

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, October 1, 2020
Virtual Meeting
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
Spring Hill Farm Farmhouse
Budgets
North Pond Road Update
Activities/Town Owned Facilities
Review of Fuel Bids
Roundtable
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chair Owens called the meeting of the Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00 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>

Roll Call

Selectmen Present (Remotely):

Stephen Landau
Chuck Myette
Jeremy Owens
Steve D’Angelo

Selectmen Absent
Joseph Hagan

Town Administrator Debra Doda (Remotely)

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

Road Agent Michael Oleson
EMD Phil Gladu
Town Clerk/Tax Collector Elizabeth Lufkin
BOS AA Janis Jalbert
Building Inspector Myrick Bunker
Planning Coordinator Andrew Hadik
Recreation Director Corinna Reishus
Maintenance Supervisor Paul Cavanaugh
Assistant Assessor Jean Packard
Michael Weider, Planning Board
Cindy LeBlanc, Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee
Beth Sautter, Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee
John Dalrymple, Groundskeeper
Penny Williams
Chester CTV

and other persons unknown to the minute taker.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Owens led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

None.

1.5 Public Comment

Chair Owens opened the meeting to public comment at 7:01 PM.

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 Spring Hill Farm Farmhouse

Beth Sautter indicated the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee would like to be able to use the first floor of the farmhouse for next year’s Fall Festival, educational events, and meetings. The Committee would like to get a list of the items necessary to make the first floor ADA compliant from an engineer. Ms. Sautter noted she contacted an architect and got a price of \$750.

Cindy LeBlanc indicated putting the farmhouse on the Historic Register may not be the most cost-effective way to go since the new siding and kitchen work were done and she believes the Historic Register would require everything to be original. The Board of Selectmen discussed an entirely new building for educational classes at a past meeting, and to provide a home for the antiques. Ms. LeBlanc noted that would prove more costly than having the first floor done in keeping with the use Miss Church had intended.

Chair Owens asked if an analysis was done recently? Building Inspector Bunker indicated he can give some highlights but can’t do the design. It needs to be done by a licensed professional. The scope of compliance begins when you get out of your vehicle, park and walk into the building and have sanitary facilities. Compliance would begin with handicapped accessible parking, walkway, and ramp into the building, doorways and bathrooms.

Selectman Landau recommended using DuBois & King, the Town’s engineers.

Vice-Chair Myette noted this would be a good first step, get the list, the estimates and figure out funding and grants. It would be nice to have the work done for the Town’s 300th Anniversary.

Selectman Landau will contact DuBois & King and work with Maintenance Supervisor Cavanaugh. Ms. Sautter and Ms. LeBlanc noted that would be acceptable to them.

3.2 Budgets

3.2.1 Assessing Department (4152)

Assistant Assessor Jean Packard presented the proposed budget for the Assessing Department for FY21/22 in the amount of \$81,475 which is an increase of 1.56% from last year’s budget. Line 2-395 was increased by \$500 to add Granite State to the list of utilities, making the total \$81,975 or an increase of 2.18%. Ms. Packard will send the updated budget to Finance tomorrow.

Ms. Packard explained the Town had a choice to go with a one-year or a five-year contract with Mr. Sansoucy, or a one-year contract with Mr. Fogg, who had previously worked with Mr. Sansoucy, the Town’s current utility appraiser. Mr. Sansoucy was involved with the utility assessment litigation which affected multiple Towns.

Selectman D’Angelo recommended checking with Town Counsel to see if the Town could execute a contract for five years without going to Town Meeting. Town Administrator Doda will consult with her tomorrow.

Selectman D’Angelo was in favor of the one-year contract. Selectman Landau agreed.

This subject will be placed on next week’s agenda.

3.2.2 Building Inspector (4240)

Building Inspector Bunker presented the proposed budget for the Building Inspector’s Department for FY 21/22 in the amount of \$110,574 which is a 9.26% increase over last year’s budget. Mr. Bunker indicated the increase was due to the Administrative Assistant line which was previously split with the BOS 25%/75% now being carried 100% by the Building Department, a difference of \$9,600. Selectman D’Angelo recommended putting the dollar amount on the footnote and expanding it to make it easier for the Budget Committee to understand.

Vice-Chair Myette asked if the Administrative Assistant would work 100% for the Building Inspector and Mr. Bunker indicated she would help where needed as she has in the past.

Vice-Chair Myette asked about the Code Books, line 1-623, which showed a 20% decrease, Mr. Bunker noted that there was no pending legislation that would require the purchase of new code books; additionally, although the RSA requires three sets of code books to be on hand, most of the books are available online so he only purchased two hard copies.

3.2.3 Government Buildings (4194-1), Stevens Hall (4194-2)

Maintenance Supervisor Cavanaugh presented the proposed budget for FY 21/22 for Government Buildings in the amount of \$302,932 which is a 1.81% decrease from last year’s budget. Mr. Cavanaugh noted it was a strange year with not a lot of buildings open. Mr. Cavanaugh made some reduction in kitchen repairs and snow removal. The sewer and drain costs for the Fire Department should drop drastically now that the septic has been repaired.

