**Town of Chester**

**PACT Committee Meeting**

**Saturday, May 19th, 2018**

**Rangeway Meeting Room**

**Draft Minutes**

**I Preliminaries**

Call the Meeting to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

New PACT Volunteer: Jack Cannon

2018/2019 Approved Budget

Part-Time Hire

Studio Purchases: 84 Chester Street

Upcoming Programming

Construction Projects

Treasurer’s Report

School Request / Plan

Non-Public Session  
Meeting Adjournment

*1.1 Call to Order*

Joe Castricone, Chairman, called this meeting of the PACT Committee to order at 10:30am.

*1.2 Pledge of Allegiance*

Chairman Castricone led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

*1.3 Roll Call*

**Members Present:**

Joseph S. Castricone, Chairman

Bob Grimm, Co-Chairman

Joseph Hagan, Selectman Liaison (ex-officio) – arrived 10:35am; departed 11:55am

Karl Knudsen, Secretary

Richard LeBlanc, Treasurer

Terry Traynor

**Members of the Public Present, at Various Times:**

Jack Cannon

Chuck Heuer

Ben Kilar

Kim Peterson

Royal Richardson

Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times

*1.4 Additions or Deletions*

Chairman Castricone announced that Selectman D’Angelo would not be in attendance; he had recently sustained a fall and was going to the hospital. Selectman Hagan will serve as the BOS liaison today. There will be no Public Comment.

*1.5 Approval of Minutes*

**Co-Chairman Grimm moved to approve the minutes of 2/26/2017, 9/1/17, and 2/3/18 as written; Mr. Traynor seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

**II New Business**

*2.1 New PACT Volunteer: Jack Cannon*

Jack Cannon, a former Selectman, wishes to continue to serve the community; just not in a frontline sense. Mr. Cannon looks forward to learning technology and honoring the memory of Dick Godfrey; a great man for whom the Studio is memorialized.

**Treasurer LeBlanc moved to nominate Jack Cannon as an official PACT volunteer; Mr. Traynor seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

The Committee thanked Mr. Cannon for his interest and welcomed him aboard.

*2.2 2018/2019 Approved Budget*

Chairman Castricone outlined the items to be purchased this fiscal year: RDL Automatic Gain Control, 1X5 A/V DA, 4 Channel Multiplexers, JVC TC400-TDM 4-Position Simultaneous Battery Charger, JVC SSL-JVC50 Spare Battery, and Transcend 32 GB SD Card.

Mr. Traynor wondered if a 2-position battery charger would be less expensive; Chairman Castricone said not much, maybe $10 less.

*2.3 Part-Time Hire*

The Part-Time Studio Worker position was discussed. Mr. Traynor felt that the main purpose of a part-timer would be to take pressure off the volunteers.

Chairman Castricone explained that now that the funding has been approved, the Committee needs to go before the BOS to request permission to hire such an employee.

Mr. Cannon suggested a job description be drawn up; Mr. Traynor read the preliminary list of duties composed by Chairman Castricone (Mr. Traynor’s comments in italics.)

* Convert VHS to digital: *can be* *tedious and long and requires someone to physically be here and be doing nothing else*
* Do all updates to equipment: *can take 3 or more hours; it’s essential to stay on top of operating system updates*
* Maintain equipment
* Program the daily and weekly programs on 20, 21, and 22: *currently done by Chuck Heuer*
* Complete and maintain all paperwork for equipment and volunteers: *it’s* *necessary to keep track of warranties, volunteer hours, etc.*
* Training of volunteers on the use of equipment
* Recommend upgrades to equipment and software: *someone should be here to keep an eye on things for consistency’s sake*
* Recommend changes in policies & procedures: *make the station run smoother* – *again, consistency*
* Maintain Budget
* Report to PACT Committee weekly or monthly

Co-Chairman Grimm suggested that the position also include producing School Board meetings; approximately 4 hours per month.

If approved by the BOS, the position will be advertised, applications will be accepted for 30 days, and then interviews will take place.

