

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, February 6, 2020
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)
Approval of Minutes
Items for Signature
Police Chief Berube
Stevens Hall Condition
Review of Budget and Warrant
Roundtable
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Owens called this meeting of the Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:01 pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present:

Stephen Landau
Steve D’Angelo
Joseph Hagan
Chuck Myette
Jeremy Owens

Present: Town Administrator Deb Doda

Members of the Public Present, at various times:

Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times
Nancy Myette
Road Agent Mike Oleson
Police Chief Aaron Berube
Fire Chief Greg Bolduc
Finance Director Joanne Smith
Maintenance Supervisor Paul Cavanaugh
BOS Admin. Asst. Janis Jalbert
Jack Cannon, Vice-Chair 300th Anniversary Committee
Rhonda Lamphere, Vice-Chair Budget Committee

Michael Weider, Chair Budget Committee
Kathy Guilmette, Budget Committee
Recreation Director Corinna Reishus

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Owens led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

Chairman Owens added an appointment with Police Chief Berube.

1.5 Public Comment

As no members of the public wished to be heard public comment was closed at 7:02 pm.

II. Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

An approval sheet for the previous meeting’s minutes was in the signature folder.

2.2 Items for Signature

All members reviewed and signed the items in the signature folder.

III. New Business

3.1 Stevens Hall Condition

Maintenance Supervisor Cavanaugh and Road Agent Oleson provided photos from the inspection they performed with the lift at Stevens Hall on Monday. In addition to the items noted at the last Selectmen’s meeting they found a lot of other deficiencies. They inspected the roof, gutters and seams and found roof leakage inside, lead paint peeling, decayed siding, rotted sills, dormer, chimney flashing to be replaced, cracked roofing, a bent ice rail, rotted moldings, rotted posts, several missing slate roof shingles, and cracks in the stairwell on the side wall. Work should commence with staging rather than being done with the lift. Selectman Landau added that the upstairs floor is in need of replacement.

The Board indicated with the 300th Anniversary coming up they would like to see Stevens Hall in its best condition especially the exterior but thought it unlikely the extensive number of repairs could be completed in time. Selectman Landau recommended making the renovation of Stevens Hall a focal point of the Anniversary event. Mr. Cannon indicated the 300th Anniversary Committee would not likely be able to raise the amount of funds necessary to renovate the structure. Selectman Landau clarified that he did not intend for the 300th Committee to raise the funds but to spotlight the need to raise the funds in conjunction with the event and to begin what repairs they could do in the next two years and beyond. The first steps would be getting estimates and working with a contractor who specializes in historical renovations and finding out if grants are available. Chair Owens added to begin with an assessment. Selectman D’Angelo reminded

102 contractors specializing in historical renovation have a limited availability. Mr. Cavanaugh will
103 check on estimates and availability.

104 Mrs. Lamphere recommended adding a Warrant Article so that a fund could be established so
105 that another year wouldn’t pass without it and having an estimate for the renovations before Town
106 Meeting. Town Administrator Doda will draft a Warrant Article tomorrow for a Capital Reserve
107 Fund with \$50,000 from the unassigned fund balance and \$50,000 from surplus if available to
108 transfer at the end of the Fiscal Year, with no tax impact. The fund could be used for renovations
109 of all historic town buildings.

110 3.2 *Appointments*

111 *Police Chief Berube – Personnel Concerns*

112 Chief Berube expressed concerns about inaccurate comments made at the Budget Committee
113 Meeting and thanked Selectmen Landau and Selectman D’Angelo for correcting them. Chief
114 Berube indicated the importance of keeping valuable employees and having them feel like they
115 are appreciated and not just a number. Chief Berube indicated toxic comments and salary
116 comparisons with the City of Nashua were off base with figures ranging from \$70-\$80,000/yr.
117 which a three-year veteran officer in Chester would not compare to. Mrs. Lamphere responded
118 that she did not hear any deprecating comments made at that meeting.

