

**Town of Chester  
Board of Selectmen  
October 29, 2019  
Approved Minutes**

**I. PRELIMINARIES**

***Present were:***

*Chairman Jeremy Owens  
Stephen D'Angelo  
Stephen O. Landau  
Town Administrator Debra Doda*

***Guests:***

*Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times  
Nancy Myette  
Emily Kunelius  
Cindy LeBlanc  
Bob Grimm  
Michael Weider  
Chris Hadik  
Victor Chouinard  
and other persons unknown to the minute taker*

- 1.1 Call to Order
- 1.2 Roll Call
- 1.3 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions
- 1.5 Public Comment (10 minutes)
- 2.1 Approval of Minutes
- 2.2 Items for Signature
- 3.1 Budgets
  - 3.1.1 Spring Hill Farm – Emily Kunelius
  - 3.1.2 PACT – Bob Grimm
  - 3.1.3 Budget Committee – Michael Weider
  - 3.1.4 Wason Pond Commission, Bath House and Cottage – Chris Hadik
  - 3.1.5 Conservation Commission – Victor Chouinard
  - 3.1.6 Agricultural – Cindy LeBlanc
  - 3.1.7 Trustees of the Trust Fund
  - 3.1.8 Executive/Administration – Debra Doda
- 3.2 Auditor's Management Letter & Town's Response
- 3.3. Review and Adoption of Fire Emergency Access Road Ordinance
- 3.4 Potential Non-Public Sessions
- IV. Roundtable

### *1.1 Call to Order*

Chairman Owens called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

### *1.2 Roll Call*

Present were Stephen O. Landau, Stephen D'Angelo and Chairman Jeremy Owens

### *1.3 Pledge of Allegiance*

Chairman Owens led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### *1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions*

### *1.5 Public Comment (10 minutes)*

## **II. OLD BUSINESS**

### *2.1 Approval of Minutes*

Chairman Owens urged the Selectmen to review the minutes.

### *2.2 Items for Signature*

Chairman Owens urged the Selectmen to sign the documents requiring signature.

## **III. NEW BUSINESS**

### *3.1 BUDGETS*

#### *3.1.1 Spring Hill Farm (4610-1) Emily Kunelius*

Ms. Kunelius presented the proposed budget for FY2020 for the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee in the amount of \$1,401 which is an increase from \$600 last year.

Selectman Landau recommended increasing the budget to \$2,000.

The Selectman noted the Fall Festival was a good community event and would encourage more activities such as a Winter Festival after January. Selectman D'Angelo recommended cross country skiing in the winter. Selectman Landau recommended winter sledding at the North Chester fields. Chairman Owens asked about parking. There are some Class VI roads and more trees could be cleared for parking.

Ms. Kunelius noted she would like to see the house opened (while that is in the Town's buildings budget or could be done by maintenance) and needs an engineer to bring the house up to building and fire code and to put together a ramp before the next event.

The Selectmen encouraged Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee to develop programs to use the 100 plus acres, house lot and barns.

***Selectman Landau motioned to increase the FY2020 Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee budget to \$2,000. Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion, with all in favor the motion passed unanimously.***

Ms. Kunelius noted the Committee voted to return \$400 to Mr. Fournier. Mrs. Doda will take care of that.

Selectman Landau recommended if the Committee needed more to come back in three weeks.

*3.1.2 PACT (4585-1) Bob Grimm*

Mr. Grimm presented the proposed budget for FY2020 for PACT in the amount of \$58,135 which is increased from \$5,940 last year.

Mr. Grimm congratulated Mrs. Doda on her appointment as Town Administrator.

Mr. Grimm noted the CIP has not been voted on yet, the franchise fees have not been determined and the franchise fee law has changed giving Comcast 180 days to let the Town know if it will accept the rate they have set. It could be amended on the floor of Town Meeting if necessary. Mr. Grimm noted there is a Telecom meeting coming up in Concord, NH. Selectman D'Angelo asked when Mr. Grimm expected to hear from Comcast? Mr. Grimm noted he had made the request for an increased franchise fee in August to the Selectmen who had, after approving the request, sent a letter requesting same to Comcast; 180 days would be around end of November.

Mr. Grimm noted doing away with franchise fees was a possibility, giving everyone in Town, regardless of whether they are cable subscribers, a fair share in paying for it. The proposal to move away from franchise fees would be to ask for 3% and fund from town budget.

Mr. Grimm discussed new equipment upgrades planned for Phase 3 of the upgrade and the change in the delivery system for 2020/21. Selectman Landau noted that while the funds come from the taxpayers the school needs to absorb more of this in their budget and noted he was not sure this needed to be done in one year. Selectman Landau noted this is why we changed Town Meeting date so the school and town budgets could be compared. CIP equipment is out at \$54,000; ~\$20,000 has been offset from franchise fees. An increase in the Franchise Fee to 3% means the quarterly amount of franchise fees received will increase from \$9,000/qtr. to \$13,000/qtr. Mr. Grimm noted PACT should not need to purchase more equipment for 5-10 years. Selectman Landau noted there is always a need to refresh equipment.

