

**Town of Chester
Selectboard’s Meeting
Thursday, August 3, 2023
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I. Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
Chairman’s Additions or Deletions
Public Comment (10 minutes)
Jason Walsh
Composting Program
Fire Department Matrix
Carkin Street
Consent Agenda
Chairman’s Announcements
Roundtable
TA Report
Action Items
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Myette called the meeting of the Chester Selectboard to order at 6:00pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectboard Present:

Chuck Myette
Steve Couture
Dana Theokas
Dick Trask
Stephen Landau

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Jim Brown
Justine Celentano, Town Clerk / Tax Collector
Kim Chaze
Phil Gladu, Fire Chief
Nancy Myette

Christy Ortins
Nick Ortins
Bob Packard
Leslie Packard
James Piper, Supervisor of Roads
Jason Walsh
and other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Myette led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

Selectman Landau added one nonpublic on Employment.

1.5 Public Comment

Chairman Myette opened the meeting to public comment at 6:01pm.

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 6:02pm.

II. Appointments

2.1 Jason Walsh

Mr. Walsh moved to Chester three years ago with his family. He has been serving on the ZBA for about 18 months as an alternate and will now be a regular member. This has been a great way to meet people and also help the community. The ZBA is a very judicial Board, and the volunteers have to understand what can and cannot be said. Mr. Walsh agreed with that statement.

Chairman Myette mentioned how Planning Board and ZBA work together, and suggested Mr. Walsh might want to attend some of the Planning Board meetings and meet a few of the members. Mr. Walsh mentioned he has been watching the Planning Board meetings and he will attend a few in the future.

The Board thanked him for volunteering.

2.2 Composting Program (moved to later in the meeting)

2.3 Fire Department Matrix

Chief Gladu presented the revised pay matrix for call members. This matrix has not changed in many years and a COLA adjustment was not given the last few years. Chief Gladu explained

the process from volunteering to becoming a paid on-call member. In order for the on-call members to get a raise they have to meet the requirements for all four quarters of the year.

With the new matrix, the raises will not have much effect on the budget. Chairman Myette would like to see the matrix be more universal with the town’s matrix. Selectman Trask feels it is important to keep people and also attract new people.

Selectman Landau asked who pays for the training. Chief Gladu stated the on-call member pays for the training and is reimbursed by the town after one year.

Vice Chairman Couture feels experienced on-call members should be compensated after the one-year mark and not have to wait three years. Chief Gladu mentioned raises are also given for certifications.

Selectwoman Theokas mentioned the Police Department is looking into incentives for schooling.

Selectwoman Theokas motioned to table this conversation. No second for this motion.

Chairman Myette felt this was a reasonable effort made by the Fire Chief and it fits into the Department Plan the Board has been talking about. Vice Chairman Couture would like Fire Chief Gladu to look at bridging the gap with the years of service for those already holding certifications, so they don’t have to wait three years. Selectman Landau mentioned other departments in Town do not get increases when they complete courses. Selectman Trask agrees there should be an education benefit for the town.

Selectman Trask would like to move forward with the matrix as presented. Chairman Myette asked Chief Gladu to look at this in a timely manner before budget time.

Selectman Trask motioned to approve the matrix as presented.

Vice Chairman Couture recommended amending the motion to look into the one-year/three-year gap for new members with previous fire service and come back to the Board with a recommendation.

Selectman Trask amended his motion: to approve the matrix as presented with a follow up on the one-year /three-year gap for previous fire service. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

2.2 Composting Program (moved from earlier in the meeting)

The Ortins would like to start a small composting program with a pickup area in Sandown and Hampstead. A local composting program is currently being started in Chester by another individual. The compost picked up by the Ortins would be used on their garden at Spring Hill Farm. Vice Chairman Couture inquired if this is allowable under the current

arrangement with the Ortins. Chairman Myette said it is, but it needed to come to the Selectboard because it would be used on town land, and it could be a liability for the town. Ms. Ortins has spoken to DES and a permit is not needed for their size operation. Also, Rockingham County Conservation District has been notified and they are fine with the operation on the farm.

Selectman Landau mentioned legislation has been looking into composting and is promoting it. The Ortins will be picking up and going through the buckets. Selectman Landau stated the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee is in favor of this operation. Selectwoman Theokas asked what happens if there are complaints. Chairman Myette stated it would be shut down. Ms. Ortins explained the process they currently use and how they are cognizant of the area not smelling and keeping rodents out.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to allow the Ortins to have a composting program at Spring Hill Farm.

Chairman Myette asked for an amendment to the motion; have a letter sent to the Town from Rockingham County Conservation District giving their approval for the project.

Vice Chairman Couture amended his to motion; to allow the Ortins to have a composting program at Spring Hill Farm, pending a letter of approval from Rockingham County Conservation District. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

The Ortins were asked to do a 90 day follow up on the program with the Selectboard.

2.4 Carkin Street

Mr. Chaze commended a few of the employees he has had positive interactions with. He loves living in Town and feels it is a good place on earth. Chairman Myette thanked Mr. Chaze for recognizing Chester is a special town. The Board appreciates hearing kudos about the town employees.

Mr. Chaze mentioned Carkin Street is one of the oldest subdivisions in town and the road is in terrible condition. The survey has been done and the Town did come in and put in a temporary fix for the flooding that has been happening for many years. Mr. Chaze is asking when the road will be fixed, as in his opinion it has been in terrible condition for 30 years. Chairman Myette explained the process from engineering to cost estimates to getting approval at Town Meeting. Chairman Myette stated that Carkin Street is on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Year 24-25 but that will need to be voted on by the Townspeople. Another option would be to get a petition for a Warrant article to pave Carkin Street.

