

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, April 4th, 2019
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I. Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
Additions and Deletions
Public Comment
Approval of Minutes
Items for Signature
Technical Review Committee
CIP Project Funding
Non-Public Sessions
Warrant
Roundtable
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Owens called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:02pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Cass Buckley (arrived at 7:06pm)
Joseph Hagan
Stephen Landau
Jeremy Owens

Selectmen absent:

Steve D’Angelo

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Greg Bolduc, Fire Chief
Myrick Bunker, Building Inspector
Scott Currier
Ephraim Dobbins, Budget Committee
Christina Gelinas, Budget Committee
Brennan Holmes, Budget Committee

Kandace Knowlton, Library Director
Rhonda Lamphere, Budget Committee
Liz Lufkin, Town Clerk
Nancy Myette
Mike Weider, Budget Committee
Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times
And other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

1.5 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Owens led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.6 Chairman’s Additions and Deletions

There were neither additions nor deletions.

1.7 Public Comment

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:03pm.

II. Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

An approval sheet for the previous weeks’ meeting minutes is in the signature folder.

2.2 Items for Signature

All members should review and sign items in the Signature Folder.

III. New Business

3.1 Technical Review Committee

Police Chief Aaron Berube, Fire Chief Greg Bolduc, and Building Inspector Myrick Bunker appeared before the Selectmen to discuss formally setting up the Technical Review Committee (TRC).

The TRC was originally set up by Building Inspector Bunker during the Crowley Woods project in order to review projects or events that would impact Police, Fire, Roads, etc. before they go too far into the planning process and correcting any errors would be costly. The current Library Renovations project was cited as an example; the Fire Department was not consulted when plans were drawn up and unexpected and potentially costly changes needed to be made to the plans after the project was already out to bid.

Any major subdivision, work on a Town-owned building, or large event should be reviewed by the TRC. They plan to meet ad hoc to draw up a list of what ‘triggers’ a project to be reviewed; this list will be presented to the Selectmen for their review before implementing. The TRC would meet once a month and all projects that meet the criteria would be reviewed. Building Inspector Bunker will reach out to other Towns to see what their criteria are.

Selectman Hagan moved to appoint Building Inspector Bunker as leader of the ad hoc Technical Review Committee, which will lead to a permanent Technical Review Committee; Selectman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

Fire Chief Bolduc and Building Inspector Bunker departed the meeting table at 7:17pm; Police Chief Berube remained.

3.2 CIP Project Funding

Police Chief Berube and Library Director Kandace Knowlton appeared separately before the Selectmen in order to discuss the changes to the CIP Projects Warrant Article that were made at last week’s meeting.

The Selectmen had removed \$40k from the CIP Projects Warrant Article which was intended to fund a new cruiser. The expectation was that those funds could be made up from the Police Department Detail fund, which was showing a total of ~\$57k in its last bank statement. However, as Police Chief Berube explained, \$30k for that \$57k had been voted upon at the 2018 Town Meeting for new radios to replace the existing ones that are becoming non-compliant, and as such there was only ~\$27k available, not \$40k. As to why the radios had not yet been purchased, he explained that as Chester is a small town they have no bulk-buying power with the vendor; in order to save money, the vendor notifies Police Chief Berube when they are about to put in a large order and the Town piggy-backs onto that order, either saving money or getting additional items at no charge. He expects to place the radio order in May 2019.

He also has \$16,227 left over from the Town Meeting 2018 CIP Projects Warrant Article cruiser purchase, as he was able to swap much of the equipment over from the old one to the new one. Those funds could be used to offset the \$40k, should it be returned to this year’s CIP Projects Warrant Article. There was some discussion about how to effectuate this; in the end it was decided to leave it in the CIP Capital Reserve Fund.

Chairman Owens moved to return the deleted \$40k to the CIP Projects Warrant Article Police Cruiser line; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Vice-Chairman Buckley abstaining and Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

Police Chief Berube departed the meeting table at 7:32pm; Library Director Knowlton joined the Selectman at this time.

The Selectmen had removed \$52k from the CIP Projects Warrant Article which was intended to assist with the cost of the Library’s upcoming renovations. The RFP was posted in March, walkthroughs with contractors are ongoing, and bids are due Friday, April 12th and scheduled to be opened at the Library Trustees meeting on Tuesday, April 16th. She has no issue with the \$27k for a Library Patio being pushed back to a future year, but they are counting on the renovation funds this year.

The Library Foundation had expected to raise \$85k; they currently have \$20k and are hoping for another \$20-25k. They also plan to utilize impact fees of \$20k, and \$110k from the Library Trust Funds. Along with the \$52k in the CIP, this would total ~\$227k. If the bids are low, they might not need the CIP funds.

Selectman Hagan asked about the potential added cost of the unexpected changes as mentioned during the earlier appointment with the TRC; this is unknown at present.

Selectman Landau moved to return the deleted \$52k to the CIP Projects Warrant Article Library Renovations line with the stipulation that the estimates be reviewed before Town Meeting; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A question for the Library Trustees to consider was posed: if the bids are drastically higher than expected, would they be willing to table the renovations for a year? The question was called. **The vote was three in favor with Vice-Chairman Buckley abstaining and Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.**

3.3 Non-Public Sessions

Selectman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputation; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

The meeting room was closed at 7:45pm. Library Director Knowlton remained in the meeting room.

Library Director Knowlton departed the meeting at 8:06pm; Scott Currier entered at this time.

Mr. Currier departed the meeting at 8:14pm; Town Clerk Liz Lufkin entered at this time.

Town Clerk Lufkin departed the meeting at 8:32pm.

