

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, March 25, 2021
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
300th Anniversary Committee Updates
Warrant Articles
Roundtable
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Owens called the meeting of the Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00pm.

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):

Jeremy Owens
Chuck Myette
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau

Selectmen absent:
Joseph Hagan

Town Administrator Debra Doda (Present Remotely)

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

Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Liz Lufkin, Town Clerk/ Tax Collector
Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director
Penny Williams, Raymond Area News
PACT

and other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Owens led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

No additions or deletions

1.5 Public Comment

Chairman Owens opened the meeting to public comment at 7:01pm.

Police Chief Berube announced Corporal Kerkman just completed a multi week course “Roadmap for Supervisors’ Success” with Primex. He is already applying some of the techniques he learned in the class.

Police Chief Berube also reported a spike in car break-ins in the area of North Pond, Orcutt, and Trillium roads. Remember to secure your cars and houses to try to keep the opportunist at bay.

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 300th Anniversary Updates

Selectman Landau reported the Committee was very happy with the save the date letter to the Governor from Town Administrator Doda.

Selectman Landau questioned if the 300th would be allowed to have a reenactment behind the municipal building. This would be on the same day as the Proclamation being held at Stevens Hall and within walking distance.

Selectman D’Angelo asked what they would be reenacting. Selectman Landau is not sure what war will be reenacted but they have some reenactors that will be doing things like weaving and such.

Vice-Chairman Myette asked if they are reenacting any of the war scenes which could be safety issues. Selectman Landau does not believe they are reenacting any of the war scenes.

They 300th would like to make sure our cannon is in working condition and could be fired that day.

The Committee will have an advertisement page on the back cover of the Town Report. The next 300th Anniversary meeting will be held on April 13th.

3.2 Warrant Articles

Town Administrator Doda emphasized the Warrant Articles need to be finalized so the Budget Committee has time to look at them before the Public Hearing. A decision will need to be made if the last two articles will be added this year.

Selectman Landau suggested both need to go to the townspeople and they can decide. We need to look to the future and plan; both articles are about future planning in one way or another. These articles affect our tax rate and our community. Bringing it to the Town Meeting will let us know the direction the towns people want to go in.

Vice-Chairman Myette agrees that both are significant for uses and expenses in the future and should go on the warrant for the public to vote on.

Chairman Owens presented Article #Z – Stone Property and Article #Z2- Hart Roberts Road.

Article Z- Stone Property - Shall the Town accept the donation of approximately 28.2 acres of land and buildings therein known as Tax Map 5 Lot 20 with an address of 78 Raymond Road on terms to be negotiated by the Board of Selectmen; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto.

Article Z2- Hart Roberts Road - Shall the Town vote to discontinue as an open highway under RSA 231:43 the following highway: Hart Roberts Road from the intersection of Hart Roberts Road and Halls Village Road to the intersection of Hart Roberts Road and Jack Road (the entire road).

Selectman D’Angelo stated the Stone property is a conditional situation. This donation is contingent on the appraisal we have authorized on the property. If the appraisal value meets the owner’s requirements, then he will be willing to donate the property to the town. The appraisal will be done in May before the Town Meeting. With the unknown use of the property, he will remain neutral and let the town make the decision.

Vice Chairman Myette pointed out the location is adjacent to town land, Chester Academy, and the Fire Station. There is potential for future buildings and even another emergency egress/exit road for the school and Fire Station. The back part of the property could be used for recreational activities. The building could easily be adapted for the committees in town to use. This is a great property and location for the future growth in the town.

With most donations, the donors are looking to apply it to their taxes and the federal regulations require an appraisal within 60 days of the closing to be considered a valid appraisal for taxes.

Selectman Landau explained the town was given the opportunity to purchase land where the school and Fire Department sit today. It was brought to the people and they voted on the purchase with the thought that in the future it might be useful to the town. When the school came to the town needing more space, we had the land in the center of town not only for the school but also the Fire Department.

Selectman Landau indicated if the townspeople vote to accept the donation, we can decide its purpose in the future. He advised if anyone has questions on the Stone property, both Vice-Chairman Myette and Selectman D’Angelo have a wealth of knowledge on this.

