

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, November 5, 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
Eagle Scout Project – Jack Helf
Budget: Trustees of the Trust Funds (4150-7)
Warrant Articles
WPCC Ramp Bid: Recommendations from the WP Commission
Set Tax Rate
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 (Present Remotely):

Stephen Landau
Joseph Hagan
Chuck Myette
Steve D’Angelo

Selectmen Absent:

Jeremy Owens

Town Administrator Debra Doda (Present Remotely)

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

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Elizabeth Lufkin

Recreation Director Corinna Reishus

Assistant Assessor Jean Packard

Police Chief Aaron Berube

Jack Helf

Jay Rowden

Sheryl Rich, SAU Business Administrator

Penny Williams

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 7:00 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 Eagle Scout Project – Jack Helf

Jack Helf reported the Eagle Scout project to construct the brick patio outside the MPR and repaint the benches was completed on November 2nd. Mr. Helf noted he had to deviate from the original plan after raising more money than anticipated. He may still add a plaque to it.

Selectman Hagan and Vice-Chair Myette noted they were very impressed and thanked Mr. Helf and Scoutmaster Rowden.

Selectman Landau motioned to accept Jack Helf’s Eagle Project and to sign the paperwork releasing Jack Helf, the troop, and the council of liability. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Owens – absent, Myette – aye, Landau – abstain, Hagan – aye and D’Angelo – aye. The motion passed 3-0-1.

3.2 Budget: Trustees of the Trust Funds (4150-7)

Vice-Chair Myette noted the budget has gone from \$10,000 to \$20,000 this year. Town Administrator Doda reported she talked to Mr. Costine about the increase and he informed her that fees are dependent upon how long the Management Firm manages the Town’s funds; it was a worst-case scenario.

Town Administrator Doda noted the only item not reflected in the current budget is the deletion of the rented trailer for the Village Cemetery trustees. Selectman Landau noted the trustees would be able to have Maintenance’s current trailer once they purchase a new one from the CIP. Town Administrator Doda noted that would reduce the budget by \$1,000 and bring it to an increase of 2.66%.

3.3 Warrant Articles

Selectman D’Angelo asked what \$300,000 for “Culture & Rec.” included. Town Administrator Doda noted Recreation, Wason Pond, Caretaker Cottage, Spring Hill Farm, etc. Selectman D’Angelo recommended including the line item #s in the budget.

Vice-Chair Myette noted the road bond was tabled last year. Selectman D’Angelo noted the Road Agent wanted to do the other half of North Pond Road next year. Vice-Chair Myette recommended having Road Agent Olson come to a meeting and discuss the proposed projects.

Selectman Landau proposed additional matching funds for the clock and steeple project at the church to preserve history and be ready for the 300th Anniversary. Last year \$25,000 was approved. The clock belongs to the Town. The L-Chip grant was not given for the clock project. Selectman Hagan noted he was all for funding the church. Selectman D’Angelo would like to do two Warrant Articles for \$25,000 each.

Selectman Landau would like to put \$5,000 in the CIP for the commercial kitchen. Selectman Hagan noted he was in favor of this.

3.4 WPCC Ramp Bid: Recommendations from the WP Commission

Town Administrator Doda reported the WPC&RC reviewed the bids and preferred the last of the three bids. They are looking for answers to some questions; she has posed them to the bidder but has yet to hear back.

Vice-Chair Myette noted two questions: was the aluminum anodized and could it be painted or coated.

This topic will be added to next week’s agenda.

3.5 Set Tax Rate

Town Administrator Doda reported the tax rate with the identical overlay to last year of \$500,000 would be \$21.15 per thousand. Last year the Town only used ~\$50k of the overlay; she believes that \$500k, in a non-revaluation year, is overkill.

Selectman Landau asked how much money was in the unreserved fund balance and Town Administrator Doda reported almost \$3.5 million or 19.54%, which is over the maximum recommended threshold of 17%. Selectman Landau noted the recommended percentage is between five and 17% and asked if it could be brought to 12%. The overlay can be brought down to \$100,000.

Town Administrator Doda noted with those adjustments the tax rate would be \$20.60 per thousand. A \$245,000 overlay brings the tax rate identical to last year, \$20.80/thousand. Vice-Chair Myette recommended a \$175,000 overlay. Selectman Landau also agreed adding that 50% of the firetruck could be taken out of the unreserved fund balance. Selectman Hagan supported the \$100,000 overlay but will go with the group and encouraged the Selectmen next year to raise the budget by no more than 2.66%. Vice-Chair Myette agreed.

Jack Cannon noted he agreed with Selectman Landau that the overlay doesn’t need to be much and supports giving the break to the taxpayers.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to set the tax rate with a \$50,000 overlay, which would bring it to \$20.53. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Owens – absent, Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Hagan – aye, and Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman Landau noted another place for storage could be found to open up a meeting room. A 20’x50’ storage unit is available for \$2,500 to purchase. A suggestion had been made that the Cub Scouts be allowed to utilize the School for their meetings, but this was denied by the School.

Selectman D’Angelo did not want to set a precedent with putting storage containers by Town Hall and would agree if located at the Transfer Station. Selectman Landau recommended it be funded out of General Buildings.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to purchase the storage container for \$2,500 with funds from the General Buildings fund and discuss with Maintenance Supervisor Cavanaugh about feasibility. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion.

Selectman Landau noted he would like to speak with Maintenance Supervisor Cavanaugh before taking money out of their budget.

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.

Selectman Landau mentioned a food drive at the Transfer Station on the first three Saturdays of November from 7 AM to 2 PM; proceeds will get distributed to the food pantry. Selectman Landau noted he had a non-public as well.

Selectman D’Angelo noted he had one non-public.

Vice-Chair Myette reported the elections went well on Tuesday. Hunting was discussed at the WPC&RC meeting and they voted to prohibit hunting on the property and post the entrances and gates. Selectman Hagan recommended posting every 100 yards to avoid liability and injury. Vice-Chair Myette will check with Primex on the liability associated with posting. Selectman D’Angelo agreed it should be posted as required or not at all. Vice-Chair Myette will go back to the Commission. Ms. Reishus asked about “no discharge of firearms” and Selectman Landau explained it was not enough due to bows and trapping.

Vice-Chair Myette indicated the following meetings and important dates are coming up:

Monday, November 9, 2020 – Budget Committee Meeting at 7:00 PM
Monday, November 9, 2020 – Recreation Commission at 7:00 PM
Tuesday, November 10, 2020 – Conservation Commission at 7:00 PM
Thursday, November 12, 2020 – Board of Selectmen’s Meeting at 7:00 PM

Vice-Chair Myette reminded that Wednesday, November 11th is Veterans’ Day and to thank the Veterans.

4.2 Public Comment

Sheryl Rich noted the school had made a donation to the Boy Scouts for allowing the school to use the tents. The school is currently unable to use its own gymnasium due to Covid protocols and are not allowing anyone in the building.

Selectman Hagan noted the School should be more helpful to the Scouts and urged Ms. Rich to ensure that their budget is maintained within 3%, as the Town has done.

4.3 Non-Public Session(s)

Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II) (c) reputation and (I) legal advice. Selectman Hagan seconded the motion. A roll call vote

was taken Owens – absent, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye, Myette – aye and Hagan – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:47 PM.

The meeting was reopened at 9:11 PM.

Selectman Landau motioned to come out of non-public session. 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 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 Hagan 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 9:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary