or FD appropriations

75
76 266 – the \$145 million is full disclosure, needs to be shared so the town doesn’t see it as
77 \$705,000

78
79 After Deana Haggart – Vice Chair – add in Lamphere

80
81 **Mr. Shankey made a motion to accept the minutes with changes. Dr. Owens**
82 **seconded the motion. All in favor.**

83
84 **XI. Old Business –**
85 **XII. New Business –**

86 **1. Finalize Drafts of the Annual Report and handout for School**
87 **District**

88 The BC discussed proper wording for the School District green sheet
89 handout as well as the Annual Report including but not limited to
90 removing opinionated language.

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Mr. Heuer made a motion to accept the Annual Report with changes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Owens. 5 in favor, 1 opposed, no abstentions, 1 absent.

Vice Chair Lamphere -Should the cleaned up spreadsheet be attached to the handout?

Selectman D'Angelo – Our town does not even compare to the comparable neighboring towns used, it is unfair to try to catch up with towns that have over \$100,000,000 more in valuation. Valuations - Auburn is almost \$665 million, Weare \$820 million, Rye \$2 billion, Chester can't compete with those kinds of salaries. Also, looking at the State of NH County Population Projection of Municipality produced by the NH Office of Energy and Planning and the Regional Planning Commission shows that by 2020 Weare – projected to be 9,000 and Chester 5,200, Auburn, 5,500, or 6,000 people. They don't match up.

Mr. Heuer – Our economy hangs by a thread, we're not keeping up with the rest of the world. We're falling further and further behind, we can't be \$20 trillion in debt and interest rates are going up not down. Diesel fuel has gone up dramatically again. A big part of the economy hinges on that because everything that moves uses diesel.

Selectman D'Angelo – Why are we building budgets and administrative positions in for some future potential issue that we don't know if it's actually going to happen. There's a drop in student population and class size, but very few changes in staffing have happened recently.

Vice Chair Lamphere – The homes that are being put up are starter homes, or a little better than starter homes so perhaps we're two or three years out for the impact on schools. In 2000, or 2001 there was a development off of Jennifer Drive that when people moved in, they were all young kids but it was a big hit when they reached school age.

Mr. Shankey – Part of what the town has done well collectively in the past is managing these increases, however I shared my feelings and this seems to be more than is necessary.

Dr. Owens – There's a lack of getting information out to the public. The BC denying the contract sparked a lot of controversy on the Front Porch. They seem shocked; we're doing a poor job of getting information out because though people should do their research, they may not be. Perhaps the comparison chart could be added to the document that will be handed out to the townspeople for their understanding? People are taking their information at face value and not looking into it themselves.

Mr. Heuer – Rather than sending out the whole sheet, we could put a sentence sharing that we have looked at the towns that the school board has mentioned, and none of them compare to Chester so it's an unfair comparison.

136 Mr. Shankey – People may look quickly at a sheet, but I think it needs to be in a
137 presentation to make a statement rather than on a piece of paper that people have to dig
138 through. Though I agree with what is here, if that sheet is handed out, it may be a lot for
139 them to go through.

140
141 Vice Chair Lamphere – I do think the attendance will be better this time around with so
142 much on the table. We came to a conclusion; some people will think we're right, some
143 people will think we aren't right. The numbers are correct and people will have to make
144 their choice if they want to support that or not. The school board will probably be doing
145 some sort of similar presentation as such was presented to the BC. It would be important
146 to have something shared about why the BC supported the school budget, but not the
147 contract.

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149
150 **2. Review and sign the MS-27** – Passed the information around the quorum,
151 and a majority of those present signed. See attached.

152
153 **3. Review the signed warrant** – See attached.

154
155 **4. Town and School Expenses**

156
157 **5. Prepare for Town Budget review**

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159 **XIII. Member Comments**

- 160 1. Chuck Heuer – Facebook Live
161 2. Chuck Heuer – Ways to generate public interest and interaction for the budget
162 process both School and Town.

163
164 Items 1 and 2 are a combo. There's a lot of interaction on the Chester Front Porch group
165 on Facebook, maybe there are some ways to use something like that to channel interest
166 into the budget process. Facebook live could be another way to share the meetings, it's
167 currently being shared through CTV but this could be another way, and it would allow for
168 more comment at the time. The participation of the townspeople and the attendance has
169 been very low. There are tools out there that could help spark an interest. Especially since
170 this is of vital interest. Some people in town don't have to worry about taxes, but most of
171 us do.

172
173 Dr. Owens – One of the BC members of Deerfield posts updates and questions for
174 opinions. The Front Porch is great, but it's owned by one member of town which can be
175 limiting. There are other ways of getting the info out, by hosting interviews, more
176 Facebook or webpage involvement.

177
178 Vice Chair Lamphere – A catchy titled letter to the editor could also help get some
179 information out for people to see more easily.
180

181 Selectman D'Angelo – since the town meeting is on a weeknight, putting up posters/signs
182 around town could help more people be aware.

183

184 **XIV. Public Comments**

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186 **XV. Next Meeting Date – March 5, 2018 (?)**

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188 **XVI. Adjourn -**

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190 Selectman D'Angelo made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Heuer seconded the motion. All in
191 favor, the Budget Committee meeting of February 12, 2018 adjourned at 8:44pm.

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193 Respectfully Submitted,

194

195 Sarah DeLisle, Recording Secretary

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