119 Chief Berube regrettably announced the resignation of Sergeant Tim Loveless and commented
120 on the difficulty with managing resources needed to attract officers such as scheduling incentives
121 so that officers could balance their work and home lives with alternating schedule, such as having
122 every other weekend off. Chief Berube indicated there were 8,000 calls for service last year with
123 an additional 6,981 business, vacation, and property checks. Chief Berube indicated he had
124 interviewed three candidates and has an officer completing field training soon.

125 3.3 *Review of Budget and Warrants*

126 The Board of Selectmen reviewed the Warrant Articles and Budget proposed for Town Meeting.
127 The Budget Committee expressed concerns with the 9.5% percentage increase partly driven by
128 the potential hire of two full-time firefighters and questioned whether the Board of Selectmen
129 would prefer to put this increase into a Warrant Article or if they would prefer it be part of the
130 budget. Selectman Landau felt the question should be posed to the Town as to whether they
131 want to have the coverage seven days a week, 12 hours/day or they don’t. If the positions were
132 put into the Warrant Article and not filled the funds could lapse into the fund balance.

133 The Selectman were in favor of keeping the Warrant Article and the \$80,000 in reductions to the
134 operating budget proposed by Town Administrator Doda and Selectman Landau. Mrs. Smith
135 indicated the tax impact would be \$1.42/thousand.

136 Mrs. Lamphere reviewed some of the information the Budget Committee was waiting for which
137 included the revised budget and the payroll matrix information such as – where the funding was
138 coming from and questioned whether the pay matrix should be on the Warrant Article since the
139 Selectmen had control over wages. Selectman Landau indicated the Warrant Article should
140 include the term “concept” as it is the concept of the new pay matrix the Selectmen are presenting
141 to the taxpayers. Funding for wages is part of the Department’s operating budget line items.

Mrs. Lamphere questioned whether the Tree Removal was specific. Road Agent Oleson indicated he would speak to that Article at Town Meeting and it is designed to remove bad trees around town before they fall on their own as the many downed trees substantially affect his budget.

Mrs. Lamphere questioned the historic digital archive article and noted while vendors are the first phase, what is the total cost – how much is the cost after the first time? Town Administrator Doda indicated she will resend the vendor presentation.

Chief Berube spoke to the administrative employee in the Department who he would like to promote to Office Manager. She has a master’s degree in social work, assists with IT and prosecutions, came to us from the court system and has been with the Department for two years. Selectman D’Angelo asked if there were plans for additional growth and she has asked for more responsibilities, although not as a police officer, and the pay should be appropriate. Selectman Landau indicated it would be a Pay Grade 11, Step 4-5.

The Board discussed the order and wording of the articles. Town Administrator Doda indicated Town Counsel opposed the pay matrix and Wason Pond ordinance as her opinion is that they should both be in the purview of the Selectmen.

Town Administrator Doda noted the Bond portion would need to be open for an hour. Ballots would be cast for the Bond, SB2, establishment of PACT Revolving Fund, and rescission of PACT Special Reserve Fund. Mrs. Lamphere reminded the Supervisors only have two ballot boxes and ballots should not be lumped close together.

The Selectmen took a brief recess at 8:38 PM with the meeting resuming at 8:41 PM.

Chair Owens proposed the order of the Warrant Articles which he read out loud and the and the Board voted to recommend:

Road Bond (\$3m at 7 years - \$299,583.33 interest over life of bond. Public hearing required/scheduled for February 20th. Ballot vote of 2/3 required).

Tax Impact: \$0.05 (first year only)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman Landau opposed

Budget (public hearing scheduled for February 13th)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed

CIP Funding

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman Landau abstained

CIP Projects

Tax Impact \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed

202 *Highway CIP Funding*

204 *Tax Impact \$0.84*

206 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

208 *Highway CIP Projects*

210 *Tax Impact \$0.00*

212 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

214 *Winter Road Maintenance Fund*

216 *Tax Impact \$0.15*

218 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

220 *Town Master Plan Capital Reserve Fund*

222 *Tax Impact \$0.03*

224 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

226 *Steeple Repair at Chester Congregational Church*

228 *Tax Impact \$0.04*

230 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

232 *Ortho Rectifying Maps*

234 *Tax Impact \$0.02*

236 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman Landau abstained (as he*
238 *believes this should be in the CIP).*

240 *Optional Tax Credit for Combat Service*

242 *Tax Impact \$0.00*

244 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

246 *Establish PACT Revolving Fund*

248 *Tax Impact \$0.00*

250 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman Landau abstained*

252 *Rescind PACT Special Revenue Fund (public hearing scheduled for February 20th*
 tentatively/paper ballot required).

254 *Tax Impact \$0.00*

256 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman Landau opposed*

258 *PACT (can be tabled if previous WAs pass. Allows PACT to continue operating if previous WAs fail)*

260 *Tax Impact \$0.00*

262 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman Landau abstained*

264 *Roadside Tree Removal*

266 *Tax Impact \$0.07*

268 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4 yes, Selectman D’Angelo abstained*

270 *300th Anniversary*

272 *Tax Impact \$0.01*

274 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

276 *Transportation Improvement Capital Reserve Fund (public hearing required/tentatively scheduled for February 20th)*

280 *Town Administrator Doda indicated DRA changed the wording to “road improvements.” The Board agreed to remove the word “road.” Town Administrator Doda will confirm the revision with DRA.*

282 *Tax Impact: \$0.00*

284 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

286 *Great Hill Cemetery Maintenance Fund*

288 *Mrs. Lamphere recommended the Board of Selectmen serve as agents to expend from this fund.*

290 *Tax Impact \$0.00*

292 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

294 *Historical Document Digitization*

296 *Tax Impact \$0.02*

298 *Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed*

300 *Pay Matrix*

Town Administrator Doda will add the word “concept.”

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed

Petitioned Warrant Articles:

*Indigenous People’s Day
SB2*

No recommendation by the Board of Selectmen

Two New Fulltime Firefighters

Tax Impact \$0.27

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed

Stevens Hall

\$50,000 fund balance/\$50,000 surplus if available for transfer for Stevens Hall and other historical buildings for restorations and repairs

Tax Impact \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5 yes, none opposed

3.4 Roundtable

Chair Owens indicated he had three non-public sessions, one under employment, one under public employees, and one under reputation.

3.5 Potential Non-Public Sessions

Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session under 91-A:3 (a) Public Employees, (b) Employment, and (c) Reputation at 9:39 PM. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Selectman Landau – yes, Selectman D’Angelo – yes, Selectman Hagan – yes, Selectman Myette – yes, Chair Owens – yes. The motion passed unanimously

The meeting room was closed to the public at 9:39 PM with Police Chief Berube remaining in the room.

Police Chief Berube departed the meeting room at 10:25 PM; Fire Chief Bolduc entered at that time.

Fire Chief Bolduc departed the meeting room at 10:42 PM.

The meeting room was reopened at 10:52 PM.

354 **Selectman Landau motioned to come out of non-public session; Selectman D’Angelo**
356 **seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**

358 **Selectman Landau moved to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on**
360 **Employment, for a period of thirty (30) days; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion.**
362 **The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.**

364 **Chairman Owens moved to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on**
366 **Reputation, for an indefinite period; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. The vote**
368 **was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.**

370 **Vice-Chairman Myette moved to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Public**
372 **Employees, for a period of six (6) months; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. The**
374 **vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.**

376 **IV. Adjournment**

378 **Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion.**
380 **The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, motion carried.**

382 The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 PM.

384 Respectfully submitted,

386
388 Nancy J. Hoijer
390 Recording Secretary