

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, February 3, 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
Deputy Treasurer Appointment
Public Ways Working Group Presentation
Final Budget and Warrant Review and Approval
Cole Road Project Engineering
Audit RFP Opening
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
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau

Selectmen absent:
Steve Couture

Town Administrator Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Dave Anderson
Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Scott Bourcier, Gale Associates

Myrick Bunker, Building Inspector

Chris Carolan

John Colman

Christine Cue

Kathy Dircks

Andrew Hadik, Town Planner

Mark Keddy

Rene Labranche, Stantec

Rhonda Lamphere, Treasurer

Nancy Myette

Mike Oleson, Road Agent

Darrell Quinn

Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director (Remotely)

Royal Richardson

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 7:02pm.

Ms. Dircks requested that a member of the Board come speak to the seniors during coffee hour on Tuesday February 8, 2022. This meeting will be in the church vestry as there is still no update on when the community center will be reopened.

As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:04pm.

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 Deputy Treasurer Appointment

Ms. Lamphere mentioned the previous deputy treasurer stepped down about a year ago. Since then, she has been spent a lot of time looking for a qualified replacement. Ms. Lamphere is recommending Ms. Cue to the Board.

Ms. Cue mentioned she has read the RSA and understands what the requirements for the position would be.

Ms. Lamphere will write a letter to the Town Clerk and attach the minutes for the appointment. Town Administrator Doda will draft a letter from the Board with their approval of the recommendation.

Selectman Landau motioned to approve the appointment of Christine Cue as Deputy Treasurer. 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 with Couture absent.

3.2 Public Ways Working Group Presentation

Mr. Stover mentioned the Public Ways Working Group was established in December and has held many meetings. The group members are Dave Anderson- resident, Myrick Bunker – Building Inspector, Jack Cannon – Budget Committee, Debra Doda – Town Administrator, Andrew Hadik – Town Planner, Chuck Myette – Selectmen, Mike Oleson – Road Agent, and Mat Stover – resident.

The Working Group was asked to look at the benefits and or disadvantages to having an elected Road Agent or an appointed Supervisor of Roads. After looking at all the data the committee is recommending a Supervisor of Roads.

Mr. Stover mentioned the advantages of continuity in overseeing transportation infrastructure have been demonstrated over the past 15 years, as the same Road Agent has been reelected since 2007. He has worked with Selectmen, Town staff, and the Budget Committee and Planning Board to meet increased volumes of work, improve financial processes and controls, include transportation projects in the Capital Improvement Plan, and increase quality, productivity, and cost-effectiveness in delivering maintenance services and capital projects.

As a Town employee, the Supervisor could have no financial interest or conflict of interest with any contractor, consultant, or supplier for infrastructure maintenance or construction operations and projects. All compensation to the Supervisor would be clear to Town officials and the public. Just as the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief are employed professional safety officials providing long-term continuity of service to the Town, the Supervisor of Roads would be employed as a professional official responsible for the safety and good condition of Town roads.

The Town would have immediate authority to enforce compliance by the Supervisor with Town and state policies, procedures, and regulations, including documentation, approval, and auditing of expenditures, as well as bidding and contract terms.

Mr. Stover mentioned the Working Group included a suggested warrant article in the report as well.

Chairman Myette thanked the group for all their hard work. He mentioned in the next seven (7) years there are over thirty (30) roads that will need to be serviced in Town. With an elected position anyone in Town can run; however, they may not have the experience needed for the job.

It was recommended to have the Working Group help with the selection of the Supervisor of Roads if this is approved. Selectman D’Angelo suggested a direct mailer and a page in the Town Report. Mr. Stover mentioned the report would also be available on the Town website and a segment on the PACT channel as well.

Vice Chairman Owens felt that the question-and-answer portion was very helpful. He inquired if there would be someone to present the article at Town Meeting. There will be Working Group members at the Town Meeting.

Selectman Landau pointed out if this does not pass, it will have to wait two years. The RSA states the position cannot change when the office is up for election.

3.3 Final Budget and Warrant Review and Approval

Selectman D’Angelo summarized the Budget Committee concerns with the budget. They questioned the IT budget from Block5 and asked if a Park Ranger was necessary at Wason Pond. He mentioned Chief Berube was in attendance and explained his budget perfectly. Selectman D’Angelo feels like the Chief sold them on some of the things he had to do to the budget. Succession planning goals for the Police Department were mentioned and the Budget Committee understood. They felt overtime was better in the overtime budget rather than adding new lines in the budget.

Chairman Myette asked if there are any changes needed to the budget. Selectman D’Angelo questioned if the overtime lines should be consolidated. Chairman Myette stated it may get confusing if it were changed now.

Selectman Landau motioned to accept the budget. Vice Chairman Owens 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 with Couture absent.