Mr. Cavanaugh noted he would like to have summer help again next year. The summer staff worked out well and helped with painting and mowing. Selectman Landau agreed, the Town couldn’t be sure the Trustees would be available next year.

Vice-Chair Myette asked about the propane increase? Mr. Cavanaugh noted he did not have the new bid amounts yet. Town Administrator Doda noted this line could potentially be adjusted after the bids are unsealed tonight.

Mr. Cavanaugh also presented the proposed budget for FY21/22 for Stevens Hall in the amount of \$11,902 which is level funded from last year’s budget.

Selectman Landau noted there were \$25,000 in General Buildings for major repairs that can be added to the \$1,000 restoration line in this budget. The DRA disallowed \$50,000 from the Warrant Article at this year’s Town Meeting and he would like to get clarification. Town Administrator Doda noted the DRA would not allow the Town to

assume a surplus that hadn’t happened yet. Selectman D’Angelo indicated that any surplus would go into the Undesignated Fund Balance. Town Administrator Doda noted they would need to get permission to expend from that fund from the DRA as well as from the Budget Committee. Selectman Landau noted there are several ways to do it.

3.2.4 Executive (4130-1)/Administrative (4130-2)

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed FY 21/22 budget for Executive Office in the amount of \$49,304 which is a 3.66% decrease from last year’s budget. Town Administrator Doda indicated she reduced the minutes, postage, mileage and miscellaneous lines based on usage.

Selectman D’Angelo questioned the Salary Pool line and Town Administrator Doda explained that is for sign on bonuses and holiday benefits for the Town Employees calculated by the Finance Department using a percentage. Selectman D’Angelo asked if the Police Department was committed to any sign on bonuses? Town Administrator Doda will check with the Police Department to see if that is something that can be reduced.

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed FY 21/22 Administration budget in the amount of \$139,950 which is a 6.95% decrease from last year’s budget. Town Administrator Doda indicated the consultant is gone, and her training will be finished halfway through the fiscal year. The BOS Administrative Assistant found a printer who can print the Town Report, flyer, and other possible handouts for less money, and the 25% PT Admin. Asst. line was moved fully to the Building Inspector’s budget, a decrease of \$9,662. Selectman D’Angelo recommended putting that in a footnote for the Budget Committee.

3.2.5 Welfare – General Assistance (4442), Governmental (4444), Other Health Agencies (4419)

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed FY 21/22 Welfare – General Assistance budget in the amount of \$12,450 which is level funded from last year’s budget. Town Administrator Doda noted she moved some categories around based on requests. There have been no requests since mid-March. Per RSA the Town cannot turn people away who need assistance so the budget should not be reduced based on usage.

Vice-Chair Myette and Chair Owens noted it is going to be a tough year and questioned if the budget should be increased? Selectman D’Angelo noted a lot of programs ended today and we don’t know what the revenue stream will be this year. Selectman Landau agreed it will be a bad year this year but disagreed on increasing the budget for next year. Selectman D’Angelo noted he hoped things will improve by July 1st next year.

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for FY21/22 for the Welfare Intergovernmental account in the amount of \$4,512 which is level funded from last year’s budget. Town Administrator Doda noted RCA and Meals on Wheels always ask for the

233 same amount. Selectman D’Angelo asked how many people they are serving? Town
234 Administrator Doda will procure that information.

235
236 Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for FY21/22 for the WR Other
237 Health Agencies account in the amount of \$21,752 which is a 4.39% decrease from last
238 year’s budget. Town Administrator Doda indicated she could reach out to them, but
239 Sonshine Soup Kitchen and Home Health & Hospice did not request any funds this year.
240 Selectman Landau noted they get a lot of help from religious institutions. Selectman
241 D’Angelo indicated serving the seniors in Town is a priority.

242 243 *3.2.6 Planning Department (4191)*

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245 Planning Coordinator Andrew Hadik presented the proposed budget for FY21/22 for the
246 Planning Board in the amount of \$81,620 which is a 1.13 % decrease from last year’s
247 budget.

248
249 Mr. Hadik noted this year’s budget of \$4,000 is the Town’s cost share for the grant
250 application to update the Stormwater Protection plan which costs \$20,000 and next
251 year’s budget will be \$2,000 for updates to the CIP.

252
253 Mr. Hadik noted he would like to promote the Workforce Housing zoning amendment
254 next year by sending out a mailing to explain that it is not to be confused with affordable
255 housing. Mr. Hadik noted the postage costs would be an additional \$350 which can be
256 absorbed into the budget.

257
258 Mr. Hadik noted the training line of \$1.00 reflects decreased training costs which would
259 only reflect an increase if a new Board member came on and needed training which
260 could also be absorbed into the budget.