Selectman Landau would like to see more hard figures and is in favor of leaving the budget at \$6,000 for now to see what happens with the CIP at the Planning Board.

Selectman Landau recommended reducing the original request by \$21,114; Mrs. Doda noted that amount had already been deleted. Mr. D'Angelo indicated he has a strong suspicion Comcast won't do anything until 5G is released.

Mr. Weider noted Mr. Grimm should let the BOS know that revolving funds are allowable for the PACT Department. Police, Fire, Recreation and the Library can utilize revolving funds which are currently utilized by Police and Recreation, as these allow funds to go directly to that account without needing to be requested every year and without expiring. There are three channels associated with fees. Mr. Weider noted it is a question for counsel whether the Town can subsidize for non-users.

Selectman D'Angelo questioned the possibility of having all streaming content to be online unrelated to Comcast. Mr. Grimm noted the new system is set up for that.

Selectman D'Angelo asked how much was in the account now? Mr. Grimm noted \$36,000 from last year was to upgrade Channel 20, which is almost complete, although there is no additional float anywhere.

Mr. Grimm will put together a Warrant Article and get it to Mrs. Doda tomorrow.

Selectman D'Angelo recommended they could revisit this down the road. Ms. Doda will contact Jay Somers tomorrow and let him know that the date of Town Meeting has changed.

### *3.1.3 Budget Committee (4150-3) Michael Weider*

Mr. Weider presented the proposed budget for FY2020 for the Budget Committee in the amount of \$1,148 which is level funded from last year.

Mr. Weider noted seminars are increased so new members can go.

Selectman D'Angelo noted he was okay with it. Selectman Landau and Chair Owens were okay with it.

### *3.1.4 Wason Pond Commission (4541-1) Bath House (4540-1) and Cottage (4535-1) Chris Hadik*

Mr. Hadik presented the proposed budgets for FY2020 for the Wason Pond Recreation & Conservation Commission, Bath House and Cottage in the amounts of \$455, \$280, and \$900 respectively, which are level funded from last year.

Mr. Hadik noted electricity is being used at the bath house and cottage and believes the current budget for that will be exceeded. Mrs. Doda noted Eversource could potentially cut the electricity if not needed; however, it apparently is powering some pumps.

Mr. Hadik noted a \$200 line for dam maintenance which is mostly brush removal done by volunteers and town maintenance could be reduced to \$1 or moved to General Government Buildings instead. The easement fees are paid by Conservation now.

The line for electricity will be increased by \$200 to \$1,099 and the dam maintenance line will be lowered to \$1.

### *3.1.5 Conservation Commission (4619-1) Victor Chouinard*

Mr. Chouinard presented the proposed budget for FY 2020 for the Conservation Commission in the amount of \$1,200 which is increased from \$954 last year.

Mr. Chouinard noted the increase is for members to attend conferences such as Associated Conservation Commission and Savings Wild Places which 3-4 members attend. Easement monitoring is going to be ramped up this year and there are going to be some expense for markers.

Selectman Landau requested the 6-8 town-owned parcels near North Woods, below Lane Road, get surveyed as there is development going on nearby. There are approximately 450-500 acres. One parcel could be surveyed each year.

*3.1.6 Agricultural (4620-1)*

Mrs. LeBlanc presented the proposed budget for FY 2020 for the Agricultural Commission in the amount of \$600 which is level from last year.

Mrs. LeBlanc noted membership in the Agricultural Commission has dwindled down to herself and she is acting as Chair. Penny Williams agreed to run an article to help with that. Mrs. LeBlanc noted she has some suggestions for Agricultural related events which would tie into Spring Hill Farm which she noted is the perfect school for that.

Selectman D'Angelo questioned whether Mrs. LeBlanc could get someone to be interested in utilizing the high tunnel and would like to see that getting used. Insurance was an issue previously with the premium approximately \$1,400.

Selectman Landau noted there was no increase in the request budget and thinks \$600 is fair. Selectman D'Angelo agreed and Chair Owens was also in agreement.

*3.1.7 Trustees of the Trust Funds (4150-7) \$18,600*

Selectman Landau noted this is for investment services fees and the Town is fortunate to have a good basis for that. Selectman D'Angelo agreed.

*3.1.8 Executive (4130-1)/Administrative (4130-2) Debra Doda*

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed FY 2020 budgets for Executive and Administrative in the amount of \$78,842 which was up from \$46,796 from last year and \$143,623 reduced from \$172,264 from last year.

Selectman D'Angelo questioned the salary pool which is less than last year. Chair Owens reminded of the new pay matrix. Mrs. Doda noted the funds are allocated to a different budget and are already included.

Selectman D'Angelo questioned the reduction in the minute taking line. Mrs. Doda noted one contracted minute taker had been hired as a part-timer and therefore the line for minute taking salary had increased while minute taker contract had been reduced.

Selectman D'Angelo noted he was good with it. Chairman Owens and Selectman Landau agreed.

### *3.2 Auditor's Management Letter and Town's Response*

Mrs. Doda provided the Board of Selectmen with a copy of the Management Letter for the Year ending June 30, 2019.

Selectman D'Angelo would like to have a broader explanation of any issues with a clear detail of what they are asking. The Great Hill Cemetery Trustees should be grandfathered since their inception in 1937.

### *3.3 Review and Adoption of Fire Department Emergency Access Road Ordinance*

Mrs. Doda provided the Board of Selectmen with a draft of the proposed ordinance concerning Use of Fire Department Emergency Access Driveway.

The Selectmen reviewed the ordinance which is effective immediately to prohibit the public and non-emergency vehicles from using the Fire Department's emergency access driveway at 27 Murphy Drive. Violations are subject to a \$250 fine per person, for each instance.

Selectman D'Angelo asked if the ordinances get numbered? Mrs. Doda noted ordinances were one of her goals for this year.

***Selectman D'Angelo motioned to adopt the ordinance concerning use of the Fire Department Emergency Access Driveway as presented. Selectman Landau seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

## **IV. ROUNDTABLE**

Selectman D'Angelo noted Halloween is Thursday night, so there will be no BOS meeting. He has purchased candy to distribute at Town Hall. There is an article he recommends in Insurance Insiders concerning municipal ransomware. Selectman D'Angelo noted he has one non-public under employment.

Selectman Landau proposed returning the old meeting room chairs to Stevens Hall which fit the period more and proposed purchasing new chairs for the meeting room and for town meeting more gradually. Mrs. Doda estimated there were 38 chairs set up in the meeting room with half a dozen or so that were not. Chairman Owens recommended replacing the worn conference table chairs.

Mrs. Doda will find out if the light pole assessment is done on 121 and 102 by the state.

Chairman Owens noted he had a request to release impact fees from the Library approved by the Planning Board at their October 16, 2019 meeting for \$22,172 relative to the 2019/20 CIP and the renovations. Mr. Hadik noted the intent of the 5/19 warrant article has been met and qualifies for Town Treasurer to release to the control of the BOS to oversee expenses provided by Kandace Knowlton and Mary Beth Ditoro. \$19,007 plus shelving of \$3,165.

***Selectman D'Angelo motioned to release the impact fees for the library renovation. Selectman Landau seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Chairman Owens noted the Selectmen had an invitation to the NHMA Annual Meeting on November 14, 2019 at the Doubletree Hilton formerly the Radisson. A delegate can be appointed. Selectman Landau and Selectman D'Angelo plan to attend.

Chairman Owens noted he had a request for archery hunting in the town-owned land behind the school. This request comes every year. Mrs. Doda is in the process of crafting an ordinance concerning this and would recommend posting. Selectman D'Angelo indicated it could be a distance of 1,000 feet from the school or property line or perhaps only on Saturdays and Sundays when the children are not in school. There is enough Conservation land that is not posted "no hunting."

Chairman Owens noted Busche Academy is allowing parking during the Halloween event on paved areas and asks folks to stay off the grass.

The Selectman discussed formalizing the date for Town Meeting. Proposed were Thursday 3/12 with a snow date of 3/13 or Saturday 3/14. The Selectman were unanimously in agreement to hold Town Meeting on Saturday, March 14, 2019 at 9 AM with the snow date being the following Saturday, which is March 21, 2019. Mrs. Doda will let the Supervisors of the Checklist know. Election day which is March 10<sup>th</sup> cannot be changed.

**V. NON-PUBLIC SESSION pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(a) employees and consideration of the compensation of a public employee**

***By Roll Call, Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(a). Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion. Selectman Landau – aye, Selectman D'Angelo – aye, Chairman Owens – aye. with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

The meeting room was closed to the public 8:30 PM.

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 9 PM.

***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session indefinitely. Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

**VI. UPCOMING MEETING DATES:**

Monday, November 4, 2019 – Technical Review Committee at 9 AM

Monday, November 4, 2019 – Wason Pond Conservation & Recreation Commission 7PM

Wednesday, November 6, 2019 – Department Head's Meeting 9 AM

Wednesday, November 6, 2019 – Planning Board 7 PM

Thursday, November 7, 2019 – Board of Selectman's Meeting 7PM

## **VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mrs. Doda noted there were problems with the phones at Town Hall Thursday until Monday afternoon after Block 5 ran updates. Block 5 will be getting computers to the Supervisors of the Checklist.

Mrs. Doda noted she will be on vacation for two weeks starting next week.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

***Selectman Landau motioned to adjourn the meeting. Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer  
Recording Secretary