

**Town of Chester  
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting  
Thursday, January 12, 2023  
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)  
Potential Non-Public Sessions  
Approval of Consent Agenda  
Police Department  
Conservation Commission  
Highway Department  
Legislative Update  
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 6:00pm.

*1.2 Roll Call*

Selectmen Present:

Chuck Myette  
Steve Couture  
Steve D’Angelo  
Stephen Landau  
Jeremy Owens

Town Administrador Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief  
Victor Chouinard, Conservation Commission  
Phil Gladu, Fire Chief  
Jason LaRochelle  
Nancy Myette  
Justin Paquette

Nick Tranquillo, Conservation Commission

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 Stevens Hall invoice to the agenda.

### *1.5 Public Comment*

Chairman Myette opened the meeting to public comment at 6:03pm.

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 6:04pm.

## **II. Consent Agenda**

### *2.1 Rate Sheets*

*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 – aye, Couture –aye, Landau – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed.***

## **III. New Business**

### *3.1 Potential Non-Public Session*

Chairman Myette announced a nonpublic on employment.

***Vice Chairman Couture motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II), (b) employment. 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.***

The meeting was closed to the public at 6:05 PM. Police Chief Berube and Mr. Larochelle remained in the meeting room.

Mr. Paquette entered the meeting room at 6:28 PM.

***Selectman Landau 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 6:43 PM.

### *3.2 Police Department*

Police Chief Berube presented Mr. Paquette for consideration of filling the Lieutenant’s position with the Police Department. It was explained Mr. Paquette would be second in command. Chairman Myette mentioned the Board has previously met with Mr. Paquette and welcomed him to the Police Department.

Chief Berube pointed out the department is slated to have two Sergeants. Both Corporals have expressed interest in the position. Both officers have been in Chester over 10 years and have exceptional reviews. Chief Berube is requesting the Board’s permission in promoting Corporal DiPerri and Corporal Kerkman to Sergeants in the department. The Board will be presented with their letter of interest and resumes.

***Selectman Landau motioned to allow Chief Berube to move forward with the promotions. Vice Chairman 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.***

Chief Berube mentioned one officer is in the process of joining Nashua Police Department. Nashua is offering \$84K compared to his \$54K in Chester. Chief Berube is requesting the Board consider an increase in midnight shift differential until the department is fully staffed or the end of this budget season. There will be midnight coverage, however the midnight patrol officers will not be rotating until more officers are hired. An extra incentive will show the officers we appreciate them. Chief Berube will provide a request for review.

Applications are being forwarded to Town Administrator Doda for the positions. Many of the applicants would have to either attend the Police Academy or test out and only have to get training on NH laws.

### *3.3 Conservation Commission*

Mr. Chouinard and Mr. Tranquillo presented the quote for the boundary survey for the east side of Lane Road.

Selectman Landau offered to contact Mr. Adler at Dubois & King for another bid. Mr. Chouinard mentioned the window to receive the bid is short if the Town wants to get this done.

Mr. Chouinard stated the current quote is for \$20K, would the funds be available. Selectman D’Angelo felt the money could be found in the budget. Vice Chairman Couture inquired if conservation funds could be used for the survey. Mr. Chouinard pointed out this is town owned property without conservation easements.

Mr. Chouinard will continue with Selectman Landau’s help to get another bid otherwise Mr. Chouinard will return next Thursday for consideration of the current bid.

### *3.4 Highway Department*

Chairman Myette introduced Mr. Piper as the new Supervisor of Roads. Road Agent Oleson and Mr. Piper will work together until the elections in March when the Road Agent term expires.

Chairman Myette explained Mr. Piper has been tasked with working on the budget and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). Mr. Piper feels some of the lines in the budget can be adjusted, however Mr. Piper has been busy.