Mr. Cannon asked of qualifications; there was some discussion on this. Mr. Traynor felt that “general technical knowledge” should be required; but there were varying views on what this actually entails. It was agreed that this position will involve more than a traditional administrative assistant’s skill set; but less than a professional filmmaker’s. Mr. Traynor felt that someone who can replace a hard drive, rebuild a computer, or be able to work around substandard editing programs constituted someone with a general technical knowledge.

Chairman Castricone felt it was important for the person to be able to follow schematics and perform basic wiring. Treasurer LeBlanc felt that the position should include general working knowledge of a TriCaster. Chairman Castricone suggested each applicant submit a short film clip. It was agreed that each and every Public Access Cable TV station is different, and the successful candidate must be adaptable. Chairman Castricone noted that currently there is no database of PACT Committee members and volunteers; the employee could create this to include background, experience, and contact information.

Chairman Castricone suggested that all applicants undergo a criminal background check.

Selectman Hagan wondered if other towns’ job descriptions had been browsed. Chairman Castricone explained that the only nearby town with a part-time studio person is Sandown; many other surrounding towns’ stations have full-time workers because they receive hundreds of thousands of dollars in franchise fees.

Mr. Heuer suggested the Committee identify its current deficits and build the job description from there. Because of the modest compensation being offered, Mr. Heuer felt hiring someone with general knowledge and lots of room to grow would be ideal.

**Chairman Castricone moved to have Co-Chairman Grimm and Mr. Traynor go before the BOS to request approval for the Part-Time studio employee position; Treasurer LeBlanc and Secretary Knudsen seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

*2.4 Studio Purchases: 84 Chester Street*

Chairman Castricone recommended the Committee purchase the curtain track and green screen instead of the camera.

**Chairman Castricone moved to purchase the track and green curtain; Mr. Traynor seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

*2.5 Upcoming Programming*

8th Grade Class Night is Thursday, June 14th; Treasurer LeBlanc & Chairman Castricone will set up and Co-Chairman Grimm & Treasurer LeBlanc will do the program.

8th Grade Promotion (Graduation) Ceremony is Saturday, June 16th; Chairman Castricone & Co-Chairman Grimm will do the program.

Town Fair is September 8th; Mr. Traynor & Treasurer LeBlanc plan to attend and Mr. Cannon & Mr. Heuer hope to assist as well. Secretary Knudsen does not yet know if he will be available.

*2.6 Construction Projects*

Approximately a year ago, PACT requested that Maintenance drill into the MPR so that PACT could install new wiring from the Studio. According to Maintenance, a special bit is needed to drill through the masonry. Maintenance did drill 1 hole to the MPR, but it’s not big enough. Chairman Castricone explained that once the proper drilling is done, they will run new wires and use old wires as spares. Treasurer LeBlanc noted that they are looking for a way to waterproof 2 ½ inch pipe.

Selectman Hagan wondered if Comcast would come out to do this work for a price; Chairman Castricone replied that they would not. Selectman Hagan will discuss this all with the BOS to see what can be done.

Installing cabling to the main Meeting Room has been discussed since September. 3 RG6 cables and 3 CAT6 cables need to be pulled so that 3 cameras may be placed for additional vantage points during important meetings.

Materials have been purchased to complete the overhead lighting project in the Studio. Chairman Castricone, Mr. Traynor, Treasurer LeBlanc, and Mr. Heuer agreed to meet & do the work on Saturday, June 2nd at 10am. The Studio will only need to be closed that day.

**III Old Business**

*3.1 Treasurer’s Report*

A formal report was not given. However, it was noted that the account remains the same since last meeting. The invoice for $2k from Broadlink (Greg Hall’s company) will be paid soon.

*3.2 School Request / Plan*

Ms. Peterson joined the meeting table and shared printed copies of her PowerPoint presentation entitled *Chester Academy / PACT Strategic Plan Overview*. Ms. Peterson focused mainly on the perceived needs of 3 “customer” segments (students, parents, and all other Chester residents), how those perceived needs define equipment requirements, and the projected benefits of requested equipment. Ms. Peterson explained that surveys were given to the first 2 customer segments, students and parents; the needs of all other Chester residents were speculated.

