

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, October 8, 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
Budgets
Utilities Assessing Contract
Activities/Town Owned Facilities
Right to Know Policy Discussion
Roundtable
Town Administrator’s Report
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Vice-Chair Myette 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>.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present (Remotely):

Stephen Landau
Chuck Myette
Steve D’Angelo
Joseph Hagan

Selectmen Absent:

Chair Jeremy Owens

Town Administrator Debra Doda (Remotely)

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

Karla Biel
Police Chief Aaron Berube
Jack Cannon, ZBA
Town Clerk/Tax Collector Elizabeth Lufkin
Recreation Director Corinna Reishus
Michael Weider
Penny Williams
Chester CTV

and other persons unknown to the minute taker.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-Chair Myette led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

None.

1.5 Public Comment

Vice-Chair Myette opened the meeting to public comment at 7:01 PM.

Selectman D’Angelo stated that he had requested that the message on the Town Website referencing the RSA concerning stealing political signs be posted and stated that it’s against the law; don’t do it!

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 Budgets

3.1.1 Police (4210), Animal Control (4414)

93 Police Chief Berube presented the proposed budget for the Police Dept. for FY/21/22 in
94 the amount of \$803,223 which is a 2.84% increase from last year. Chief Berube
95 indicated increases in Line 1-122 PT Officer Salaries of \$10,000 and Line 1-561 PD
96 Conferences, Classes of \$500. Chief Berube indicated part-time salaries were at 35%
97 already this year and provide a cushion for full-time officers to attend training, court time
98 and take their vacations. The Park Ranger salary line was moved to Recreation/Wason
99 Pond for next year. Chief Berube indicated the Police Academy has reduced classes
100 placing more of a burden on the Town.

101
102 Selectman D’Angelo asked what kind of training/classes would \$3,000 get the
103 Department? Chief Berube indicated he was trying to keep the budget low per request
104 of the Town Administrator. A lot of training is done in-house, and expenses are for
105 specialty training for officers. One example is Sergeant Sable attending an Executive
106 Leadership class which costs \$695. Officer Gardner is attending a Patrol Officer’s Class
107 which is \$500.00 which is good for an officer with under three-years’ experience.

108
109 Selectman D’Angelo asked if Chief Berube saw any additional interest in such programs
110 and Chief Berube indicated another officer wanted to attend a traffic accident
111 reconstructionist class.

112
113 Selectman D’Angelo indicated he would not be opposed to increasing Line 1-561 by
114 \$1,500-\$2,000. Vice-Chair Myette agreed. Chief Berube indicated he tries to find
115 classes with certifications so the officers can come back and teach them. Town
116 Administrator Doda agreed. Selectman Hagan recommended increasing Line 1-561 to
117 \$10,000 to afford one or two classes per year per full-time equivalent. Selectman
118 D’Angelo added that some classes are not offered in NH.

119
120 Vice-Chair Myette recommended the class requirement be built into the annual reviews.
121 Chief Berube created a worksheet during the annual review process for the officers to
122 provide what training they are interested in. Selectman D’Angelo added to include
123 additional training and support for Chief Berube as well. Selectman Landau agreed with
124 the training and reminded the increase would have to be justified to the Budget
125 Committee and information on the courses would be helpful.

126
127 Selectman D’Angelo asked if training was ever coordinated with other towns? Chief
128 Berube indicated the Department just did training with other towns in Raymond today
129 with about 60 officers in attendance.

130
131 Selectman D’Angelo asked about the Fuel Costs (Line 3-635) which was decreased by
132 9.09%. Chief Berube indicated he has been tracking this cost.

133
134 Selectman Hagan indicated Chief Berube had done a good job on this budget and was
135 pleased to see full-time coverage.

136
137 Vice-Chair Myette thanked Chief Berube for providing the monthly updates.
138

Chief Berube presented the proposed Animal Control Budget for FY 21/22 in the amount of \$2,500 which is level funded from last year. Chief Berube indicated there had been no expenditures this year. Dr. George at Deerfield Veterinary Clinic had not charged any storage fees. If a dog had to be quarantined, however, the Town would be responsible for charges for housing, maintenance, and food. Occasionally there would be an update to equipment used for animal control in the cruiser.

Selectman D’Angelo asked about the cost of the recent skunks rescue which resulted in a couple of officers being sprayed. Chief Berube indicated the officers were able to clean and salvage their uniforms. One pair of gloves is still being aired out and may respond to going through the Fire Department’s gear washer.

Selectman D’Angelo asked if the incident had happened during the day whether Fish & Game would have been called and Chief Berube indicated yes, this incident had happened at night and the skunks ran back into the house. The officers couldn’t in good conscience leave an elderly resident with skunks trapped in her house until morning.

3.1.2 Recreation (4520), Wason Pond Community Center (4530), Fireworks (4587)

Recreation Director Reishus presented the proposed budget for FY 21/22 for the Recreation Department in the amount of \$77,606 which is a 1.44% increase over last year. Ms. Reishus noted the REC Salaries line 1-110 increased by 2.37%.

