

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Monday, April 3rd, 2017
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

Work Session
Appointment with Budget Committee

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Landau called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 6:41pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Cass Buckley
Jack Cannon
Joseph Hagan
Stephen Landau
Dick Trask

II. Work Session

The Selectmen met in the Cable TV Meeting Room to formulate a plan to address the Budget Committee’s request to delete \$106k from the Operating Budget in order to go to Town Meeting with a unified budget.

A list of potential cuts to the Operating Budget was discussed. There was disagreement on whether or not the Police and Fire Departments should be expected to cut more from their budgets between those who thought all should share the ‘pain’ and those who were loath to cut public safety services. In the end, a list of \$70k in cuts was agreed upon.

The Warrant Articles were also discussed. Road Agent Oleson has volunteered to cut the *Class 8 Plow Truck with Plow and Sander* for \$110k from Warrant Article #D, CIP Projects, and replace it with the same basic truck, only used, that is being offered for \$40k by a resident who is no longer utilizing it. This truck should last the Town ~five years, and would drop the amount of that Warrant Article from \$838,473 to \$768,473.

There is some concern that the Budget Committee may disagree with some of the items in Warrant Article #D, and will vote against supporting it, which would cause an issue with the 10% rule. Although the Article could be split into individual Articles – either five, one for each department, or 12, one for each item to be purchased - this would increase the number of Articles and is not optimum.

It was generally agreed that Warrant Article #N, Director of Public Works - Full Time could be deleted this year. Although MRI provided a good report, the Selectmen should still create a detailed plan with a more extensive job description as well as determining what equipment and personnel would be needed. This deletion would remove \$128,282.45 from the Warrant.

Vice-Chairman Trask moved to approve Warrant Article #S, Fire Department Equipment; Selectman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried. The funds for this Article are being withdrawn from the Fire Department Detail Special Revenue

Fund and as such are not adding to the tax impact.

The decision was made to offer the following compromise to the Budget Committee:

Cuts to Operating Budget:	(\$ 70,000.00)
Delete Warrant Article #N:	(\$ 128,282.45)
Delete New Truck in Warrant Article #D:	(\$ 110,000.00)
<u>Add Used Truck in Warrant Article #D:</u>	<u>\$ 40,000.00</u>
Total	(\$ 268,282.45)

The Selectmen adjourned to the Main Meeting Room at 7:22pm.

III. Appointment with Budget Committee

Budget Committee Members present:

Steve D’Angelo
Chuck Heuer
Becky Owens
Brian Shankey
Michael Weider

Members of the Public present:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Greg Bolduc, Fire Chief
Ben Clark, Deputy Fire Chief
Michael Oleson, Road Agent
Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director

The Selectmen presented their compromise to the Budget Committee; discussion ensued. The Budget Committee was in favor of the two reductions to the Warrant Articles, although Budget Committee Chairman Weider is concerned with the fact that the Fire Department is requesting three vehicles this year; with those no longer in the CIP, they will be unable to collect as much in Impact Fees. He would prefer that one vehicle be pushed back a year.

The Budget Committee is most concerned that over the past two years, the Operating Budget has increased by half a million dollars. They were hoping for a reduction of \$106k, not the \$70k that the Selectmen have offered; however, it was pointed out that the tax rate is determined not only by the Operating Budget but also the Warrant Articles, and that a large portion of those requested funds have also been removed. Removing the \$70k from the Operating Budget would bring it down from \$4,393,942 to \$4,323,942. Budget Committee Chairman Weider calculated that this compromise would raise the taxes by ~\$69 on a \$350,000 house; Chairman Landau countered that this ~\$69 meant that the residents would be provided with full services with no excuses from the Department Heads in the Public Safety sector.

Budget Committee Chairman Weider moved that the Budget Committee support an Operating Budget of \$4,323,942; Mr. Heuer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

The Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen will go to Town Meeting with a unified budget.

Finance Director Smith will recalculate the budget and prepare the MS Forms for the Public Hearing, which is Monday, April 10th, 2017.

IV. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, April 6th, 2017.

The Selectmen departed the Budget Committee meeting at 8:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Doda
Recording Secretary