Town Administrator Doda mentioned warrant articles K & O were the only ones left for the Board to approve.

Chairman Myette read Warrant Article #a – Recission of Road Agent

Shall the Town rescind the action of the 1924 and 1992 Town Meetings to elect a road agent for a two-year term and authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a full-time road agent who will be the Supervisor of Roads. The term of the elected road agent will terminate at the 2023 Annual Town election. Further to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty-five thousand four hundred seventeen dollars (\$55,417) salary and benefits for the Supervisor of Roads position for six months in Fiscal Year 22-23. Salary and benefits for this position will be carried in the Operating Budget in future fiscal years.

He mentioned the Working Group researched surrounding Towns and the matrix. They felt that a salary around \$80K and benefits would be appropriate for the position. The warrant article has six months in for the transition period and the remainder of the fiscal year’s budget.

Chairman Myette went on to article #k – Highway CIP Projects. At prior Board of Selectmen meetings, the roads and engineering were discussed. The roads that were mentioned came up to

about \$635K and a new project for \$300K has been added to the table. Town Administrator Doda advised these are the projects that Road Agent Oleson planned to do this summer.

Selectman D’Angelo mentioned the Town Administrator’s report and advised there will be about two hundred new homes with an average of \$8K in impact fees per home. He suggested looking at that as a supplement rather than all taxation for projects. Chairman Myette mentioned these impact fees are years out. Road Agent Oleson mentioned money for impact fees for highway can only be spent in certain quadrants in Town.

Road Agent Oleson explained impact fees have been used for culverts that needed emergency work done and or repairs that may not be on the CIP in quadrants.

Town Administrator Doda advised the warrant article is the same numbers that were mentioned at a prior meeting, a new table with an additional project being requested. If the requested roads are put in the projects, then the warrant article is short of funding. Selectman D’Angelo is reluctant to take more money from the unassigned fund balance to fund the roads. He suggested waiting to get a better idea of what might not be spent in the budget at the end of the fiscal year.

Road Agent Oleson mentioned in order to fix roads the Town needs about a million dollars a year. For several years the Town has been trying to catch up with extra funding. When cuts are made after much planning it is hard to keep to the plan. It is important to get wear coats on the roads otherwise it will cost the Town more because the roads will not last.

Chairman Myette advised if the Board decides on the recommended projects, they will need to find the additional money needed. Selectman D’Angelo mentioned they are allocating \$1.2M for roadwork. Road Agent Oleson was under the impression part of the money was going to engineering and not on roadwork.

Road Agent Oleson mentioned two bad loads of asphalt were put down on North Pond Road; the vendor has been notified and they will take care of it this summer.

Town Administrator Doda advised if the Board wants to keep the amount on the warrant article Road Agent Oleson will decide what roads to work on based on the amount provided to him. It was noted that if there was extra money in the budget at the end of the fiscal year that could be encumbered for the roads. Selectman Landau pointed out at the last meeting that any encumbered funds at the end of the year could be put into the historic buildings fund.

The Board agreed that article #k will not change.

Selectman D’Angelo asked if article #o – Engineering Culverts, Bridges, and Roads would have to go to Town Meeting to be spent or can the selectmen authorize it. Town Administrator Doda advised the money is not going into a fund, so the selectmen have authority to spend.

Town Administrator Doda pointed out article #o is just for engineering and if article #f – Establishing a Culverts and Crossings Capital Reserve fund fails, #l2 – Funding of Culverts and Crossings Capital Reserve Fund will be null and void. The consensus was to leave article #o as is with the non-lapsing clause.

After all the warrants there will still be 17% in the Unassigned Fund Balance.

The articles were put in order and renumbered by the Selectmen as follows:

Article #8 – Recission of Road Agent Position, Article #9 – Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, Article #10 – Solar Array at Landfill, Article #11 – Renaming of 300th Anniversary Fund, Article #12 – Discontinuance of Hart Roberts Road, Article #13 – Budget, Article #14 – Establish Culverts and Crossings Capital Reserve Fund, Article #15 – CIP Funding, Article #16 - CIP Projects, Article #17 – Highway CIP Funding, Article #18 – Highway CIP Projects, Article #19 – Funding of Culverts & Crossings CRF, Article #20 – Engineering of Culverts, Bridges, and Roads, Article #21 – Funding Fire Department Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund, Article #22 – PACT, Article #23 – 300th Anniversary, Article #24 – Master Plan, Article #25 - Winter Road Maintenance Fund, and Article #26 – Petition Warrant Article: Amend Date of Indigenous Peoples Day.

3.5 Cole Road Project Engineering (moved from later in the meeting)

Chairman Myette thanked the individuals for attending the meeting this evening, but the Selectmen would like one more week before deciding.

