

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, April 23, 2020
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I. Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
Chairman’s Additions or Deletions
Approval of Minutes
Items for Signature
Appointment to Conservation Commission
Emergency Management Update
Review Newsletter
Schoolhouse on Candia Road
Comcast Renewal
Roundtable
Public Comment (10 minutes)
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chair Owens called the meeting of the Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:01 PM.

Under the emergency provisions of RSA 91A, this meeting is being conducted electronically and will be recorded, via dial-in, (929) 436-2866, internet at <https://zoom.us/j/770832311> as well as broadcast on Channel 20 and streamed on <http://vod.chesterctv.com>.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present (Remotely):

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

Present: Town Administrator Deb Doda (Remotely)

Members of the Public Present (Remotely), at various times:

Police Chief Aaron Berube
Town Clerk/Tax Collector Elizabeth Lufkin
BOS Administrative Asst. Janis Jalbert
Jack Cannon
Rick Sibley
Penny Williams, Raymond Area News
Chester CTV

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Owens led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

1.5 Public Comment

Public Comment took place at the end of tonight’s meeting.

II. Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

An approval sheet for the previous meeting’s minutes was sent electronically.

2.2 Items for Signature

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

III. New Business

3.1 Appointment to Conservation Commission

Rick Sibley appeared before the Selectmen to be reappointed to the Conservation Commission.

Vice-Chair Myette indicated he has worked with Mr. Sibley on the Conservation Commission where he has been serving as an alternate for the past year, and the Commission has requested he be changed to a regular member. He has attended many meetings and contributed and been involved in programs and has made a nice addition.

Selectman Landau indicated Baron Richardson’s term as a regular member expires in 2020 and he has expressed no interest in renewing at this time; therefore, Mr. Sibley will take that position. Mrs. Lufkin will reach out to Mr. Sibley to swear his oath over the phone.

Selectman Landau motioned to appoint Rick Sibley as a regular member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire May 31, 2023. Selectman D’Angelo

seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Hagan – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye, Owens – aye. With all in favor the motion passed unanimously.

3.2 Emergency Management Update

Mrs. Lufkin indicated the Governor should be deciding tomorrow whether to extend the current shutdown past May 4th. She has drafted the newsletter, but it may need some minor tweaking depending on what the news is tomorrow.

Mrs. Lufkin reported there will be a webinar tomorrow at noon with Homeland Security and FEMA. The Town will be assigned a field representative to assist with procedures. As a result, there will be no EOC conference call tomorrow. Chief Berube recommended putting together a Zoom meeting to review, which TA Doda will do. Questions can still be forwarded to EOC if anything comes up.

Vice-Chair Myette reported things are going well at the Transfer Station. They were open yesterday, Wednesday, from 6 PM to 8 PM with one bay open initially. Once three or four cars began to back up at about 6:30 PM they opened the second bay. By 7:00-7:15 it was quiet with one car every five minutes or so. The employees did a great job and appear eager to get back to normal routine.

Chief Berube recommended renting an electronic billboard which could be displayed on the lawn at Stevens Hall or at the Transfer Station to get messages to residents including the status of Town Meeting. The price, which Mrs. Lufkin believes is reimbursable expense through FEMA’s assistance plan, is \$500 per month for a six-month contract. A three-month contract would be \$895/mo. Messages could easily be changed with the blue tooth connection and the Town would have control of that by computer. Selectman D’Angelo recommended revisiting the decision on Monday.

Selectman D’Angelo reported he was at Wason Pond earlier this evening and witnessed people visiting the area from all over. There were kayakers from Fremont and he spoke with the gentleman who appeared to be running some sort of clinic. He took pictures and observed groups of teenagers. He is concerned Ranger Wright may become overwhelmed with Pawtuckaway and beaches closed, many will visit Wason because it is open. It may be necessary to close the recreation area and block off the entrances. Cones were also observed on the field, but he was uncertain what they were for. With Chester down to zero COVID-19 cases and the surrounding Towns affected, he would like to keep exposure down as much as possible in fairness to the residents. Chief Berube did not believe there were any federal guidelines that prevent it from being shut down, but the Department is getting ready to address crowds if it becomes necessary and plan to put an extra officer on.

Vice-Chair Myette indicated he was not in favor of closing it prematurely. The Governor recommended people get out and walk their neighborhood trails. At some point he agreed it could become a problem and this may be the time to implement tags or permits which Mrs. Lufkin could issue remotely with no fees assessed during the pandemic period. The ordinance could be put together quickly as well.

139 *3.3 Review Newsletter*

140
141 Mrs. Lufkin reviewed the draft newsletter, some of which will include a letter from EMS and the
142 BOS; bulleted directions for the Transfer Station, contact information for verifying charities with
143 the Police Department, volunteers who wish to help the Fire Department distribute items,
144 information about the Nutfield/Tri-Town and Raymond Area news, information about Wason
145 Pond and a quick update of all departments.

146
147 *3.4 Schoolhouse on Candia Road*

148
149 The Town received a request from a Candia resident who wished to purchase Schoolhouse No.
150 5 which is located at 580 Candia Road. The Board determined if the Town owned it, the
151 proposal would have to be brought to Town Meeting first. The Board determined the record
152 owner is the Chester Ladies Aid Society. Town Administrator Doda will send a response
153 indicating the Board has declined the offer.

154
155 Selectman Landau noted the Town of Candia had a historical schoolhouse building which is
156 now located at Sturbridge Village. Selectman Landau gave a brief history of some of the
157 schoolhouses in Town, some of which are now private residences such as the large one on
158 Haverhill Road, the one on Lane Road which was left in the middle of the road when it was
159 being moved, and one on Chester Street.

160
161 The Candia Road schoolhouse was built circa 1812 approximately and has an outhouse
162 building. It used to abut the old Methodist Church. The Ladies Aid Society used to make
163 blankets and quilts there for the soldiers during World War I. The Ladies Aid Society used to
164 give a small scholarship to a student graduating from Chester. The Historical Society is
165 interested in the buildings, and it has been the subject of a couple of Eagle Scout projects.

166
167 Selectman Landau indicated he could not see it moving it out of Town.

168
169 *3.5 Comcast Renewal*

170
171 Town Administrator Doda indicated the renewal price is for the phone and internet service and
172 speed has increased from 150 MPS to 300 for less money.

173
174 ***Selectman D’Angelo motioned to renew the service with Comcast at \$154/mo. Vice-Chair***
175 ***Myette seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Hagan – aye,***
176 ***D’Angelo – aye, Owens – aye, Landau – nay. The motion passed 4-1-0.***

177
178 **IV. Roundtable**

179
180 Selectman Landau noted that there was a report of two housecats who tested positive for
181 COVID-19 and there may be concern of human to animal transmission. This could be a
182 question to ask at the next EOC meeting conference. Selectman D’Angelo noted he was
183 disappointed that people were not able to get tested while animals were.

Vice-Chair Myette reported the subject of Hart Roberts Road came up at yesterday’s Planning Board Meeting. An owner is planning a private gravel horse riding ring with no plans to enclose it at this time, but possibly in the future. There were concerns expressed that fire and EMS need to be able to access the area and don’t have adequate turn around space. The question was asked whether Hart Roberts Road is actually a Town accepted road or a driveway. Chair Owens asked if there were evidence it had been continuously plowed for 20 years or more. Selectman D’Angelo indicated the Board may need to consider whether to continue plowing it. Vice-Chair Myette indicated the Road Agent had voiced concerns the road was not up to the Town’s road acceptance standards. Selectman D’Angelo noted in 1996 at Town Meeting discontinuance of the road was tabled.

Vice-Chair Myette met with Mr. Lewis and he began the process of marking trees that needed to be removed at Wason Pond. Some are large and may need to be winched out of the way with the tractor. Mr. Lewis will get back to him with the total number of trees and the action to be taken.

Vice-Chair Myette asked about Pomp Road and installing a gate or other means to disrupt access to ATVs. The location of the gate was at issue and he noted it could be put at the top of the crest. Boulders may work as a deterrent, but access has to be provided to police, fire and EMS. Town Administrator Doda will ask Maintenance and the Road Agent to assist.

Chair Owens indicated the State is considering a request that in the event Town Meeting is not held by June 30th the Towns have the authority to go to a “default” Budget, which would be the same as the current year. Others have stated that the “default” budget should be the one accepted at the February Public Hearing and submitted via the MS747. TA Doda will consult with DRA as to which supposition is correct.

4.2 Public Comment

Anne, who identified herself as a resident of East Derry Road, asked about the “speed tables” that had been suggested as a part of the road reconstruction project. She realizes the Board has voted instead to reduce the speed limit to 25 mph but is concerned this will be ignored. She and her family have experienced close calls since the road has been improved and people are speeding frequently. The speed limit on the Derry side is still 35 mph and people are going 45 or 50 and using it as a cut-through. The speed tables would provide a physical barrier to exceeding the speed limit. Before the road was improved, the road itself was a natural speed bump and improvement has changed the complexion of the neighborhood, sadly. Vice-Chair Myette asked if Road Agent Oleson could come in to talk at the next meeting and explained plowing and maintenance were a concern with the speed tables. Chief Berube advised he sent reminders to officers to spend more time there. Selectman D’Angelo asked if other residents could contact the Board, perhaps even by petition, as to their preference.

Jack Cannon expressed concerns with any plans for closing Wason Pond during the pandemic. He has observed activity while walking his dog and observed social distancing taking place. Mr. Cannon requested that Ranger Wright be given a chance to do his job and let the Chief know if and when he is over run. To close the area sooner would be depriving the residents the opportunity to use and enjoy it.

232
233 *4.3 Potential Non-Public Sessions*
234

235 ***Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91A-3(II)(a) public***
236 ***employees at 8:14 PM. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was***
237 ***taken Hagan – aye, Landau – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Myette – aye, Owens – aye. With all in***
238 ***favor the motion passed unanimously.***
239

240 The meeting was closed to the public at 8:14 PM.

241
242 The meeting was reopened at 8:32 PM.

243
244 ***Selectman Landau motioned to come out of non-public session. Selectman Hagan***
245 ***seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Landau – aye, D’Angelo –***
246 ***aye, Hagan – aye, Owens – aye. With all in favor the motion passed unanimously.***
247

248 ***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the non-public session on Public Employees for a***
249 ***period of one (1) year; Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was***
250 ***taken – Landau – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Hagan – aye, Myette – aye, Owens – aye. With all***
251 ***in favor the motion passed unanimously.***
252

253 **V. Adjournment**
254

255 ***Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Hagan seconded the***
256 ***motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Landau – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Hagan –***
257 ***aye, Owens – aye. With all in favor the motion passed unanimously.***
258

259 The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM.

260
261 Respectfully submitted,
262

263
264 Nancy Hoijer
265 Recording Secretary