

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, January 13, 2022
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
Final Budget and Warrant Review
Chairman’s Announcements
Roundtable
TA Report
Action Items
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 (Remotely)
Steve Couture
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau

Town Administrator Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief (Remotely)
Phil Gladu, Fire Chief
Nancy Myette

and other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Myette led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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52 *1.4 Chairman’s Additions or Deletions*
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54 Chairman Myette has one nonpublic.
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56 *1.5 Public Comment*
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58 Chairman Myette opened the meeting to public comment at 7:02pm.
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60 As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:03pm.
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62 **II. Old Business**
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64 *2.1 Approval of Minutes*
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66 An approval sheet for the previous meeting’s minutes was sent electronically.
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68 *2.2 Items for Signature*
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70 All members reviewed and signed the items in the signature folder.
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72 **III. New Business**
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74 *3.1 Final Budget and Warrant Review*
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76 Town Administrator Doda mentioned the 300th Anniversary Committee will be deciding at the next
77 meeting about the fireworks budget. Selectman D’Angelo advised the fireworks could come out of
78 the Recreation revolving fund and not the budget.
79

80 With the Fire Department Budget going down, Selectman D’Angelo questioned if there will be
81 enough in the budget to make it all year. Fire Chief Gladu expects some increase but feels the budget
82 is appropriate.
83

84 The Board of Selectmen went thru every department in the budget before finalizing the budget.
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86 Town Administrator Doda mentioned a decrease in the minute taking in the Executive budget. Also,
87 office supplies in the following budgets were decreased: Town Clerk/ Tax Collector, Treasurer, and
88 the Building Department.
89

90 The Elections budget increased based on having 3 elections and 2 meetings next year. With the
91 current auditor increasing their pricing the town sent out an RFP (Request for Proposal).
92

93 The IT budget decreased by moving the VM license upgrades to the following year’s budget saving
94 about \$10K. This will need to be done next fiscal budget as the licenses version will no longer be
95 supported then. The Legal budget stayed the same with the addition of the Police Department
96 prosecution budget moved from the Police Department. Planning is adding a part time employee.
97 Zoning and Cemeteries were brought closer to actual.
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99 Town Administrator Doda mentioned \$500.00 was taken out of the insurance budget for ancillary
100 coverage when people could not afford the insurance required.

Chief Berube advised the Police budget was reduced by the requested \$25K. Personnel salary increases are approximately \$74K and the budget only went up about \$60K from last year.

Fire Department overtime line was reduced to \$7500.00 as there is only one eligible firefighter and salaries were placed in the appropriate budget lines. Emergency Management budget was increased due to all the new construction in town. When a new house is occupied a number sign needs to be placed, and the prices have increased.

Town Administrator Doda stated the salt and plowing was flatlined and adjusted the salary line. Selectman Couture mentioned the on-call stipend is not showing as an increase since it is a new line, but it does factor into the increase in the Highway budget.

Chairman Myette inquired if the new compactors would change the Recycling budget. Town Administrator Doda advised the change just happened today and so it is unknown if it will change the budget. The cardboard was picked up twice in one day this week so the compactor should help the town with hauling fees.

Parks and Recreation reduced the budget by utilizing laminated paper signs and having the playground mulch delivered before July.

Selectman Couture explained the library trust funds cannot be utilized for operational expenses. Selectman D’Angelo stated the explanations are well written and the library is a valuable resource for the town.

The town is utilizing the CIP and the town has no more loan payments or bonds now the Quint is paid off.

Selectman D’Angelo mentioned the increase to the budget is better than past budgets. The budget was finalized and can be sent to the Budget Committee.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to accept the budget as is with the caveat that the budget may be reduced by \$7000K for fireworks. Selectman Landau 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 unanimously.

Selectman D’Angelo mentioned he has asked for copies explaining the proposed zoning amendments.

Article #a Road Agent has been rewritten. Selectman D’Angelo inquired if there would be a tax impact. Chairman Myette advised there would be no tax impact this year, and the Public Ways Working Group will have an answer ready as to what could impact taxes. If this is approved there is no money in the budget to hire this year.

Selectman Landau requested the amount spent on the last revaluation in town. Article #b is asked for every year. This dollar amount may change once the information is provided and if the money is not spent, it will stay in the capital reserve fund for future reevaluations.

Article #c - PACT will have no tax impact.

Selectman Landau requested article #d to include “Town’s closed landfill on Dump Road.” Deleting the appropriation if the Warrant Article was voted down was requested as no work will be done before Town Meeting.

Article #e will not be discussed until a decision on the fireworks is made.

