

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, July 29, 2021
Municipal Complex
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
Fire Department Update
ARPA Funds
Encumbrance
Chairman’s Announcements
Roundtable
Potential Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

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

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present:

Chuck Myette
Steve Couture
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau

Selectmen absent:

Jeremy Owens

Town Administrator Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Aaron Berube – Police Chief
Phil Gladu, Acting Fire Chief
Liz Liacos (Remotely)
Buddy Menard (Remotely)
Nancy Myette
Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director (Remotely)
Ted Scott (Remotely)

and other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Myette led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

None

1.5 Public Comment

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

As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:02pm.

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.

III. New Business

3.1 Fire Department Update

Acting Fire Chief Gladu advised that the department has had 30 calls for service both in Chester and other surrounding towns the last three weeks.

On July 21st a call came in for a tree on house. A tree had fallen and taken out all the services to a house with no structural damage. On the morning of the 23rd, we assisted Auburn with a structural fire which is being investigated.

On the evening of July 23, there was a significant motor vehicle accident in the middle of town. Three patients refused medical help and one was transported for evaluations. A fire with exposure came in on the 27th in town and all frontline units responded. Fire was in a generator located in the driveway. The CO levels were checked in the house, and nothing was found.

Recently the department received ten new Motorola pagers and has started the process of phasing out the older less reliable pagers. The power stretcher has arrived. This one is battery operated and better for both the department personnel and patients. Also, during the annual testing, a supply line failed, and we received a replacement plus three backups.

Acting Fire Chief Gladu mentioned he has three great candidates for the Lieutenant’s position. Currently the department has one Lieutenant, and it usually has four to five in the department.

Alex Hodosi will be finishing his Advanced - EMT class in mid-August. Lieutenant Menard has also restarted the Explorer program and has four young people interested.

Selectman Couture mentioned the impressive response time to the accident at the center of town.

Acting Fire Chief Gladu mentioned when it was toned out and the initial report came in as multiple injuries with possible entrapment under a van. Derry Medic checked if DHART was available if it was needed and more rescue units were called in. Once on scene, Mike Willinsky, Chester resident and off duty Paramedic/Firefighter, gave a full run down on the patients. When the patients were off scene the Fire Department helped clean up and waited for the wreckers.

Selectman Couture questioned if the center of town was on the state’s 10-year plan for a roundabout or a set of lights. Police Chief Berube advised it is on the list, but it is all based on the severity of the accidents. Although there are numerous accidents most are not severe.

Selectman Couture mentioned the potential for money to be coming for these items.

3.2 ARPA Funds

Town Administrator Doda stated she had a brainstorming meeting on Wednesday about potential projects the ARPA money can be spent on. Potential projects include culverts, bridges (Wason Pond foot bridge), cyber security, and revenue replacement. Selectman D’Angelo suggested a cloud-based program to get rid of servers in the municipal buildings.

Chairman Myette mentioned the town is eligible for more than half a million dollars and Town Administrator Doda has already submitted the application paperwork.

Selectman Couture advised to keep it as administratively simple with a big project, because managing and reporting on the grant will be easier with fewer projects.

A list of potential projects will be identified and then they can be ranked in order of importance.

3.3 Encumbrance

Chairman Myette stated the town had \$193,960.95 left for encumbrances. Encumbrances paid out in July include the Police Department \$2500.00, and the Building Department’s access window.

Town Administrator Doda mentioned \$1480.00 was paid out for the window project by using a different, less expensive vendor for the building of the window.

Chairman Myette indicated the amounts for the encumbrances are similar to previous conversations with the exception of the last highway amount being \$25K from last week’s conversation of \$65K.

Town Administrator Doda stated the Cemetery Trustees have agreed to pay for half the shed out of their current budget and encumbering \$3972.00.

With the changes to some lines the additional highway roadwork will be \$31,452.95. Town Administrator Doda advised the money will be found for the additional work that has been completed for the roadwork.

Chairman Myette mentioned numbers were mentioned at previous meetings and work was done prior to knowing what was left in the budget. It was suggested to possibly have a smaller project be pushed to a later date.

Town Administrator Doda suggested next year let the Department Heads know that no work can be started until the actual dollar amount has been finalized. Selectman Couture mentioned at the previous meeting it was understood that any money left in the budget would go to road work.