The meeting room was re-opened at 8:37pm.

Selectman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Chairman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

Selectman Landau moved that the minutes to the first non-public session on

Reputation be sealed for an indefinite period of time; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

Selectman Landau moved that the minutes to the second non-public session on Reputation be sealed for six (6) months; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

Selectman Landau moved that the minutes to the third non-public session on Reputation be sealed for one (1) year; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

3.4 Warrant

The Selectmen reordered and made their recommendations on the Warrant Articles. The results are as follows:

Article #8, Purchase of Property: **Vice-Chairman Buckley moved to move this Article to the Warrant; Selectman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Vice-Chairman Buckley opposed and Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.**
Recommendations: YES: Owens, Hagan, Landau NO: Buckley ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #9, Operating Budget: YES: Hagan, Landau, Owens NO: Buckley ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #10, CIP Funding: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #11, CIP Projects: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #12, Highway CIP Funding: YES: Hagan, Landau, Owens NO: Buckley ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #13, Highway CIP Projects: YES: Hagan, Landau, Owens NO: Buckley ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #14, Town Administrator: YES: Owens NO: Buckley, Hagan, Landau ABSENT: D’Angelo

Selectman Hagan stated that although a Town Administrator might seem expensive, it was no more expensive than the three executives at the School. Vice-Chairman Buckley stated that although he was not opposed to the idea of a Town Administrator, he had yet to see a solid plan on how it would work in Chester.

Article #15, \$15k for Steeple Repair at Chester Congregational Church: YES: Landau, Hagan NO: Buckley, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #16, Revaluation: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Owens NO: Landau ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #17, PACT: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #18, 300th Anniversary: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #19, Roadside Tree Removal: YES: Hagan, Owens NO: Buckley, Landau ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #20, Motor Vehicle Registration Fee Waived for POWs: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #21, Town Master Plan Capital Reserve Fund Creation and Funding: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #22, Increase in Elderly Property Tax Exemption: YES: Buckley, Hagan, Landau, Owens ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #23, Increase in Veterans’ Property Tax Credit: YES: Buckley, Landau, Owens ABSTAIN: Hagan ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #24, Increase in Veterans’ Tax Credit for Service-Connected Total Disability: YES: Buckley, Landau, Owens ABSTAIN: Hagan ABSENT: D’Angelo

Article #25, Replenish Unanticipated Maintenance CRF: YES: Owens, Hagan, Landau NO: Buckley ABSENT: D’Angelo

Selectman Landau brought up the question of moving Town Meeting from May to March in order to coincide with the School’s budget. He would prefer a straw poll at the beginning of this year’s Town Meeting with a Warrant Article next year if the vote was generally in the affirmative.

Selectman D’Angelo will be asked to provide his recommendations for the Warrant before next week’s meeting.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman Landau:

- The DARE program is having a “Hawaiian Shirt and Beanbag Toss/Cornhole Tournament” fundraiser in the MPR on Friday, May 3rd, 2019 at 6pm. They hope to raise \$700.
- A user of the Chester Kitchen this weekend unplugged the carbon monoxide (CO) detector, which alarmed. The person also did not turn on the exhaust hood when using the kitchen, although there is a sign clearly indicating that this is required. The

Fire Department had to respond. He has now asked the Maintenance Department to hardwire in a CO detector.

- There is an issue with the oil tank outside of the Police Station; the outer layer of the double-walled tank has water in it, and this is causing an alarm. The water needs to be disposed of as a hazardous material.
- The Department Heads meetings will be switched from the first Thursday of each month to the first Wednesday in order that Finance Director Joanne Smith can be available to answer any questions that might arise. Town Counsel Gorrow has been invited to attend the May Department Heads meeting in order to answer questions about the CIP.
- An Earth Day clean-up of Wason Pond and the roads will be held on Saturday, April 20th from 10am to 2pm.
- Hazardous Waste Day is Saturday, April 27th from 9am to 12noon in Plaistow.
- According to the Assessing Department, the latest valuation added \$8.2m to the tax base.

Selectman Hagan:

- Nothing to report.

Vice-Chairman Buckley:

- Nothing to report.

Chairman Owens:

- Drug Take-Back day is Saturday, April 27th at the Transfer Station. They cannot take liquid drugs, but the Transfer Station takes needles every week.
- The Police Department has requested overtime pay for Officers who work on Easter Sunday.
- Town Counsel has reviewed the Electricity Contracts and her requested changes have been made. **Selectman Landau moved to allow Chairman Owens to sign the Standard Power contracts; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Vice-Chairman Buckley abstaining and Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.**
- A new Library liaison will be selected after the Elections.
- Interested residents may sign up to run for elected office until 5:00pm on Friday, April 5th, 2019.

4.3 Public Comment

Mike Weider stood and was recognized. He stated that the Budget Committee is not in favor of the Warrant Article for an expendable trust fund for roadside tree removal, and that they also have some concerns on CIP Funding, specifically the \$700k to be taken from the Unassigned Fund Balance. They believe that using that amount this year will negatively impact taxes next year and would like a smaller amount to be used. They do not believe that the School surplus figure, which is currently at \$560k, is sustainable with a multi-year contract getting larger every year.

There was some dispute about ongoing funding for roadwork; Vice-Chairman Buckley believes that \$2m will be an annual figure, whereas Selectman Hagan demurs and would prefer to enact his plan where the School Budget is cut by 1% annually and those savings directed towards roadwork. Chairman Owens added that School Board Chairman Royal Richardson had emailed, saying he would be happy to meet with the Selectmen about the budget.

V. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, April 11th, 2019.

Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Doda,
Recording Secretary