

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, December 1, 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 Consent Agenda
Conservation Commission Appointment
Spring Hill Farm Budget
Doc Hagan – American Legion, Boy Scout Troop
Unfunded PTO/Vacation Liabilities Fund Discussion
Warrant Articles
Highway Safety Grant
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 6:06pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present:

Chuck Myette
Steve Couture
Jeremy Owens (arrived at 6:16pm)
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau (via Zoom)

Town Administrator Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Victor Chouinard, Conservation Commission
Mark Desiderio, Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee
Eric McGowan, Conservation Commission
Beth Sautter, Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee

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

Chairman Myette added 3.7 Grant Application submittal.

1.5 Public Comment

Chairman Myette opened the meeting to public comment at 6:08pm.

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 6:09pm.

II. Consent Agenda

2.1 Approval of Minutes October 20, 2022.

No comments

2.2.1 Proposal for Services Landfill Post Closure Monitoring Programs

Chairman Myette advised this is the annual contract from Nobis.

2.2.2 Tax Abatement

No comments

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens – absent, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Owens absent.

III. New Business

3.1 Conservation Commission Appointment

Mr. Chouinard presented Mr. McGowan as an alternate on the Conservation Commission. Mr. McGowan’s property had a conservation easement on it when he purchased it, and he wanted to learn what he could and couldn’t do with the property.

Mr. McGowan purchased his property in Chester two years ago. He and his family love hiking and camping. He has learned a lot about easements and has decided to join the commission.

Chairman Myette read the appointment paperwork and mentioned the document would be signed and Mr. McGowan could go to the Town Clerk’s office to be sworn in.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to appoint Eric McGowan as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire on May 31st, 2025. Vice Chairman Couture seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –absent, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Owens absent.

Selectman Owens joined the meeting at 6:16 pm

3.2 Spring Hill Farm Budget

Ms. Sautter and Mr. Desiderio presented the Spring Hill Farm budget. Mr. Desiderio explained the increases include the price increase for electricity and more activities happening at the farm. Ms. Sautter explained with the events being such a success, the committee would like to purchase tables and pop-up tents.

Selectman D’Angelo questioned the costs for heating and electricity last year. Mr. Desiderio pointed out the costs for last year are at the top of the sheet for heating, electricity, and insurance. Chairman Myette mentioned the heat is set at a very low temperature to prevent the pipes from freezing.

Selectman D’Angelo questioned why the committee pays for their own insurance. The property should be covered under the town’s insurance. Chairman Myette explained some the items at the farm are not owned by the town, so they are not covered by the town’s policy.

3.3 Doc Hagan – American Legion, Boy Scout Troop

With Dr. Hagan not present, this agenda item has been removed.

3.4 Unfunded PTO/ Vacation Liabilities Fund Discussion

Town Administrator Doda advised during a previous discussion in June someone asked if there was a fund for unfunded payroll liabilities, and that she had drafted a Warrant Article to create such a fund. Examples of unfunded payroll liabilities might be paying vacation time out when an employee leaves, or carrying over vacation into a new Fiscal Year. Chairman Myette suggested changing the name to simply “unfunded liabilities” so it could be used for maintenance items too; TA Doda advised that there was currently an unanticipated maintenance items fund so this would not be necessary.

Selectman D’Angelo advised it would be too easy for an employee to not take vacation and expect to be paid from this fund. He reminded the Board to be careful with the salary pool, as the Budget Committee had cut that budget last year.

All members of the board agreed to not create the fund and follow the vacation policy of use it or lose it. The draft Warrant Article will be deleted.

3.5 Warrant Articles

Selectman D’Angelo feels it is too early to discuss warrant articles. Town Administrator Doda mentioned the Planning Board has not completed the Capital Improvement Projects Table 10 for next fiscal year.

Vice Chairman Couture advised the solar array project is only for behind the municipal building. Town Administrator Doda pointed out the winter road maintenance fund has been increased to not exceed one hundred fifty-five thousand dollars (\$155,000).

Road Lane markings were discussed. Chairman Myette asked for the Highway Safety Committee to identify key roads, mileage and recommendations for either fog lines, center lines, or both. Selectman Landau suggested a dotted fog line to possibly save the town money.

Town Administrator Doda presented Article #M renaming of the 300th Anniversary Fund. It is unknown at this time if there is money left in the account after the 300th events.