A new mixer, HD conversion equipment, 2 HD-ready cameras, and an HD-ready portable camera & microphone are being requested by the School for purchase from the PACT fund—a total of $5,137. Ms. Peterson said that the BOS wanted the School to get aligned with PACT; and that the BOS approved putting these purchases in the PACT warrant. Ms. Peterson said that the students were really excited to start a news group.

Mr. Traynor asked for details on the issues with the camera. Ms. Peterson stated that it freezes, and someone has to climb up the wall to reset it. Co-Chairman Grimm said that he has never seen it freeze while live, nor has he seen Mr. Kilar climb to reset it. Mr. Traynor thought this might actually be a feed issue, not a camera issue.

Chairman Castricone noted that 10 years ago, PACT spent $14k on equipment at the School. In those 10 years, the only content consistently produced by the School has been 1 School Board meeting per month. It is the School’s business to supply its own content. There is no access for Co-Chairman Grimm to come fix faulty equipment unless escorted (as is the protocol for all visitors and vendors). Chairman Castricone was disappointed that the School didn’t come before PACT to discuss this request.

Co-Chairman Grimm asked Ms. Peterson how many of the so-called “customers” surveyed were Comcast subscribers; he felt that the needs surveys were invalid. Co-Chairman Grimm added that permission is needed to film children; when Channel 22 goes live, it is viewable across the country.

Royal Richardson wondered why all of this mattered; Chairman Castricone advised that there was no public comment. Mr. Kilar, Mr. Richardson, and Ms. Peterson prepared to leave the meeting but remained standing. As tensions rose, Selectman Hagan urged attendees to lower the tenor and speak to one another like members of the same community.

Mr. Traynor suggested students film their news with their iPhones using 4K; this is done by professional news channels. Selectman Hagan asked if the requested equipment was compatible with 4K; Mr. Traynor said no, but students already have this virtually free system at their disposal. This could mean having 200 cameras, it simply is a matter of sharing content through a folder.

Mr. Richardson said that if the PACT Committee is not going to move forward and say whether they will or won’t support the purchases, then he was going to leave. Secretary Knudsen urged all attendees to lower the level of tension in the room—"everyone here cares about doing the right thing; if we don’t work on this, shame on us.”

Mr. Cannon asked if the school news group is composed of remote bits or if it’s done at a desk; Ms. Peterson said that she envisions both, like actual news. Mr. Cannon wondered if the students could move toward their vision now with what they have, and then highlight deficiencies as they go. Mr. Kilar and Ms. Peterson didn’t think so. Ms. Peterson mentioned again that funds have already been approved and appropriated. Chairman Castricone offered that the School could use cameras that PACT has here.

Mr. Cannon suggested that a separate meeting take place in which a few individuals meet at the school and then reconvene with the entire Committee. Treasurer LeBlanc explained that the School is supposed to work through Co-Chairman Grimm, and they don’t; they call Chairman Castricone.

Chairman Castricone moved to table the issue and have the School get together with Co-Chairman Grimm to make something happen. Treasurer LeBlanc reminded that access to the School is needed. Mr. Cannon strongly suggested that the School take a new inventory; the last was done in 2011. Mr. Grimm has an appointment with Mr. Kilar this Wednesday at 5:15pm to replace the switcher.

Again, Chairman Castricone moved to table the issue until June. Selectman Hagan felt that the source of contention was Comcast funding; this should be taken off the table, it’s meaningless. Mr. Cannon reminded that similar conversations took place when PACT was trying to get streaming online.

Mr. Traynor asked if the School representatives were familiar with a “proof of concept”, which is basically a short film which gives the feel of a full-feature film. Mr. Richardson would be loath to let students “walk around with their own devices”; but then said that the students did something similar during the election. Chairman Castricone asked why those shorts weren’t provided to PACT to air; Mr. Richardson said that the School wants something more seamless and structured.

Mr. Kilar challenged Treasurer LeBlanc to come to the School next Friday and attempt to film. Regarding successfully operating equipment, Mr. Kilar insisted, “if you can’t, they [the students] can’t.”

Secretary Knudsen thought it would be best to allow the purchase of the requested equipment. He thought the Committee should give the School a chance to do what they want to. He urged the Committee to think beyond where they are; they have to start somewhere.

