

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, December 16, 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 New Member Introduction
Revisit Scheduling of Town Owned Facilities
Budget Review
Chairman’s Announcements
Roundtable
TA Report
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
Jeremy Owens
Steve Couture
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau

Town Administrator Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief
James Fleckenstein
Phil Gladu, Acting Fire Chief
Andrew Hadik, Town Planner
Tara Ingalls
Mark Keddy
Nancy Myette
Mike Oleson, Road Agent

51 Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director

52
53 and other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary.

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55 *1.3 Pledge of Allegiance*

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57 Chairman Myette led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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59 *1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions*

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61 A discussion on the CIP was added after 3.1 Fire Department New Member Introduction

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63 *1.5 Public Comment*

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

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

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69 **II. Old Business**

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71 *2.1 Approval of Minutes*

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73 An approval sheet for the previous meeting’s minutes was sent electronically.

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75 *2.2 Items for Signature*

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77 All members reviewed and signed the items in the signature folder.

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79 **III. New Business**

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81 *3.1 Fire Department New Member Introduction*

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83 Acting Fire Chief Gladu introduced Mr. Fleckenstein as the newest member of the Fire Department.
84 Mr. Fleckenstein stated he moved to Chester in March, and he has about 15 years of service as an
85 EMT and paramedic with some fire experience.

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87 The Board welcomed Mr. Fleckenstein to the Fire Department.

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89 *3.2 CIP Discussion (added to the agenda)*

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91 Chairman Myette mentioned the Planning Board held the Public Hearing for the Capital
92 Improvement Plan (CIP) at their meeting last night. Although no public were present for the
93 hearing the CIP discussion was great and the document was cleaned up. Some of the discussion
94 focused on how to utilize the document and where projects fit in and the importance to the
95 departments. There are items moved out past the seven (7) year mark that are placeholders that
96 can be moved into the table by the Board of Selectmen.

97
98 Town Planner Hadik explained Table 10 is the list of projects within the CIP document. The updated
99 version shows what other funds might be available for the projects such as impact fees within the
100 departments.

Town Planner Hadik mentioned the CIP projects by priority are Police and Fire then Highway to keep a functioning infrastructure. Then General Government, Library, and Recreation. The Recreation CIP items might be wants but are justified as projects and could potentially be paid for by impact fees.

Town Planner Hadik indicated some of the large items such as bridges and culverts on the Highway CIP could be taken care of if Chester gets their fair share of the federal money that was just passed. He mentioned the Road Agent has done a great job paving and improving the roads. Last week the roads were scanned by Street Scan including the subdivisions that will be accepted in June. Once the data is received some roads might move in the table if the data shows the roads are better than thought to be.

Chairman Myette pointed out it is nice to see what is available for impact fees, grants, and capital reserve funds for the Board to understand what the possible projects could be for the year.

Town Planner Hadik advised some departments are not spending their impact fees and the town is getting closer to the six (6) year window when the fees will need to be returned. Police, Fire, Library, and Recreation have been using their impact fees regularly. The school has recently started spending theirs. General Government has not spent theirs and with the impact fees could pay for the first three (3) projects on their list.

Selectman D’Angelo inquired if the roof invoice had been received. Town Planner Hadik explained the impact fees can only be used on items listed in the CIP, with the roof not listed on the CIP money would need to come from the Historic Building Capital Reserve Fund.

Selectman Landau reported Maintenance Director Cavanaugh is currently looking for someone to repair the concrete steps at Stevens Hall and use impact fees to pay for it. He questioned why the Police Department Building engineering and construction is no longer on the CIP but pushed out beyond the seven (7) years. It was explained if an item is just an aspiration for the future to take it off the CIP.

Selectman D’Angelo questioned the amount of CIP money that might remain in the CIP fund if not spent this year. Town Planner Hadik pointed out a little over \$1.6M has not been spent.

Chairman Myette appreciates the work done on the CIP by Town Planner Hadik. The Board needs to get a better understanding of how it works and what amount needs to be requested for the CIP and how to fund the projects.