Town Administrator Doda mentioned she gave the Road Agent the ok to do the work since the vendor was in town doing work and the Board of Selectmen had given the money to roadwork.

Selectman D’Angelo suggested Road Agent Oleson may have to cut back on some of the planned projects. Also ask Town Planner Hadik if money is available in the CIP to offset the balance. The Candia Road Culvert is an unexpected expense in this fiscal year’s budget.

Selectman D’Angelo mentioned this is an indication on how thin the budget was for the year. There is money in the CIP for roadwork from a warrant article that will lapse in December of 2021 if not used. That money will go back in the general fund if not spent and we can ask to spend that money in a warrant article next year.

Selectman Couture motioned to approve the encumbrances as noted on Town Administrator Doda’s worksheet. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens – absent, Couture – aye, Landau –aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Owens absent.

The changes to the encumbrance list include reducing the access window to \$1480.00, reducing the cemetery shed to \$3972.00 and giving the roadwork \$31,452.95.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings for next week:

Monday, August 2, 2021 Wason Pond Commission Meeting at 7:00pm

Wednesday, August 4, 2021 Planning Board Meeting at 7:00pm

Thursday August 5, 2021 Board of Selectmen Meeting at 7:00pm

4.2 Roundtable

Selectman Couture:
Nothing to report.

Selectman D’Angelo mentioned an issue being raised by the ZBA with being a liaison. As a Planning or Budget Committee member, the Liaison is appointed as an ex-officio member which gives them voting rights and he feels it should be the same for ZBA. Selectman D’Angelo advised ZBA Chair Maloney is not comfortable with the liaison voting on cases.

Selectman Couture questioned if a statute was not allowing the liaison to be a voting member. Selectman D’Angelo advised there is not a statute against voting, it is a matter of the Board of Selectman sanctioning the liaison to vote according to the ZBA attorney Stephen Bennett.

Selectman Landau stated the ZBA is a quasi-judicial board. If the ZBA handles a case, it has to be appealed to either the Board of Selectman or the court. Selectman D’Angelo advised the appeals do not go to the Board of Selectman anymore, they are sent to the state level for appeals.

Selectman Couture suggested having the town attorneys give a recommendation on this matter. Town Administrator Doda mentioned a conversation about ex-officio positions with the town attorneys. It is in the RSAs for the Planning Board that a selectman is ex-officio and because it does not say it in the RSAs ZBA then it is not an ex-officio position. New Hampshire is not a Home Rule state; it is a Dillon’s Rule state. Dillon’s Rule means if the statutes do not say you can do it then you cannot do it, while Home Rule means if it does not say you can’t do it then you can.

Selectman Landau requested a meeting with our attorney on this matter. Town Administrator Doda will request Town Counsel’s opinion in writing, and then set up a meeting with the attorneys at another Board of Selectman’s meeting if there is still a dispute.

Selectman Landau commented the Police Department project was placed on hold based on the cost of a new building and reconfiguring the entire municipal complex property. Police Chief Berube stated the sitework configuration is about half of the total price the town was quoted.

Selectman Landau would like to refresh the PD Space Needs Committee and schedule a tour of the Tilton Police Department to get ideas for a building.

Selectman D’Angelo suggested looking at properties the town owns for a possible space for a building. Selectman Landau advised the location needs to be centralized and visible.

Police Chief Berube does not agree with the asking the townspeople for more money for this project without a plan in place.

Town Administrator Doda will send the prior RFPs and renderings of the Police Department Building to Selectman Couture.

Selectman Landau will ask the committee members if they are still interested in being a member and scheduling a tour of Tilton Police Department for ideas.

Chairman Myette:
Nothing to report.

4.3 Non-Public Session(s)

Chairman Myette announced there are three non-publics on reputation and legal.

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

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:19 pm.

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

The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:44 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 Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens – absent, Couture – aye, Landau –aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Owens absent.

Selectman Landau motioned to leave 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 Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens – absent, Couture – aye, Landau –aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Owens absent.

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Reputation, for a period of one (1) year. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens – absent, Couture – aye, Landau –aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Owens absent.

V. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert
Recording Secretary