Selectman D’Angelo suggested \$50K from the unassigned fund balance and interest earned from other capital reserve funds to fund article #f – Culverts and Crossings Capital Reserve Fund. Town Administrator Doda will rewrite the article and confirm the permissibility of the interest transfers.

Selectman D’Angelo feels that article g – 300th Anniversary needs to be split. One will be to raise and appropriate funds and the other will be to rename the fund to *Significant Anniversaries*. Selectman Landau suggested raising \$1K per year.

Town Administrator Doda stated article #h- CIP Funding has been funded \$600K - \$800K every year. Selectman D’Angelo asked for the total amount for projects on the CIP this year and how much was left in the CIP that is not going to be spent on other projects. Town Administrator Doda will get the information.

Chairman Myette inquired about the construction of the causeway bridge in Article #i – CIP Projects. He indicated the engineering and construction might not be started in the next year. Selectman Landau mentioned the possibility of Congress passing more funding making it feasible to get construction done in FY 22-23. Town Administrator Doda pointed out the paving at the Fire Department will need to be added back into the projects.

Selectman Landau suggested moving the well pump to this year and getting it done before July. Selectman D’Angelo advised if it is a CIP project the Board of Selectmen can recommend the Planning Board to authorize it to be funded this year. Impact fees is another possibility for funding.

Article #l – Winter Road Maintenance is the same every year and Article #m – Master Plan will have no change.

Town Administrator Doda took the projects from the CIP Table 10 for article #k – Highway CIP Projects. More time will be needed to decide what projects are feasible for this year.

Selectman Landau suggested \$250K for Article #n – Funding Fire Engine Capital Reserve Fund. Chief Gladu feels he needs to have \$800K in the capital reserve fund for the new pumper truck. Selectman D’Angelo requested a timeline of when it will be ordered and when it will be delivered. Selectman Landau stated a warrant article could be requested for the next two years to get the money needed for the new pumper truck.

Chairman Myette suggested asking for the \$400K this year instead of splitting in case it is not approved one year by the town. This way we have the money when it comes time to order. Selectman D’Angelo suggested \$250K and money could be taken from the unassigned fund balance if needed for the purchase. Selectmen Landau inquired if there are any issues with the current pumper truck. Chief Gladu stated there is nothing wrong with it but if you keep pushing it back then it will run into when the other vehicles in the fleet need to be replaced.

Selectman Landau suggested \$200K from the unassigned fund balance for article #o – Historical Building Capital Reserve Fund.

Selectman Couture left the meeting at 8:18 pm.

Town Administrator Doda advised there needs to be a discussion on just the CIP Warrant Articles at some point.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings for next week:

Monday, January 17, 2022	Budget Committee Meeting at 7:00pm
	Spring Hill Farm Meeting at 7:00pm

Tuesday, January 18, 2022	300th Anniversary Committee Meeting at 7:00pm
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Thursday, January 20, 2022	Board of Selectman Meeting at 7:00pm
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Chairman Myette announced the following events:

Monday, January 17, 2022	Town Hall closed for Martin Luther King Jr/ Civil Rights Day
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Sign up to run for office Wednesday, January 19th - Friday, January 28th, 2022. List available on the Town Clerks page.

4.2 Roundtable

Selectman Landau mentioned leaving a mask mandate decision to the Town Administrator and employees. Other stores are asking that if not vaccinated wear a mask otherwise it is at your discretion. Chairman Myette questioned if the CDC had new guidance on the subject. Fire Chief Gladu advised the mindset among masked vaccinated people is they are still getting sick so what’s the sense in wearing a mask. Selectman D’Angelo stated the purpose behind wearing a mask is to stay out of the hospital or even die from Covid-19.

The upgrade to the video audio system in the MPR was mentioned. A new quote will be obtained with the requested 15’ screen.

Selectman D’Angelo
Nothing to report

Chairman Myette
Nothing to report

Vice Chairman Owens
Nothing to report

4.3 Town Administrator’s Report

Town Administrator Doda noted the cardboard compactor contract is all set, and it includes paper.

Selectman D’Angelo questioned if the fuel pump was fixed and if not what the time frame is for repairs. Police Chief Berube advised this is several weeks out on backorder. Your Variety in Chester is being utilized for the time being for fuel.

The solar letter of intent agreed upon at the last Board of Selectmen’s meeting was signed by the Chairman.

4.4 Action Items
Nothing to report

4.5 Non-Public Session(s)

Chairman Myette announced two non-public sessions on reputation.

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

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:35 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 –aye, Couture – absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Couture absent.

The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:26 PM.

Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the first 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 –aye, Couture – absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed unanimously with Couture absent.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert
Recording Secretary