Mr. Piper mentioned he will have the services of Mr. Oleson, MLM Construction and equipment until March 15<sup>th</sup>. The contract with Mr. Oleson to utilize MLM and their equipment that had been negotiated has been removed from the table. Mr. Piper has requested quotes to rent some of the equipment that the town needs. The rates are going to be much higher and there is limited availability for some equipment. Without equipment some of the jobs will have to wait. Mr. Piper has spoken to dealerships about purchasing an excavator and loader. Selectman Owens pointed out the town has known it would need equipment for many years.

Selectman Landau suggested hiring a few more laborers. He also pointed out that if the contract is still available, he would like to sign it.

Mr. Oleson reported Mr. Piper is doing an outstanding job. He explained many people worked on the agreement; the Board agreed to the proposal in nonpublic. It would be a guaranteed \$125K for one year which Mr. Oleson would have to earn during that year. The agreement was MLM equipment and manpower would be available when it was needed as it has been for the last 16 years. Selectman D’Angelo objected when it came time to vote on accepting the contract and the other Selectmen decided to hold off on signing. Mr. Oleson stated he will continue to back Mr. Piper in his new role as much as he can but he cannot promise the town that equipment or personnel would be available 24/7 like it is currently from his company.

Vice Chairman Couture thanked Mr. Oleson for his version. Chairman Myette mentioned there were questions on costs for the contract and the Board has a fiduciary responsibility. No one on the Board said they would not sign the contract, but some answers were needed before signing. Chairman Myette reiterated the hiring of another employee is needed so Mr. Piper can be a supervisor and not a worker.

### *3.5 Legislative Update*

This agenda item has been removed with the absence of State Representative Ford.

### *3.6 Warrant/ Budget/ Stevens Hall*

Chairman Myette reported the Budget Committee has asked for the town budget tomorrow. The Selectmen have looked at the budgets but not at some of the line items. Town Administrator Doda mentioned any changes to the budget during the first glance were changed. Highway budget will need to be relooked at by the Supervisor of Roads for adjustments.

Selectman Landau suggested the Stevens Hall steps be pushed out since no one uses the basement. Town Administrator Doda mentioned the items listed as projects were placed on Table 10 of the CIP for the upcoming Fiscal Year by the Planning Board. Vice Chairman Couture mentioned Maintenance Director Cavanaugh (not present) felt the replacement of the stairs were a necessity.

Selectman Landau feels the Town should look at grants for the Wason Pond causeway bridge reconstruction. Chairman Myette agreed the causeway bridge on the CIP is premature without a cost estimate and the engineering completed. Town Planner Hadik (not present) and Town Administrator Doda are researching and applying for possible grants.

Selectman Landau questioned why the drainage needs to be fixed since the Wason fields are available. Selectman Landau feels the requested amount on Table 10 will not necessarily fix the problem. The field is used by the school for soccer. Selectman Owens mentioned the issue with the school utilizing the Wason fields were transportation issues. Chairman Myette advised the Wason fields are low impact per the conservation easement and it was decided the leagues would not be played at Wason. Chairman Myette asked for Recreation to list the fields; Selectman Landau will speak to Mr. Dalrymple about Nichols Field. Chairman Myette recommended estimates for a permanent fix on the drainage be obtained. Selectman Landau explained if three of the items are moved to a different year, an excavator could be placed on the CIP.

Chairman Myette inquired what a good number would be for the highway CIP. Town Administrator Doda asked for Mr. Piper and Mr. Oleson to indicate what the plan for the roads this summer would be. The listed roads were what the Planning Board had on the Table 10 for projects. Chairman Myette mentioned grant applications have been submitted for Cole Road Culvert and there are ARPA funds available. The engineering and estimates have not been completed for the project. Town Administrator Doda explained they are not ready to go out to bid since things keep changing. Additional money has been requested for engineering. It is unclear what fiscal year the culvert will be done in. Town Administrator Doda and Mr. Piper will be meeting with Mr. Bourcier about the project. Chairman Myette suggested holding off on the Highway CIP until after the meeting with Mr. Bourcier.