261
262 Mr. Weider explained the Planning Coordinator position held by Mr. Hadik will become a
263 Town Planner position. The increase voted on by the Board last year is reflected in the
264 budget and a new job description is available. The Coordinator’s position may be filled
265 part-time in fiscal 22/23 to take on administrative tasks. Mr. Weider explained that the
266 position of Planner is more in line with Mr. Hadik’s responsibilities and will plug into the
267 pay matrix created by the Selectmen last year.

268
269 Mr. Weider noted the Master Plan has already accrued \$40,000 toward the projected
270 update costs and the Planning Board will have a Warrant Article this year for the
271 remainder.

272 273 *3.2.7 Town Clerk/Tax Collector (4140-1)*

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275 Town Clerk/Tax Collector Lufkin presented the proposed budget for FY 21/22 for the
276 Town Clerk/Tax Collector in the amount of \$139,718.00 which is a 9.95% increase from
277 last year’s budget. Ms. Lufkin noted the Town Clerk and Tax Collector’s budget have
278 been combined which made sense so that shared costs like telephone service did not
279 have to be separated out. Ms. Lufkin noted the main increase is for a part-time Assistant

Clerk’s position. Right now the office is closed on Friday to catch up on work. The DMV responsibilities are the most time-consuming.

Selectman D’Angelo asked how many hours per week the assistant would work? Ms. Lufkin indicated 12 hours or 700 per year. The position would be a Labor Grade 10, Step 0 on the Pay Matrix, \$18.50 per hour. Selectman D’Angelo indicated the hours for the position may need to be increased to get someone. Ms. Lufkin agreed noting Atkinson just put out for the position for 20 hours per week. Ms. Lufkin noted concerns that if she or Ms. Cannon became ill, not one else could do the job. It requires 30 days of shadowing, together with complicated and technical training before the new staff member would be allowed to process DMV records. Selectman D’Angelo questioned whether this position needed to be filled this year and Ms. Lufkin indicated yes. Vice-Chair Myette recommended discussing how to fill the position this year when the budgets were finished.

There was some dispute about whether or not vault maintenance belonged in the GB Budget (it did not) and why the line for office supplies had increased (the TC/TX office now needs to purchase ink for the DMV printers, whereas before it was supplied by the State).

3.3 North Pond Road Update

Road Agent Oleson reported that work on North Pond Road was finished for this season. This took eight weeks. Due to the fact that the road was raised two feet in some areas, it was necessary to redo some residents’ driveways in order to ‘make them whole’.

In the Spring, any washouts will be corrected, guard rails installed, and a top coat put down. As there are no guard rails, extra delineator posts have been installed in order to guide snow plowers.

Road Agent Oleson departed the meeting at 8:44 PM.

3.4 Activities/Town Owned Facilities

Recreation Director Reishus, as Facilities Manager, reported that the Wason Pond Community Center and Stevens Hall were remaining closed for the time being. Community groups are looking for meeting space, which is in short supply. Some are utilizing Busche Academy; others have gone virtual. The Scout Room in the annex is being updated and will need to be inspected by the Fire Department.

3.5 Review of Fuel Bids

Town Administrator Doda indicated she went back through the fuel usage history discussed at the last meeting to get a five-year average; the numbers were not appreciably different, but she used the higher numbers. She then got new bids from the four bidders.

Selectman D’Angelo indicated Bidder #3 was the low bidder but from Massachusetts and not much different than Bidder #4 who the Town went with last year. Chair Owens and Vice-Chair Myette agreed. Town Administrator Doda indicated they provided good customer service and there were no issues. Vice-Chair Myette indicated they identified the discount provided to employees.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to accept the fuel bid of Bidder #4. Vice-Chair Myette seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Owens – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Myette – aye, Landau – aye, Hagan – absent. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The winning bidder was revealed to be Irving Energy out of Portsmouth.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman Landau indicated he met with the Police Department Building Committee. The architect presented a different view of the building. Figures were high. The architect is talking with a couple of contractors. The lanterns at the Transfer Station Swap Shop were an excellent temporary solution to the lighting problem. Emma is doing an excellent job. The Transfer Station does need some additional help if anyone is looking for part-time work.

Vice-Chair Myette noted he spoke with Town Administrator Doda about personnel for the Transfer Station.

Chair Owens noted the following meetings were coming up:

Monday, October 5, 2020 – Wason Pond Conservation & Recreation Commission – 7 PM

Wednesday, October 7, 2020 – Planning Board – 7 PM

Thursday, October 8, 2020 – Board of Selectmen’s Meeting – 7 PM

4.2 Potential Non-Public Sessions

Chair Owens indicated he had one non-public session, under reputation.

Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(c) reputation. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Owens – aye, Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye and Hagan – absent. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was closed to the public at 9:07 PM. Building Inspector Bunker remained in the meeting.

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

The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:19 PM.

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session on reputation for a period of thirty (30) days. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Owens – aye, Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye and Hagan – absent. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

V. Adjournment

Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Myette – aye, Landau – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens – aye and Hagan - absent. With all in favor the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary