

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, March 9, 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)
Consent Agenda
Warrant
Electronic Timecards
Spring Hill Farm/ Trustees Lease
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 6:04pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present:

Chuck Myette
Jeremy Owens (arrived at 6:09 PM)
Stephen Landau
Steve D’Angelo

Selectmen Absent:

Steve Couture

Town Administrador Debra Doda

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Victor Chouinard, Conservation Commission
Kevin Dolan
Phil Gladu, Fire Chief
Nancy Myette
James Piper, Supervisor of Roads

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 6:05pm.

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 6:06pm.

II. Consent Agenda

2.1 Post Closure Annual Report Landfill

No comments

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to allow Chairman Myette to sign the Landfill Post Closure Annual Report. Selectman Landau 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.

III. New Business

3.1 Conservation Commission

Mr. Chouinard presented two potential easements for the Board of Selectmen’s consideration.

Mr. Chouinard read the letter from the Conservation Commission.

Dear Selectboard:

On February 27th, 2023 the Chester Conservation Commission unanimously approved two conservation easements.

The first easement covers an 18.43 acre parcel in the North Woods, Tax Map 8, Lot 16 that was purchased by the Conservation Commission and conveyed to the town by Warranty Deed of Alexis Davis, dated October 18, 2017 and recorded in Book 5869, Page 2165.

The second easement covers four parcels also in the North Woods, Tax Map 8, Lot 13, and Tax Map 7, Lots 62 and 63. Approval to place conservation easements on these three town owned parcels was conferred by an affirmative vote of a Warrant Article, #19, on May 11, 1999 at the Town Meeting. In addition to the three above parcels, a fourth parcel is included in this easement. This parcel, which was purchased by the Conservation Commission, is Tax Map 7, lot 62-1, conveyed to the Town of Chester by Gerald E. Illig and Janet M. Illig, by deed dated August 26, 2019 and recorded in Book 6032, Page 20462

The easements on these parcels insure the protection of an area some of which is designated by The NH Fish and Game as Tier 1 habitat with important wildlife corridor connectivity.

Both of these easements contain the standard wording found in most of the conservation easements already in place.

We are requesting approval of these two easements this evening in support of the Conservation Commission fulfilling one of its important obligations.

Should you have any questions concerning this authorization please contact me.

Selectman Landau motioned to approve the easements for Tax Map 8, Lot 16, Tax Map 8, Lot 13, and Tax Map 7, Lots 62 and 63. 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 suggested posting signs on parcels with information about how it was acquired and by whom. Mr. Chouinard supports this idea.

3.2 Prepare for Town Meeting (moved to later in the meeting)

3.3 Highway Department Update (moved to later in the meeting)

3.4 Fire Department Hiring Update

Chief Gladu has three potential candidates for the open position in the Fire Department. One candidate has finished all the requirements and two candidates have one more test before any decision can be made. Once the tests have taken place then the official hiring of the best candidate can happen fairly quickly.

Chief Gladu mentioned two candidates have applied to be call members and former FT FF Keith Culligan has returned as a call member.

Chief Gladu stated storm coverage for the storm this past Saturday went well. There were two calls for service and both times the Highway Department was called out to clear the driveways for the ambulance. Selectman Landau inquired on the condition of the trucks at the Fire Department. Chief Gladu felt the trucks were clean and had no major issues. During the summer all the testing on the trucks will be performed.

Chief Gladu mentioned the Fire Department had an ice training at Wason Pond. It was well attended. Sandown had a few people attend and Derry sent the warming tent with snacks.

The Explorer program is back and has more than ten participants in the program. The spaghetti dinner will be held on March 25th and is posted on social media.

3.2 Prepare for Town Meeting

The Board went thru the warrant articles and planned who would speak on each article if needed. Selectman Landau mentioned some of the confusion at the School Board Meeting last evening. Selectman D’Angelo suggested a supplemental page be created with definitions and comparisons for

the tax rates from this year vs last year. Town Administrator Doda will draft a document for the residents at Town Meeting.

Town Administrator Doda mentioned the ballot vote on article #27 can be done by an accurate hand count. If Moderator Scott does not agree and keeps it as a ballot vote, the Board will request that it be moved ahead to allow for the one hour it needs to be open.

Selectman Landau inquired if the school has an emergency and has no money to fund it, is the Town responsible. Chairman Myette stated the school would need to use their unassigned first, and then if they could not cover the amount the Town would be responsible. Selectman D’Angelo advised a special town meeting would be needed.

3.3 Highway Department Update

Mr. Piper, Supervisor of Roads, announced with all the weather events and duration of storms he has exceeded those budget lines and most of the Winter Road Maintenance fund. Salt is getting harder to acquire. Mr. Piper stated they do a sand salt mixture for the beginning of the storm. The roads will need to be swept in the spring if too much has been used on the roads.

Mr. Piper is asking the Board for funds above and beyond the Winter Road Maintenance Fund. He explained without any more weather events there is still \$45K in contracts for the plow drivers to be paid out. Chairman Myette requested an update on total expenditures for the next Board Meeting to better understand how much more funding is needed.

Mr. Piper updated the Board on potential candidates and when interviews are taking place for the open position in the Highway Department.

Mr. Piper has been researching additional storage containers to be used at the salt shed. He would like to increase the amount of salt that can be stored, now that salt is getting harder to acquire. Chairman Myette suggested speaking to Town Planner Hadik (not present) to get this added to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Selectman Landau mentioned an article that he will distribute to the group on wheeled excavators. Mr. Piper has been researching many vendors and needs to consider what size machine would be more efficient for the town.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

Chairman Myette mentioned the State has determined the Shepard Home Bridge could be eligible for an 80-20 matching grant for 2027. They are asking if the Town would like the Shepard Home Bridge to be considered for the grant. The Town’s portion is estimated at \$352K which would need to be raised for the match. This bridge will have engineering completed this year.

Chairman Myette also mentioned the town is pursuing a few other grants for some of the projects in town.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to allow Chairman Myette to sign the NHDOT Bridge Funding opportunity for the bridge on Shepard Home Road. Selectman 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.

200
201 *4.1 Chairman’s Announcements*
202

203 Chairman Myette announced the following meetings and upcoming events:
204

205 Monday March 13, 2023 Conservation Commission Meeting at 6:00pm (Meeting
206 Room)
207 Budget Committee Meeting at 7:00pm (Rangeway)
208

209 Monday March 13, 2023 Wason Pond Commission Meeting at 7:00pm (Rangeway)
210

211 Wednesday March 15, 2023 Planning Board Meeting at 7:00pm
212

213 Tuesday March 14, 2023 Town Elections from 7:00 am to 7:00pm in the Multipurpose
214 room
215

216 Thursday March 16, 2023 Town Meeting at 6:00 pm in the Multipurpose room
217

218 *4.2 Roundtable*
219

220 Selectman Landau mentioned an upcoming webinar about potential funding opportunities
221 presented by the NH Preservation Alliance. This led to a conversation about investing in a grant
222 writer for the Town. The Town is missing grant opportunities. Chairman Myette feels it needs to be
223 an experienced person, as grant writing is an art. Selectman D’Angelo stated it’s not what you write,
224 it is who you know.
225

226 Chairman Myette mentioned Spring Hill Farm Trustees are applying for an AARP grant for the farm.
227

228 Selectman D’Angelo:
229

229 *Nothing to report*
230

231 Selectman Owens
232

232 *Nothing to report*
233

234 Chairman Myette:
235

235 *Nothing to report*
236

237 *4.3 Town Administrator’s Report*
238

239 Town Administrator Doda mentioned the different events that have been requested to be held at
240 the Transfer Station. This would include selling Girl Scout cookies, candidates campaigning for the
241 upcoming election, and passing out recycling flyers. The Board is fine with the events and the best
242 location would be the large area on the way out of the Transfer Station.
243

244 Selectman Landau questioned if the town had an ordinance for political signs in the center of town.
245 Town Administrator Doda advised one candidate’s sign was removed from the lawn at Stevens Hall.
246 Mr. Dolan, 219 Shepard Home Road, advised the candidates signs are not allowed on Town owned
247 property according to NH RSA 664:17.
248

Town Administrator Doda mentioned the church that currently meets on Sunday nights has asked to have their services in the morning. There is a concern with parking since both churches would be held at the same time. Selectman D’Angelo suggested the churches need to work it out and the town should not be involved in the decision.

The subpoena for documents referencing PFAS at the landfill was brought up. The Nobis paperwork will be sent as they do all the testing at the landfill.

4.4 Action Items

None

4.5 Non-Public Session(s)

Chairman Myette announced one non-public session.

Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II), (c) reputation and (j) financial information. Selectman 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.

The meeting was closed to the public at 7:56 PM.

Selectman Owens 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 with Couture absent.

The meeting was reopened to the public at 8:09 PM.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on Reputation. Selectman 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.

Selectman D’Angelo motioned to seal the minutes of the second 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 – absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

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 – absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janis A. Jalbert
Recording Secretary