Again Ms. Peterson stated that the purchases were approved; Treasurer LeBlanc countered that they are not yet approved by the PACT Committee. Mr. Kilar urged the Committee to take a vote. Mr. Traynor offered to go to the school to attempt to operate the existing equipment. Mr. Kilar agreed, but said this should happen on a separate day from when Treasurer LeBlanc visits.

Selectman Hagan wondered if the Committee voted today to approve or deny the request, would this end the issue, or could the School go back to the BOS? Chairman Castricone said it would be the end. It was noted that the cameras the School currently have are C Tape & VHS tape.

Mr. Cannon expressed that he’d like a motion to be made for a detailed physical inventory of the equipment at the School.

**Treasurer LeBlanc moved that a detailed physical inventory of the equipment at the School be performed; Chairman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

Mr. Heuer acknowledged the presence of an “elephant in the room”; he is disappointed that personality clashes are getting in the way of furthering education & benefits to be reaped by all. To vote and get a “no” is the wrong answer. Different towns do and don’t share PACT funding with their schools. It is unfortunate that the Committee did not get to participate in deciding what the School’s equipment needs are.

Ms. Peterson commented that the latter part of Mr. Heuer’s comment was wrong; and the School did try to discuss needs with the Committee.

Mr. Heuer emphasized the need to “bury the hatchet.” He reminded that the Committee runs the Studio on a very limited budget; and the Committee doesn’t know what the agenda is at the School. As mentioned at the last meeting, Mr. Heuer would hate to see “2 towers” arise and have twice as much money spent.

Ms. Peterson stated that the School just wants to replace defunct equipment. Mr. Heuer asked the Committee, what is it about wanting new equipment that makes them think the School is moving toward their own tower? Treasurer LeBlanc said it was because the School bypassed the PACT committee and went straight to the BOS. Mr. Heuer disagreed, stating that the School didn’t go around anyone; the topic came up the night of the BOS meeting. Mr. Richardson added that the previous Chair of the BOS asked the School to attend the BOS meeting.

Chairman Castricone urged all to let go of the past and create solutions workable for both sides.

Chairman Castricone moved to table the issue, have Co-Chairman Grimm and the School sit down and then come back to the Committee to have a base to start from and then move forward.

Secretary Knudsen suggested the Committee approve purchasing items one at a time once funds are available on July 1st. Mr. Kilar added that there is a logical sequence in which to do this. Mr. Heuer wondered what difference the type of content being produced made.

Selectman Hagan departed the meeting at 11:55am.

Mr. Kilar said it would be helpful if personal opinions were put aside and the School could be given a yes or no to give them direction; much time has been invested. Mr. Kilar again requested the Committee take a vote. Chairman Castricone asked, if the Committee approves buying this equipment, would that be the end?

Secretary Knudsen felt that was a question that could not be answered. Secretary Knudsen expressed that he didn’t like the idea of voting now, nor did he like the idea of tabling the issue; however, he felt that tabling was smarter.

Secretary Knudsen seconded the motion to table the issue until June.

Chairman Castricone moved to modify the motion to table on the contingency that the School and PACT Committee get together, with the potential to modify plans.

Chairman Castricone withdrew this motion.

**Chairman Castricone moved to table this scenario until the PACT Committee and the School can get together to come up with a plan; Secretary Knudsen seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

The next PACT Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 4th at 7:00pm.

Ms. Peterson, Mr. Kilar, and Mr. Richardson departed the meeting at 12:09pm.

*3.3 Non-Public Session*

**Chairman Castricone moved to enter Non-Public session under NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c), Reputation; Treasurer LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

Mr. Cannon, Mr. Heuer, and Ms. Williams departed and the meeting room was closed at 12:10pm.

The meeting room was reopened at 12:36pm.

**Chairman Castricone moved that the Committee come out of Non-Public session; Treasurer LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

**Chairman Castricone moved that the minutes of the Non-Public session on Reputation be sealed for an indefinite period; Treasurer LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

**IV Adjournment**

The next scheduled meeting of the PACT Committee is Monday, June 4th, 2018 at 7:00pm.

**Chairman Castricone moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Traynor seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Rose Wilson, Recording Secretary