Town Administrator Doda pointed out the road work Mr. Oleson would like to do this summer would be Halls Village Road. Chairman Myette mentioned \$125K was received for roads and the repairs for Carlin Street were authorized from that account. With the additional \$95K for bridges the Fremont Road bridge decking could be funded. Town Administrator Doda will request the amounts available for roadwork from Finance Director Smith (not present). Selectman D’Angelo requested the current amount available in the CIP accounts and a list of equipment needed for the Highway Department. Selectman D’Angelo feels it would be better to set the Table 10 items and not have Mr. Piper work on all the projects for his first year in the job. Vice Chairman Couture commented with the new position there should be a bid process for services and consultants.

Chairman Myette pointed out an invoice for the painting of Stevens Hall is still pending. He explained that could be funded by the ARPA funds the town will not be spending this year. Town Administrator Doda reviewed the different accounts (building improvement fund, unanticipated maintenance fund, operating budget and historical buildings fund) that could be used for funding the Stevens Hall painting project. The project is finished; however, the top portion of the building was not in the original scope of work. Vice Chairman Couture requested an estimate and contract for the painting near the top of the building.

***Selectman Landau motioned to approve the use of funds from the funds mentioned to pay for the painting of Stevens Hall. 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.***

Selectman D’Angelo requested a warrant article be added to replenish the different funds.

#### **IV. Selectmen’s Business**

##### ***4.1 Chairman’s Announcements***

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings and upcoming events:

Monday January 16, 2023      Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee Meeting at 7:00pm  
Budget Committee Meeting at 7:00pm

Tuesday January 17, 2023      ZBA Meeting at 7:00pm

Thursday, January 19, 2023      Board of Selectman Meeting at 6:00pm

Chairman Myette mentioned the Boston Post Cane was awarded to Millie Bennett during the seniors’ coffee hour on Tuesday. Town Administrator Doda thanked Town Clerk/ Tax Collector Lufkin (not present) and Recreation Director Reishus (not present) for all the work setting up the party.

Chairman Myette pointed out registered voters in the Town of Chester may file their Intent for Candidacy for open offices in the Town Clerk's office beginning January 25th through February 3rd.

The following seats are open for candidacy:

Elected Office	Term	# Of Open Offices
Board of Selectmen	3 years	2
Budget Committee	3 years	3
Budget Committee	1 year	1
Great Hill Cemetery Trustees	5 years	1
Library Trustees	3 years	1
School Board Member	3 years	2
School District Clerk	3 years	1
School Moderator	3 years	1
School Treasurer	3 years	1
Supervisor of the Checklist	6 years	1
Town Clerk/Tax Collector	3 years	1
Town Treasurer	3 years	1
Trustees of the Trust Fund	3 years	1
Village Cemetery Trustees	3 years	1
Wilcomb Townsend Trustees	5 years	1

Selectman Landau announced the passing of Chester resident Richard Bellemore SR.

#### *4.2 Roundtable*

Selectman Landau:

*Nothing to report*

Vice Chairman Couture:

*Nothing to report*

Selectman D’Angelo:

*Nothing to report*

Selectman Owens has one nonpublic on employment.

Chairman Myette reported the Winterfest plans are coming together. The event will be held at Spring Hill Farm on February 18<sup>th</sup> from 12:00pm to 5:00pm.

*4.3 Town Administrator’s Report*

*No comments*

*4.4 Action Items*

*None*

*4.5 Non-Public Session(s)*

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

***Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II), (a) public employees, (b) employment, (c) reputation, and (e) 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.***

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:02 PM.

***Selectman Landau 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 8:59 PM.

***Selectman Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on Employment. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on Employment. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Reputation. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the fourth non-public session, on Reputation. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the fifth non-public session, on Pending Litigation. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the sixth non-public session, on Reputation. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the seventh non-public session, on Reputation. Vice-Chairman 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 Owens motioned to seal the minutes of the eighth non-public session, on Public Employees. Vice-Chairman 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 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 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert  
Recording Secretary