Selectman D’Angelo asked the balance of the revolving fund and Mrs. Reishus noted it was just under \$60,000. Selectman D’Angelo asked Ms. Reishus how Recreation anticipated spending? Ms. Reishus indicated on programming and part of her payroll. Programs such as boot camp, yoga, soccer, etc. are still going on. Another mobile recreation squad may take place over the winter.

Vice-Chair Myette asked if the training line 1-740 was for the Recreation Director and Ms. Reishus indicated she attends one of the three days of training at the NE Conference.

Ms. Reishus noted one of the equipment was broken at the playground and the car will be replaced with a green dinosaur.

Selectman D’Angelo noted a lot of revenue won’t be generated in the coming year.

Recreation Director Reishus presented the Wason Pond Community Center budget for FY 21/22 for the Recreation Department in the amount of \$23,463 which is a 177.24% increase over last year. Ms. Reishus noted the Ranger salary line 1-110 was moved from the Police Department. Selectman D’Angelo recommended placing a foot note so this would be clear to the Budget Committee.

Selectman D’Angelo asked if Ms. Reishus would be supervising the Park Ranger position beginning next July and Ms. Reishus indicated yes. Town Administrator Doda indicated the Police Department’s background checks were more stringent.

Selectman D’Angelo asked who did the background checks for Recreation? Ms. Reishus noted the State. All employees, volunteers and commissioners over 18 years of age undergo background checks every three years.

Selectman D’Angelo asked about the Pavilion project in the CIP. Ms. Reishus noted it was pushed out to FY 22 but may be able to be accomplished with impact fees and other means without going to the taxpayers for a Warrant Article. The \$40,000 cost in the CIP was for a prefabricated design. Vice-Chair Myette indicated the design that will be used will be done like the covered bridge, a timber frame design, with lumber cut off Town property, and volunteers. There will be costs for foundations, footings, fasteners, and roof. The engineer will provide the Commission with a materials list and recommendations for the foundation.

Recreation Director Reishus noted the Town Fair Fireworks budget proposed for FY-21-22 is level funded from last year’s budget at \$7,000. The Board had no further questions.

3.1.3 Finance (4150-1), Insurance (4196), Ad & Regional Associations (4197), Legal (4153), Debt Service (4711, 4721), Benefits (4155)

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for Finance for FY 21/22 in the amount of \$143,775 which is a 1.29% increase over last year. Town Administrator Doda indicated the cost for the audit is up, the fax was added back in and line 1-150 also covers the postage machine. Dues and Subscriptions (line 1-560) was increased by 30% from \$50 to \$65 based on actuals as well as Office Supplies (line 1-620) which increased by 2% from \$1,250 to \$1,275.

Vice-Chair Myette questioned the need for the fax machine? Ms. Lufkin noted Finance uses it quite a bit. Vice-Chair Myette questioned whether the large printer had fax capability? Selectman D’Angelo asked if the cost of a postage machine was necessary and whether something like Stamps.com through the post office that didn’t charge a fee could be used. Town Administrator Doda indicated she would check with Ms. Smith in Finance.

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for Insurance for FY 21/22 in the amount of \$107,723 which is a 2.97% increase over last year. Town Administrator Doda noted the estimated increase is 3% and the new rates will come out on October 15th. Selectman D’Angelo recommended coming back after the rates are set to review this budget proposal and added unemployment rates could increase by much more next year.

Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for Ad & Reg. Dev. For FY 21/22 in the amount of \$8,651 which is a 1.59% increase over last year. Town Administrator Doda noted this is for dues with NHMA and SNHPC. Vice-Chair Myette indicated the Planning Board had informed him of the increase with SNHPC based on population counts. The dues for NHMA were level from last year.

233
234 Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for Legal for FY 21/22 in the
235 amount of \$65,000 which is level funded from last year. Selectman D’Angelo indicated
236 legal costs could go down next year as the utilities’ litigation wraps up.
237

238 Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for Debt Service for FY 21/22
239 in the amount of \$0.00 which is a 100% decrease from last year. Selectman Landau
240 recommended putting \$1.00 in each of the TAN lines (1-100) Principal and Interest,
241 bringing the proposed budget to \$2.00. Town Administrator Doda noted the last loan
242 payment is being made this year.
243

244 Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for Benefits for FY 21/22 in
245 the amount of \$921,284 which is a 9.28% increase over last year. Selectman D’Angelo
246 indicated retirement is up considerably as the State shifts the burden to the local level.
247

248 *3.1.4 IT (4150-8)* 249

250 Town Administrator Doda presented the proposed budget for IT for FY 21/22 in the
251 amount of \$128,362 which is a 14.72 % decrease over last year. Town Administrator
252 Doda indicated line 8-315 Software – DMV/Dogs decreased by 5.95%, Line 8-324
253 decreased by 100% as the Software was a one-time purchase.
254

255 Selectman D’Angelo asked about the increase in IT Phones Internet Line 8-341? Town
256 Administrator Doda noted the Town uses Comcast and Granite State and would find out
257 which provider increased their rate.
258

