

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, March 12, 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
Appointment to SHFAC
Permission for Bait Site on Town Owned Property
Permission for Alcohol at Stevens Hall
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Owens called the meeting of the Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00 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
Fire Chief Greg Bolduc
Rhonda Lamphere
Colin Costine
Emily Kunelius
Kathryn Allard

47 *1.3 Pledge of Allegiance*

48
49 Chairman Owens led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.
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51 *1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions*

52
53 None
54

55 *1.5 Public Comment*

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57 As no members of the public wished to be heard public comment was closed at 7:10 PM.
58

59 **II. Old Business**

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61 *2.1 Approval of Minutes*

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63 An approval sheet for the previous meeting's minutes was in the signature folder.
64

65 *2.2 Items for Signature*

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67 All members reviewed and signed the items in the signature folder.
68

69 **III. New Business**

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71 *3.1 Appointment to the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee*

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73 Emily Kunelius, Chair of the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee appeared with Colin Costine
74 to have him reappointed to the Committee as an alternate with a three-year term.

75 Selectman Hagan thanked him for wanting to do this and continuing to do this.

76 ***Selectman D’Angelo motioned to appoint Colin Costine as an Alternate member of the***
77 ***Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee with a three-year term. Selectman Hagan seconded***
78 ***the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

79 *3.2 Permission for Bait Site on Town Owned Property*

80
81 The Board had a request from Steve Demers to put a bait site for the purpose of hunting deer
82 on Map/Lot 8-14-1 which is town-owned property.
83

84 As Mr. Demers was not present Vice-Chairman Myette reviewed the letter from the Chair of the
85 Conservation Commission who noted at their March 10, 2020 meeting the Commission met with
86 Mr. Demers and voted not to recommend that bait sites be allowed on town property. Their
87 biggest concern was setting a precedent. Vice-Chairman Myette indicated bait sites can disrupt
88 the migration and feeding patterns and attract other animals and predators.
89

Selectman Landau approached the Town map and pointed out the location of the parcel. Selectman Landau equated it to hunting an elephant at the zoo and indicated he was not in favor of baiting at all and this parcel is one of the last big areas where wildlife roams and does not want to set a precedent for everyone to want to do this.

Selectman D’Angelo indicated a number of pictures of coyote sightings have circulated and something like this would keep them going.

Selectman Landau motioned to not allow baiting on town-owned land. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

3.3 Permission for Alcohol at Stevens Hall

Kathryn Allard appeared before the Board to request permission for BYOB alcohol to be allowed at a surprise birthday party they were hoping to have at Stevens Hall with approximately 100 in attendance on April 18th. There will be a police detail. Selectman D’Angelo advised Ms. Allard she may need to appear before members of the Technical Review Committee such as the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Road Agent. Parking would be the biggest concern. Alcohol is not being sold at the event. Selectman D’Angelo would like Ms. Allard to speak with the Chief and the Board would like to hear back from him on that. There is no on-street parking allowed on Route 102 or Route 121.

Selectman Owens, D’Angelo and Hagan indicated they were not opposed to the request for BYOB alcohol at the event so long as there is a police detail present.

IV. Roundtable

Selectman Landau reported a letter was received from NH DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau concerning the Wason Pond Community Center testing which was so good it received a waiver not needing to be tested for another six years – 2026. Selectman Landau attributed the positive results to the installation of a ultra-violet disinfecting system which also treats the drinking fountain at the playground.

Selectman Landau indicated trees had to be removed at Stevens Hall despite the expense and work Bartlett has done over the years to try to save them. Selectman Landau noted one tree had a wall around the base of it constructed by a children’s group and will see about planting a couple of low growing bushes or daffodils to commemorate the 300th Anniversary.

Selectman Landau indicated there was a tree at the cemetery which was overgrowing a couple of the stones.

Vice-Chairman Myette noted some trees were removed recently at Spring Hill Farm because they were too badly damaged.

Selectman Landau noted Elm Trees were purchased from the Elm Society out of Keene and were very successful, there is one planted between the Community Center and Playground in

memory of a youngster who lost his life in a road accident. At one-point Chester Street was lined with Elm Trees and the Town could get some Elm trees and also offer them to the townspeople at cost who would plant their own. Chairman Owens liked the idea and recommending looking into it. Selectman Hagan indicated he would gladly participate in this and plant some on his property.

Selectman Landau asked the Board how they felt about having the Scouts reimburse the Town for the roof which was replaced in the annex above the room where they are storing items. A handshake deal was entered into about 20 years ago according to Mr. Costine and Selectman D’Angelo did not think it was enforceable now. Selectman D’Angelo indicated he would not ask them for it now. Chairman Owens agreed it would not be fair to them if the Town were to decide to do something else with the space. Selectman Hagan agreed it was not their ownership. Vice-Chairman Myette had no issue.