Mr. Chaze suggested fixing the road in sections. Selectman Trask stated there would be too many seams and that is not how the town does road projects. Chairman Myette stated it is

on the CIP and will be presented to the Town. Mr. Chaze asked what happens if the people vote no, how will it be fixed. He also asked what if people voted not to fix Lane Road. Chairman Myette stated Lane Road is a true safety issue and must be fixed.

Chairman Myette ended the conversation.

III. New Business

None

IV Consent Agenda

4.1 Town Fair Raffle Authorization

Selectman Trask motioned to approve the Town Fair Raffle Authorization form. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask – aye, Theokas – aye, Couture – aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

V. Selectmen’s Business

5.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings and upcoming events:

Monday August 7, 2023	Wason Pond Commission at 7:00pm
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Tuesday August 8, 2023	Conservation Commission at 6:00pm
	Solar Working Group at 7:00pm

Wednesday August 9, 2023	Planning Board at 7:00pm
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Tuesday August 15, 2023	ZBA at 7:00pm
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Thursday August 17, 2023	Selectboard Meeting at 6:00pm
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The planned work to replace the Fremont Road Bridge has been scheduled for Monday, August 14th (weather dependent – could be pushed back if it continues to rain). Due to the nature of the work, that area of Fremont Road will be closed to traffic for approximately two months and a detour utilizing Pheasant Run Drive and Shepard Home Road will be necessary. There will be nowhere to turn around, should people ignore the signage and drive that far.

The Board asked Mr. Piper for an update on Lane Road. Mr. Piper stated the pipe is in, and backfilled. With the weather tomorrow they will get what they can done. No set date but weather permitting it could be finished by the end of next week. Vice Chairman Couture asked if the cost for the engineering was in the estimate the Board received. It will be a

229 separate cost for the project. The tree company hired for the project was also able to retrieve
230 the pipes from downstream. Mr. Piper was able to get a lot of the asphalt picked up.

231
232 Selectwoman Theokas asked if people coming to look at the damage were being safe and not
233 getting too close to the opening. Mr. Piper, although not always on site, has observed people
234 being safe. The Board thanked Mr. Piper.

235
236 Mr. Packard, Lane Road, mentioned most of the work has been under the management of the
237 neighbors and they are doing a great job.

238
239 *5.2 Roundtable*
240

241 Selectman Landau pointed out the memo from Maintenance Director Cavanaugh about the
242 considerable amount of work needed at the library. These repairs could possibly be placed
243 on the CIP. Selectman Landau and Maintenance Director Cavanaugh are working on RFPs for
244 the roofs at the municipal complex and the tower at Stevens Hall.

245
246 Selectwoman Theokas mentioned the last day for the summer program is tomorrow. It is a
247 great program with lots of children in attendance. Selectman Trask reiterated what a great
248 program this is. Many of the counselors come from inside the program. Kudos were given to
249 Recreation Director Reishus and her team.

250
251 Selectwoman Theokas mentioned the next event for Recreation is Town Fair.

252
253 Selectman Trask
254 *Nothing to report.*

255
256 Vice Chairman Couture
257 *Nothing to report.*

258
259 Chairman Myette
260 *Nothing to report.*

261
262 *5.3 Town Administrator’s Report*
263

264 Admin Assistant Jalbert inquired if the Board was ok with the encumbrances approved at the
265 last meeting. They were in agreement those were still approved, and the department heads
266 could be notified.

267
268 Selectman Landau suggested the remaining \$36,169.25 be encumbered and applied to the
269 Lane Road Emergency Repairs.

270
271 ***Selectman Landau motioned to encumber \$36,169.25 for the Lane Road Emergency***
272 ***Repairs contingent on Department of Revenue Administration approval. Vice Chairman***
273 ***Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– nay,***
274 ***Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau –aye. With four in favor, the motion passed.***

275
276 **4.4 Action Items**
277

278 Finance Director Smith (not present) has requested the Board to vote for the annual
279 withdrawal from the winter road maintenance capital reserve.
280

281 ***Selectman Trask motioned to withdraw \$100,560.98 from the Winter Road Maintenance***
282 ***Capital Reserve Fund. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was***
283 ***taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau –aye. With all in***
284 ***favor, the motion passed.***
285

286 **5.5 Non-Public Session(s)**
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288 Chairman Myette announced non-public sessions on reputation, security and employment.
289

290 ***Vice Chairman Couture motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II) (b)***
291 ***employment (c) reputation, (e) pending litigation, and (i) security. Selectman Landau***
292 ***seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye,***
293 ***Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.***
294

295 The meeting was closed to the public at 7:40 PM.
296

297 ***Selectman Trask motioned to come out of non-public session. Vice Chairman Couture***
298 ***seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye,***
299 ***Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.***
300

301 The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:15 PM.
302

303 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on***
304 ***Reputation. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken***
305 ***Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor,***
306 ***the motion passed.***
307

308 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on***
309 ***Reputation. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken***
310 ***Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor,***
311 ***the motion passed.***
312

313 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on***
314 ***Emergency Functions. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was***
315 ***taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in***
316 ***favor, the motion passed.***
317

318 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the fourth non-public session, on***
319 ***Reputation. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken***

Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the fifth non-public session, on Reputation. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the sixth non-public session, on Reputation. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

VI. Adjournment

Selectman Trask moved to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert

Recording Secretary