Vice-Chairman Myette motioned to move Warrant Article Z – Stone property to the warrant article. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Owens – aye, D’Angelo – abstained, Landau – aye, Myette – aye and Hagan – absent. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Hagan- absent.

The recommendations from the board are the same as moving the article forward.

Selectman D’Angelo suggested adding \$400K to Article H - CIP Funding for a total of \$800K and add Stevens Hall to Article I with \$400K. Stevens Hall renovations, maintenance and painting is already in the projects so this would be adding money and moving into fiscal year 21- 22.

Although reluctant, Selectman D’Angelo suggested withdrawing \$400K from Article J – Highway CIP Funding making that \$600K. With Article R – Fire Department Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund changed to either \$250K or \$300K and add \$500K to Article T- Historic Building Capital Reserve from the unassigned fund balance. With all the changes suggested we would have close to \$1M for the renovation at Stevens Hall.

Chairman Owens clarified with all the changes proposed will that give Stevens Hall \$800K this year for the renovations?

Selectman D’Angelo advised yes based off all the conversations with Charters Brothers. If we do not make these modifications, where will the money come from to do the renovation? Of course, this can be revised at town meeting if we have the estimates in. If we can minimize the tax impact on the town, they may approve it.

Selectman Landau has attended the meetings with Charters Brothers at Stevens Hall. One of the meetings was with a potential roofer who believes we do not need to replace the entire roof, just fix the cracked or broken pieces. The material used could last 300 years according to him. Depending upon weather, this roofer would have scaffolding along one or two sides for 8-12 weeks.

The biggest area of concern is the copper roof on the front tower of the building. This is where a lot of leaks are believed to be from.

Selectman Landau believes from all the conversations about Stevens Hall this will be a three-to-four-year project to do everything that is needed. Most of the exterior work can be done before the 300th has the Proclamation and parade.

Selectman Landau suggested raising Article T – Historical Building Capital Reserve Fund to \$400K and leaving the other warrant articles as previously voted on. This amount will get the work started and we can apply for LCHIP and Moose Plate grants to help alleviate the tax burden.

Selectman D’Angelo reiterated his suggestion was a contingency plan and we can always change it later. We need to fix the building with the least amount of tax impact.

Vice-Chairman Myette agrees with putting \$400K into Article T; that would get the roof started and the other items can be worked on over the next few years. With the amounts we have spent on

roads the last couple years, a good split might be putting \$750K into Article J and \$650 for Article I. This will not change the tax impact.

Selectman D’Angelo stated we are making an effort, and this can be readjusted when we have a better understanding of cost and timeframe.

Town Administrator Doda confirmed the changes to the following articles.

Article H – CIP Funding will be to raise and appropriate \$650K.

Article I – CIP Projects – add a line for Stevens Hall with \$250K, if permissible.

Article J- Highway CIP Funding – raise and appropriate \$750K.

Article K – CIP Highway Projects – spend \$750K.

Article T – Historic Building Capital Reserve Fund- raise and appropriate \$400K transferred from the unassigned fund balance.

Town Administrator Doda will make the changes, get Selectman Hagan’s recommendations, and send to the Budget Committee.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman Landau has two non-publics under reputation.

Vice-Chairman Myette has one non-public under reputation.

Selectman D’Angelo pointed out the NH State of Emergency and mask mandate have been extended twenty-one (21) more days. The numbers are still climbing in the state.

Recreation Director Reishus reported there is confusion with social distancing guidelines. The guideline still is 6ft with a mask, the 3ft with a mask is for schools only.

Chairman Owens announced the following meetings are coming up:

Thursday, April 1, 2021 Board of Selectmen’s Meeting at 7:00pm

4.2 Non-Public Session(s)

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

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:04 pm.

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

The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:24 PM.

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

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

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Reputation, for a period of six (6) months. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Owens – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Landau – aye, Myette – aye and Hagan – absent. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Hagan absent.

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

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

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

V. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert
Recording Secretary