

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, August 22nd, 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
Appointments – Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee,
Wason Pond Commission, Conservation Commission
Maintenance Update
New Fire Association Members
Police Department Space Needs Study
Safety Policy
Pipit Easement
Fire Department Update
Roundtable
Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Myette called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Steve D’Angelo
Joseph Hagan (arrived at 7:13pm)
Stephen Landau
Chuck Myette
Jeremy Owens (arrived at 7:33pm)

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Greg Bolduc, Fire Chief
Paul Cavanaugh, Maintenance
Victor Chouinard, Conservation Commission
Will Gatchell, Harriman
Judy Johnson, Harriman
Nancy Myette
Rick Sibley

Kristina Snyder
Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times
And possibly other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

1.5 Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-Chairman Myette led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.6 Chairman’s Additions and Deletions

An appointment with Maintenance Man Paul Cavanaugh was added to the agenda at position 3.3.

1.7 Public Comment

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:02pm.

II. Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

There are unapproved minutes in the Signature Folder; please review them and indicate changes or approval.

2.2 Items for Signature

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

III. New Business

3.1 Appointments

Kristina Snyder appeared before the Selectmen in order to be appointed as a regular member to the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee (SHFAC) and the Wason Pond Conservation and Recreation Commission (WPC).

Ms. Snyder stated that she was aware that the Conservation Commission liaised with the SHFAC and WPC, and as no-one else had expressed interest, she was interested in representing the Conservation Commission on those committees. Vice-Chairman Myette added that Ms. Snyder had been on the ConsCom for a number of years now and that she had done quite a bit of nice work and arranged for some interesting programs.

Selectman D’Angelo moved to appoint Kristina Snyder as a regular member of both the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee and the Wason Pond Conservation and Recreation Commission with three-year terms to expire May 31st, 2022; Selectman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Chairman Owens and Selectman Hagan yet to arrive; motion carried.

The Selectmen thanked Ms. Snyder and reminded her to visit the Town Clerk’s office to be sworn in. She departed the meeting at 7:05pm.

Conservation Commission Chairman Victor Chouinard then presented Rick Sibley to the Selectmen to request that he be appointed as an alternate member to the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Sibley has lived in Chester for 22 years and is interested in hiking and in nature; he has raced in the Wason Pond Pounder. He added that he is interested in preserving open space and water conservation.

Selectman D’Angelo moved to appoint Rick Sibley as an alternate member to the Conservation Commission with a three-year term to expire May 31st, 2022; Selectman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Chairman Owens and Selectman Hagan yet to arrive; motion carried.

The Selectmen thanked Mr. Sibley and reminded him to visit the Town Clerk’s office to be sworn in. He departed the meeting at 7:08pm, and Mr. Chouinard returned to the Public.

3.2 Maintenance Update

Maintenance Man Paul Cavanaugh appeared before the Selectmen to update them on Maintenance Department activities. He has been employed by the Town for eight months now.

- Stevens Hall now has a new kitchen floor.
- The Department is keeping up with current work orders as well as catching up with old ones dating back as far as 2013.
- The lawnmower needs replacing; it is expected to last this season but no longer. He has two bids and will solicit a third, then will ask that it be added to the CIP.
- He has three-four old quotes for reroofing the Annex and will have them updated.
- He will be soliciting quotes for a new air conditioning system for Town Hall as well as a new boiler for the Annex.
- The pond at Spring Hill Farm recently suggested as a residents-only recreation spot has turned out to only be knee deep. The water tested clean, however. It could make a nice picnic area. Selectman D’Angelo suggested perhaps a toddler beach to give them an area away from Wason Pond. The path in is narrow and soft; Mr. Cavanaugh has spoken with Andy Higham of the Highway Department about assisting with roadwork in order to ease access for emergency vehicles, especially.
- The Rockingham County Jail Trusties spent a week here in July and did a great job cleaning out basements and painting at Stevens Hall and the Highway Garage. They will be back the second week of September and hopefully will finish painting the Highway Garage and start the Maintenance Garage. They are also scheduled to return the second week of October and at that time they would finish up the Wason Pond Barn.
- A small garage at Spring Hill Farm that was suggested as a potting shed has more structural damage than originally thought and will need more work than just re-roofing.

Selectman Landau moved that Paul Cavanaugh be promoted to the position of Maintenance Supervisor with a \$3/hour raise; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Chairman Owens yet to arrive; motion carried.

Mr. Cavanaugh returned to the Public at 7:20pm.

3.3 New Fire Association Members

Fire Chief Bolduc appeared before the Selectmen with two new members of the Fire Association, Jordan Perry and Alex Hodosi.

Ms. Perry has her EMT-Advanced and has ambulance experience. She is attending college for nursing.

Mr. Hodosi is a long-time Explorer Post member. He attended bootcamp while still in high school and has his FFI and EMT certifications. He is a member of the National Guard and is attending college for Homeland Security. He lives in Derry, but the Association is making an exception for the residency rule for him.

The Selectmen thanked Ms. Perry and Mr. Hodosi. They, along with Fire Chief Bolduc, returned to the Public at 7:25pm.

3.4 Police Department Space Needs Study

Will Gatchell and Judy Johnson from Harriman appeared before the Selectmen with Police Chief Berube in order to discuss the Police Department Space Needs Study.

A working group had been formed of interested employees, elected officials, and residents, and had met with representatives from Harriman a dozen times or so over the past eighteen months. The current facility had been evaluated inside and out, and it was determined that the building was in fair condition overall but that the lack of space was a problem and caused issues with security and parking, among other things. Current and future needs were discussed; the Police Department currently occupies 5,058 net square feet and it was calculated that they will need 9,630 nsf in the next twenty years.

The evaluation showed that as there was already infrastructure in place, it would be economical to repurpose much of the current Police Department and Annex areas as well as building some additional space, such as a community meeting room and a sally port. The property on which the current Town Hall buildings sit is over 13 acres, which will allow for expansion of the buildings as well as additional parking. A common request from the Public was for a building that could be seen from Chester Street and of which residents could be proud.

Selectman D’Angelo asked what the cost would be to demolish the entire Town Hall complex and start building from scratch rather than repurposing and adding; Selectman Hagan would also like to know an estimate for building a new Police Department elsewhere in Town. These figures are unknown, although as the complex is insured for \$6.2m, it would likely cost at least that much. Police Chief Berube posited that Town Hall is underinsured, as Londonderry’s newly built Police Department cost that town \$13m. Selectman Landau stated that the Working Group had considered those options, but in the end determined that the existing infrastructure, the amount of land available, and the location of the current building made Harriman’s plan and location the best option overall. Additionally, repurposing and adding will allow current Police services to continue without disruption.

The last step for Harriman in this phase of the project (Space Needs Assessment Study) is to create a final report; after that, they would like to discuss the next phase (Design Plans). Part of that phase is a recommendation to perform a structural analysis on the Annex before simply reroofing (Task Two, \$6,500). Selectman Landau pointed out that the Selectmen had encumbered \$51k for reroofing the Annex; perhaps the structural analysis cost could be taken from that.

Selectman D’Angelo moved to authorize Harriman to perform a structural analysis of the Annex at a cost of \$6,500 to be taken from the encumbered funds; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

Should the Annex prove to be structurally unsound, Harriman’s original plan will need to be revised.

Harriman’s final report for this phase of the project should be available by the Selectmen’s next meeting, which is scheduled for September 5th. At that time, Task One, design plans for \$48,000, can be discussed.

Ms. Johnson stated that once a schematic design is complete, which will include energy efficient features, a cost estimate will be made in order to determine a project budget. This is likely to be available at the end of October. A presentation at Town Meeting in March is desired.

Mr. Gatchell and Ms. Johnson departed the meeting at 8:34pm; Police Chief Berube remained at the meeting table.

3.5 Safety Policy

Police Chief Berube appeared before the Selectmen to discuss the Town’s Safety Policy and Animal Control.

The Department of Labor has required that the Safety Policy be updated, as the current version appears to be from 2012. This Policy was discussed and revised at the August meeting of the Joint Loss Management Committee and is now available for the Selectmen to review and approve. It will be discussed again at the next Selectmen’s Meeting on September 5th. Police Chief Berube added that there may be parts of the Safety Policy that conflict with the Personnel Policy, and that should be reviewed next; Selectman D’Angelo suggested that this could be a project for the Town Administrator.

Insofar as Animal Control is concerned, the local kennel has informed the Police Department that they will no longer be able to house strays; they would need to be taken to the Stratham ASPCA. Wason Pond Ranger John Wright has the facility to house these strays and is willing to take them. He is already an employee, so this is not a new position but an extension of his current duties. It is unclear at the moment if the Town has a dog ordinance or not; this will be researched and discussed at the Selectmen’s meeting of September 12th, which will focus on Ordinances.

Police Chief Berube returned to the Public at 8:57pm.

3.6 Pipit Easement

Victor Chouinard, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, appeared before the Selectmen to discuss the Pipit Estates easement.

Pipit Estates is a planned Conservation Subdivision of ~26 acres bounded by Sandown, Old Sandown, and Cross Roads. Per Ordinance, 50% of the land in a Conservation Subdivision must be conservation land; therefore, the developer is donating 15.91 acres (~60%) to the Town under a Conservation Easement. It was pointed out that although the developer had originally wanted to allow the Hampstead Area Water Company to take water from the conservation portion, this will not be happening.

Selectman Landau moved to approve and sign the Pipit Estates Conservation Easement paperwork; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

Mr. Chouinard departed the meeting at 9:02pm.

3.7 Fire Department Update

Fire Chief Bolduc returned to the meeting table to update the Selectmen on the Fire Department’s search for a new full-time employee.

Fire Chief Bolduc thanked the hiring committee, which consisted of Will Sable from the Police Department, Scott Newnan and Phil Gladu from the Chester Fire Department, resident Herb Rowell, and Tom Beaumont from the Derry Fire Department. This committee had chosen four candidates for him and Deputy Chief Ben Clark to interview, and one had been chosen. The offer made is well within the existing budget, as this new potential employee has fewer certifications than the previous employee. A background check is still required, and this may take another two weeks.

Selectman Landau suggested to Fire Chief Bolduc that he consider hiring both of the candidates rather than just one. Fire Chief Bolduc stated that although his plan is eventually to have five firefighters in place, at this point in time there was not enough money in his budget. Even considering that the position has been open since the beginning of the Fiscal Year and the lower pay rate, he would still need an additional ~\$35k to hire a second person, and that is without benefits.

A second hire, however, would allow for more coverage at the Fire Station. Currently there are two shifts operating – one person from 7am to 3pm, and one from 8am to 4pm. This allows for six hours of double coverage, which is often necessary for safety purposes. 37% of the Fire Department’s calls come in during that six-hour period; if he was able to arrange coverage for twelve hours a day, seven days a week, they could potentially answer 70% of the calls with full-time employees.

Open shifts are always offered to call members first, but only he and one other member have been filling them. Fire Chief Bolduc stressed that this was in no way a criticism of the Town’s call members; the majority of them have full time jobs and work out of Town, which makes them unavailable during weekdays.

The next Fire Association business meeting is on Tuesday, September 3rd.

Fire Chief Bolduc returned to the Public at 9:21pm.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman Landau:

- The Fire Department has solicited three bids for the work on its septic system; this will be discussed at the next Selectmen’s Meeting.

Selectman D’Angelo:

- He has been researching recreational immunity, specifically as it might apply to Wason Pond. He believes that charging for parking there would not impact the immunity, but Selectman

Landau disagrees, stating that as the Selectmen have previously discussed ways to limit the overcrowding caused by out-of-towners, it might be considered discriminatory. Police Chief Berube added, however, that there is no prohibition to parking along 102, which would cause line of sight issues; perhaps the State could be asked to put up “No Parking” signs in that area. It was suggested that the article Selectman D’Angelo had found be forwarded to Town Counsel for her opinion.

- He continues to be interested in having a passenger van added to the CIP, and will speak with the Planning Board.

Selectman Hagan:

- Nothing to report.

Vice-Chairman Myette:

- The Planning Board has requested the release of \$1,677.70 in Impact Fees for the third payment of a five-year Taser program. **Selectman Landau moved to approve the release of \$1,677.70 in impact fees, which is for the third payment of a five-year Taser program; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.**
- A representative from the Concord for Hometown Heroes Banners organization had inquired as to whether the Selectmen would be interested in offering residents the opportunity to purchase banners to be hung on telephone poles, honoring a service member of their choice. The Selectmen were not interested in pursuing this offer.
- Some of the American flags hung by the Legion appear to need repair. Additionally, their request to lease the Maintenance Garage has gotten more involved than originally imagined; it was agreed that they will be allowed to utilize the space without leasing it. BOS AA Doda will contact Commander Edwards.
- The Recreation Commission had voted to approve the use of its Impact Fees to engineer the Wason Pond Pavilion. The Planning Board will be sending a letter to the Selectmen, requesting their approval of the release.
- Transfer Station Snowplowing will still be handled via an external vendor; bids will be solicited this week.
- The auditors will be in Town from Tuesday, September 3rd, through Thursday, September 5th.
- The Wason Pond Commission meeting for September will be held on Tuesday, September 3rd rather than Monday, September 2nd, as that Monday is the Labor Day Holiday.

Chairman Owens:

- He has a copy of the Town’s stray dog ordinance from the 70s; it does not address fines.

4.2 Non-Public Session

Selectman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Public Employees, (b) Employment, and (c) Reputation; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

The meeting room was closed at 10:03pm. Police Chief Berube remained in the meeting room.

Police Chief Berube departed the meeting room at 11:09pm; Fire Chief Bolduc entered at this time.

Fire Chief Bolduc departed the meeting room at 11:34pm.

The meeting room was re-opened at 11:41pm.

Selectman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Chairman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

Selectman Landau moved that the minutes to the first non-public session, on Public Employees, be sealed for a period of three (3) months; Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

Selectman Landau moved that the minutes to the second non-public session, on Employment, be sealed for a period of three (3) months; Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

Selectman Landau moved that the minutes to the third non-public session, on Reputation, be sealed for an indefinite period of time; Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

V. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, September 5th, 2019.

Chairman Owens moved to adjourn the meeting; Selectman Landau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:43pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Doda,
Recording Secretary