Article #N is to establish the Prosecutorial Costs Expendable Trust Fund for the purpose of funding any unanticipated increases in the cost of providing prosecutorial services to the Police Department over and above those budgeted for and to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be placed in this fund. Vice Chairman Couture questioned the benefit of a trust vs placing this in the budget. Having it in a warrant article, it can be non-lapsing versus a budget item every year.

Changing of the Town Meeting date has been identified as a warrant article. Town Administrator Doda mentioned the Conservation Commission has requested two warrant articles for easements on town owned property.

No other warrant articles were discussed.

3.6 Highway Safety Grant

Chairman Myette advised a motion is needed to enter into a contract for a highway safety grant for the Police Department. Chief Berube sent the documents prior to the meeting.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned for the Town of Chester to enter into an agreement to accept and perform New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety grants, specifically the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety grant # 23-034 in the amount of \$8,283.00. Selectman D’Angelo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, D’Angelo – aye, Owens –aye, Couture –aye, Landau – abstained. With four in favor, the motion passed with Landau abstaining.

Selectman Landau inquired about what the grant will be used for. Vice Chairman Couture mentioned speed details, distracted drivers, and a few more.

3.7 Grant Application submittal

Chairman Myette mentioned Town Administrator Doda is working on a 50/50 matching grant for the causeway bridge at Wason Pond. Town Administrator Doda has requested authorization to sign the grant paperwork.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to authorize Town Administrator Doda to sign the grant for the Wason Pond causeway bridge. Chairman Myette 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.

3.6 Highway Safety Grant (continued)

Chief Berube summarized the grant opportunity from the State of NH. This grant will put an extra patrol car on the road to focus on driving under the influence, texting, and speed enforcements. This grant does have a match but that is satisfied by paperwork, court time, and gas for the vehicles.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings and upcoming events:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Monday, December 5, 2022 | Wason Pond Commission Meeting at 7:00pm |
| Wednesday, December 7, 2022 | Planning Board Meeting at 7:00 PM
School Board Meeting at 7:00 PM |
| Thursday, December 8, 2022 | Board of Selectman Meeting at 6:00 PM. |
| Saturday, December 3, 2022 | The Library is closed for regular business today – because they’re open from 12pm to 6pm for the Whoville Wreath Event. Raffles, crafts, cookies, and photos with the Grinch – don’t miss it! |
| Saturday, December 3, 2022 | Join the Lions Club from 9am to 2pm over at Stevens Hall for their Holiday Fair. |
| Saturday, December 3, 2022 | You can get a take-away for lunch today at the Congregational Baptist Church – Loaf and Ladle To Go! (Luminary kits are available then as well.) These are just a few of the Christmas in the Village activities. Events run at various times today and tomorrow (Saturday and Sunday) – some even start Friday night - check the weekly events update on the town website for details. |
| Saturday, December 3, 2022 | Christmas Tree Lighting & Carol Sing is scheduled for Saturday afternoon at Stevens Hall at 5pm. |
| Sunday, December 4, 2022 | Christmas in the Village continues today. |
| Wednesday, December 7, 2022 | Pearl Harbor Day |

4.2 Roundtable

Vice Chairman Couture
Nothing to report

Selectman D’Angelo:
Nothing to report

249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298

Selectman Owens:
Nothing to report

Selectman Landau mentioned the Breakfast with Santa will be on December 10th, 2022, in the Multipurpose Room.

Vice Chairman Couture
Nothing to report

Selectman Owens:
Nothing to report

Chairman Myette
Nothing to report

4.3 Town Administrator’s Report

Ms. Dircks, President of the Seniors (not present) and Ms. Lufkin (not present) are planning the Boston Cane celebration.

4.4 Action Items
None

4.5 Non-Public Session(s)

Chairman Myette announced non-public sessions on pending litigation, employment, and finances.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II), (b) employment, (c) reputation, (e) pending litigation, and (j) financial information. Selectman D’Angelo 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 6:56 PM. Police Chief Berube and Mr. Paquette remained in the meeting room.

Police Chief Berube and Mr. Paquette departed the meeting room at 7:29 PM.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to come out of non-public session. Selectman Owens 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 8:14 PM.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on Employment. Selectman Owens 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.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on Pending Litigation. Selectman Owens 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.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Financial Information. Selectman Owens 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.

Vice Chairman Couture motioned to seal the minutes of the fourth non-public session, on Reputation. Selectman Owens 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

Vice Chairman Couture moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Owens 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 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert
Recording Secretary