3.4 Audit RFP Opening

Chairman Myette opened the three bids received for auditing services for the Town.

Bidder	Financial Statement Audit	Discount	Single Audit	Hourly Rate for additional services
#1	\$22,000.00	(\$3, 000.00)	\$2,500.00	\$108.00 to \$200.00
#2	\$19,750.00		\$2,300.00	\$65.00 to \$150.00
#3	\$25,000.00		\$4000.00	

A decision will be made next week once Finance Director Smith (not present) has a chance to review and make a recommendation.

3.5 Cole Road Project Engineering

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings for next week:

Monday, February 7, 2022	School Board Public Hearing & Budget Committee Meeting at 7:00pm Wason Pond Commission Meeting at 7:00pm
Tuesday, February 8, 2022	Conservation Commission Meeting at 7:00pm
Wednesday, February 9, 2022	Planning Board Meeting at 7:00pm
Thursday, February 10, 2022	Board of Selectman Meeting at 7:00pm

4.2 Roundtable

Selectman Landau mentioned various committees are working together to hold a Winter Carnival at Spring Hill Farm on February 26, 2022, from 2:00pm to 7:00pm. The 300th would like pictures of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator for their mailer. The elevator at Stevens Hall is being worked on, some parts that were needed had to be made.

Selectman Landau requested the bid process to be waived for the work on the HVAC system for the Building, Planning, and Accessing Departments. The one bid in hand is from a contractor that understands and knows the building.

Selectman Landau motioned to waive the bidding process for the HVAC system and not to exceed \$9K in repairs. 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 with Couture absent.

Selectman Landau has three non-publics.

Selectman D’Angelo mentioned the parking issue needs to be addressed on the Town Administrators report. He suggested having Maintenance Director Cavanaugh and Road Agent Oleson work together on pricing and options for possibly graveling out back for more parking. Selectman Landau suggested leveling and graveling the old playground to get more parking.

Selectman D’Angelo inquired as to what our cut is for the Town Clerks office registering vehicles for the Town of Auburn. Town Administrator Doda stated the Town keeps the Town clerk fees for vehicles they registered.

Town Administrator Doda mentioned Town Moderator Scott is unavailable to meet with the Selectmen about Town Meeting. If he agrees with the Selectmen’s ideas on Town Meeting, he will sign off on it. He is not in favor a mask mandate because the building does not have a mask mandate but would be happy with mask suggestions including supplying masks, hand sanitizer and socially distanced seating. Selectman D’Angelo advised there will not be a mask mandate by the Selectmen. Town Administrator Doda advised the Town could provide the masks and sanitizer.

Selectman D’Angelo has non publics to discuss.

Vice Chairman Owens questioned if there were any updates available for the center of Town considering the number of accidents there. Selectman D’Angelo feels they might be waiting for funding. Selectman Landau suggested a traffic light.

Chairman Myette
Nothing to report

4.3 Town Administrator’s Report

Town Administrator Doda reported the Transfer Station opened early on Wednesday due to being closed the previous Saturday for weather. They had 87 cars come during that time with trash and recyclables.

4.4 Action Items

344 *Nothing to report*

345
346 *4.5 Non-Public Session(s)*

347
348 Chairman Myette announced non-public sessions on reputation and legal.

349
350 ***Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II) (c)***
351 ***reputation. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye,***
352 ***D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion***
353 ***passed with Couture absent.***

354
355 The meeting was closed to the public at 9:00 PM.

356
357 ***Selectman Landau motioned to come out of non-public session. Selectman D’Angelo seconded***
358 ***the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –***
359 ***absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

360
361 The meeting was reopened to the public at 10:34 PM.

362
363 ***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on Pending***
364 ***Litigation, for an indefinite period. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote***
365 ***was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four***
366 ***in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

367
368 ***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on***
369 ***Reputation, for an indefinite period. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote***
370 ***was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four***
371 ***in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

372
373 ***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Reputation,***
374 ***for a period of thirty (30) days. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was***
375 ***taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in***
376 ***favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

377
378 ***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the fourth non-public session, on***
379 ***Reputation, for a period of thirty (30) days. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call***
380 ***vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With***
381 ***four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

382
383 ***Selectman Landau motioned to seal the minutes of the fifth non-public session, on Reputation,***
384 ***for a period of thirty (30) days. Selectman Couture seconded the motion. Selectman D’Angelo***
385 ***seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye,***
386 ***Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

387
388 **V. Adjournment**

389
390 ***Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion.***
391 ***Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo –***
392 ***aye, Owens –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with***
393 ***Couture absent.***

394
395 The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 PM.
396
397 Respectfully submitted,
398
399 Janis A. Jalbert
400 Recording Secretary