Selectman D’Angelo indicated the COVID-19 virus had become a pandemic very recently. In addition to the obvious advice, that if you are sick don’t come in, Selectman D’Angelo reported the school is prepared if they need to shut down. Saturday’s Town Meeting could be an issue. A large number of the most susceptible risk group would be in attendance at that meeting. Selectman Hagan agreed, “the constitution is not a suicide pact.” Selectman Hagan, who is a physician, opined it is not reasonable to push the envelope, this should be postponed. While this is different than a blizzard, the moderator is the only one who can postpone the meeting. Town Administrator Doda tried to reach Moderator Scott by telephone during the meeting without success.

Selectman D’Angelo indicated things were being cancelled even in the courts, jurors don’t want to be there. Chairman Owens agreed that any event over a dozen people was not recommended. Colleges and universities that were open this morning, have closed by afternoon. If the meeting were to take place, the Board could make suggestions to space out seating and other precautions like keeping the doors open and the air moving. More people have died from the flu but Selectman Landau opined one death from this would be too many. Vice-Chairman Myette asked if there were another way to vote? Mrs. Lamphere questioned whether the decision to hold Town meeting was a statutory requirement.

Selectman Hagan noted persons who show no symptoms can carry the virus. The mortality rate is 2-5% especially in the elderly with poor physiological resolve and pulmonary disease, those undergoing chemotherapy and transplants. Selectman D’Angelo noted it could be worse in May if the meeting were to be held then, but it can also be worse in a day, no one knows.

Mrs. Lamphere recommended reviewing RSA 39:1 and Selectman Landau reviewed RSA 40:13 as well. Town Administrator Doda noted no other Towns have cancelled their Town Meetings as of yet and the Secretary of State is not recommending it. The moderator has up to 6:00pm on the day prior to Town Meeting to postpone to a reasonable time.

Chairman Owens noted given CDC guidelines it would be irresponsible to get a group together of that size and susceptibility level.

Selectman Landau questioned whether 10-20 of us could get together provided there was a quorum of the Board and vote on Saturday to continue the Town Meeting to a Special Town Meeting. Mrs. Lamphere noted there would need to be seven days’ notice for a Special Town Meeting and other procedures with appropriations.

Town Administrator Doda will get in touch with the moderator first thing tomorrow morning.

Vice-Chairman Myette reported Wason Pond Conservation & Recreation Commission has been discussing the parking procedures for the coming summer season at Wason Pond. The Commission is in favor of increasing the hours of the ranger, the Police Chief may have a summer intern available, the Commission was in not in favor of either a sticker system or a parking kiosk but will further explore a sticker program if additional ranger time is not available and or security cameras are not approved.

Selectman Hagan asked if they would need an ordinance and Vice-Chairman Myette indicated they would.

Mrs. Lamphere discussed the warrant articles for the potential meeting on Saturday and it was noted the cemetery trustees would amend their article. Mrs. Lamphere asked if the Highway Budget would be on track with \$87,888 in the plowing lines and not knowing if there is anything outstanding. Town Administrator Doda indicated she had spoken with Road Agent Oleson and he is on track. The balance of the account over \$105,000 which is interest will need to be moved to the unreserved fund balance.

Chairman Owens indicated the following meetings and events are coming soon:

- Saturday, March 14, 2020 – Town Meeting **t/b/d**
- Monday, March 16, 2020 – Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee at 7 PM
- Wednesday, March 18, 2020 – 300th Anniversary Committee at 7 PM
- Thursday, March 19, 2020 – Board of Selectmen’s Meeting at 7 PM
- The March 16th Budget Committee meeting will be moved to the second Monday in April

V. Potential Non-Public Sessions

Chairman Owens indicated he had two non-public sessions, one under reputation and one under employment. Selectman Landau added another under reputation.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to go into non-public session under 91-A:3 II (a)(c) at 8:13 PM. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Landau – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Hagan – aye, Myette – aye and Owens – aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 8:13 PM. Fire Chief Bolduc remained in the meeting room.

Fire Chief Bolduc departed the meeting at 8:53 PM.

The meeting room was reopened at 9:07 PM.

Selectman Landau motioned to come out of non-public session; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to seal the minutes from the first non-public session, on Employment, for a period of one (1) year; Chairman Owens seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes from the second non-public session, on Reputation, for an indefinite period; Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Owens motioned to leave the minutes from the third non-public session, on Reputation, unsealed; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer
Recording Secretary