3.3 Revisit Scheduling of Town -Owned Facilities

Recreation Director Reishus explained the Recreation Commission met this month and recommends continuing to follow CDC guidelines. They are allowing one recreation program per day with cleaning between groups.

During the last couple weeks there have been Covid-19 exposures in town buildings. Selectman D’Angelo asked if the employees are being protected. New Hampshire is leading the nation in Covid-19 cases per capita. Chairman Myette recommends continuing with the current guidelines.

Recreation Director Reishus feels more resources are needed to open facilities to more than one group a day. She recommends either hiring a cleaning company or if the decision is to hire someone for the Maintenance Department have them work in the afternoon or evenings.

3.4 Budget Review

Town Administrator Doda reported an increase of 10%. Vice Chairman Owens inquired how much of the budget increase is salary. Town Administrator Doda stated the salaries increased by \$350K with an overall budget increase of \$550K. Town Administrator Doda will work on breaking down the salaries.

Selectman Couture would like to know what is important in the budget when he goes to the Budget committee meeting. He indicated during the prior budget conversations the library pay increase seemed important. Selectman Landau pointed out that the wage increases for the library are not under the Board of Selectmen’s control, it’s governed by the Library Trustees.

Selectman Couture will request Block 5 to explain the IT budget increase at a Budget Committee meeting if necessary. Vendor costs for recycling have increased and the budget represents those increases.

Benefits went up by 15% but there is not much control on that line. That can change when someone gets married and or has a child.

Planning increased due to the addition of an employee to help the Town Planner. Police increase is due to court time and holidays which need to be covered being broken out from the overtime budget line item.

Chairman Myette suggested looking at line items’ monetary increases and not the percentages. Another budget discussion will be held at the January 6th, 2022, Board of Selectmen’s meeting.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

Chairman Myette noted the ARPA Funds acceptance public hearing is scheduled at the December 23, 2021 Selectmen’s Meeting. This meeting will focus on the acceptance and no decisions will be made on where the funds will be spent.

Chairman Myette mentioned a letter was received from the individual requesting the town portion of his motorcycle registration. The state has already refunded their portion.

Vice Chairman Owens motioned to return the town portion of the motorcycle registration in the amount of \$28.00. Selectman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken; Myette – aye, D’Angelo – abstained, Owens –aye, Couture – aye, Landau –aye. With four in favor the motion passed with D’Angelo abstaining.

4.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings for next week:

Tuesday, December 21, 2021 ZBA Meeting at 7:00pm

Thursday, December 23, 2021 Board of Selectmen Meeting at 7:00pm

Chairman Myette announced the following events:

Friday, December 24, 2021 Santa Ride starting at 4:30pm

Recreation Director Reishus mentioned the scavenger hunt at Wason Pond starts Friday and will be up for a few weeks. A meeting for the Winter Fest at Spring Hill Farm will happen on January 10th. The event date is set for Saturday, February 26, 2022.

4.2 Roundtable

Vice Chairman Owens asked about the complaints about the phone service interruptions. Town Administrator Doda advised years ago Granite State Telephone was the only phone service in Chester. Other companies have not wanted to come into the territory since the monopoly ended.

Selectman Couture mentioned the LCHIP grant recipients list was released. Town Administrator Doda advised she would be submitting an LCIP Grant application this year. Selectman Couture offered to assist with the grant.

Selectman D’Angelo

Nothing to report

Selectman Landau mentioned the 300th would like to put up bunting or possibly wrap the columns in red, white, and blue cloth at Stevens Hall, Library and Post Office prior to Proclamation Day. They may need a seamstress to sew the pieces of cloth together. Also bunting can be purchased by homeowners on Chester Street to decorate their homes. The 300th will also be sending postcards for the event.

Chairman Myette stated the handicap ramp at the community center will not be available for a while. The ramp has been built however the decking it attaches to is in poor condition and needs to be repaired.

4.3 Town Administrator’s Report

Town Administrator Doda

Nothing to report

4.4 Non-Public Session(s)

Chairman Myette announced non-public sessions on reputation and employment.

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

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:28 PM

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

The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:54 PM.

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

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

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

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

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

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

V. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert
Recording Secretary