259 Selectman D’Angelo asked about the \$10,000 increase for hardware Line 8-314? Town
260 Administrator Doda indicated she will check with Ms. Smith.
261

262 Selectman D’Angelo indicated there may be a benefit for switching from servers to a
263 Cloud based system which may be more secure.
264

265 *3.1.5 Zoning Board of Adjustment (4193)* 266

267 Jack Cannon presented the proposed budget for the Zoning Board of Adjustment for FY
268 21/22 in the amount of \$19,233 which is level funded from last year. Mr. Cannon noted
269 the number of applications drives the budget for items such as advertising and postage.
270 There were 16 applications last year which is the three-year average.
271

272 *3.2 Utilities Assessing Contract* 273

274 Town Administrator Doda noted there was no update from Mr. Fogg concerning a proposed
275 contract for the utility assessment line of the Assessing budget, as he has been out of the office.
276 Town Counsel indicated a long-term contract can be entered with an escape clause referred to
277 as a “non-appropriation” clause.
278

Selectman D’Angelo indicated he was in favor of a one-year contract. Vice-Chair Myette recommended postponing until the Board hears back from Mr. Fogg to get the final contract before making any decision. Selectman D’Angelo recommended having him attend a meeting.

3.3 Right to Know Policy Discussion

The Selectmen discussed adopting the Right To Know Policy, which utilizes language approved by the New Hampshire Municipal Association and clarifies how residents may receive access to governmental records.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to adopt the Right to Know Policy as presented. A roll call vote was taken Owens – absent, Myette – aye, Hagan – aye, Landau – aye, D’Angelo aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman D’Angelo recommended having a policy that all inquiries made concerning past employees be run through the Town Administrator. The only information that should be provided is the dates of employment and the job position/title. Selectman D’Angelo requested that this request be provided to the Department Heads.

Selectman Hagan asked Ms. Lufkin about voter registration. Ms. Lufkin indicated there will be voter registration on Monday, October 12th and the Supervisors of the Checklist will be on hand from 7-8 PM. Absentee Ballots can be requested at this time as well. The Supervisors and the Clerk’s office will continue to be open for registration and absentee ballots the next two Monday nights from 7-8 PM and on Saturday the 24th from 11 AM-12 PM. Selectman D’Angelo reminded the public will be required to wear masks for that. Ms. Lufkin noted anyone unable to wear a mask can use the external window at the Town Clerk’s office.

Vice-Chair Myette noted the Planning Board held its first CIP meeting on Wednesday with the Fire Department, Police and Road Agent. There are three large pieces coming up for highway equipment and buildings, deciding upon a DPW over the next two to three years and whether to move forward with that and the Police Department building. There could be grants for Fire Equipment. The following year there is over \$700,000 for equipment, backhoe, pump and the Police Building with no funding for roadwork which could be \$1 million and unlikely to pass if all are presented in the same year.

Selectman D’Angelo indicated the operating budget is proposed at \$5 million dollars this year which is more than a two percent increase when you consider the \$50,000 for fire apparatus was removed.

Selectman Landau indicated he spoke with an architect, a Chester resident, who is willing to look at both Spring Hill Farm and the Wason Pond Community Center for accessibility purposes. This architect charges \$150/hr. He will notify Vice-Chair Myette of the date and time. Selectman Landau asked if the RFP for the handicapped ramp for the Community Center was

sent to Amramp? Town Administrator Doda posted it on the webpage and NHMA and will send it to Amramp tomorrow. Selectman Landau will provide the address if necessary. Vice-Chair Myette asked why the RFP specified the material for the railings but not the ramp and Town Administrator Doda explained that Building Inspector Bunker recommended the contractor decide. The bids are due on October 21st and will be available for the October 22nd BOS meeting.

Selectman Landau indicated Ms. Reishus is trying to find places for people to meet and there is a portable classroom that could be used as a meeting room. The Scouts have no issues with it. The Fire Department will do an occupancy evaluation. The equipment stored there should be moved but the container company did not have anything available until after January 1st.

Vice-Chair Myette noted the following meetings were coming up:

Monday, October 12, 2020 Budget Committee Meeting at 7 PM
Tuesday, October 13, 2020 Conservation Commission Meeting at 7 PM
Wednesday, October 14, 2020 Planning Board Meeting at 7 PM
Wednesday, October 14, 2020 300th Anniversary Committee Meeting at 7 PM
Thursday, October 15, 2020 Board of Selectmen’s Meeting at 7 PM

4.2 Potential Non-Public Sessions

Selectman Landau indicated he had one non-public session, under reputation.

Selectman D’Angelo indicated he had another non-public session under legal for tax liens.

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

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:37 PM. Town Clerk Lufkin remained in the meeting.

Town Clerk Lufkin departed the meeting at 9:09 PM.

The meeting room was reopened at 9:13 PM.

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

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on Legal Advice, for an indefinite period. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Owens – absent, Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye and Hagan – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on Reputation, for an indefinite period. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Owens – absent, Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye and Hagan – aye. 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, Owens – absent, Myette – aye, Landau – aye, D’Angelo – aye, and Hagan - aye. With all in favor the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary