

**Town of Chester
Selectboard’s Meeting
Thursday, May 4, 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)

NexTrex Bench: Ann Podlipny

Appointment to Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee: Ann Podlipny

Wason Pond Wrangler Update: Jessica Hatch

PD - Consideration of New Hire: Chief Berube

Highway Update: James Piper

Fire Department Purchase Request: Chief Gladu

Solar Working Group Mission

Consent Agenda

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 Selectboard to order at 6:00pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectboard Present:

Chuck Myette

Dana Theokas

Dick Trask

Stephen Landau

Selectboard Absent:

Steve Couture

Debra Doda, Town Administrator

Members of the Public Present at various times:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief

Valquerio Eiro

Phil Gladu, Fire Chief
Jessica Hatch (via Zoom)
Nancy Myette
James Piper, Supervisor of Roads
Ann Podlipny
Mason Rue
Beth Sautter
Saul Shriber

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 2.5 Highway Update: James Piper and 2.6 Fire Department Purchase Request.

1.5 Public Comment

Chairman Myette opened the meeting to public comment at 6:02pm.

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 6:03pm.

II. Appointments

2.1 NexTrex Bench: Ann Podlipny

Ms. Podlipny has received the NexTrex bench for recycling five hundred pounds of plastic which was collected at various locations in town. Ms. Podlipny inquired where the Selectboard would like it placed. Suggestions were Stevens Hall lawn and Spring Hill Farm. Ms. Podlipny advised she would need a truck and help getting the bench from her home to the designated location. Ms. Podlipny mentioned to celebrate the receipt of the bench, Mr. Gesel, Center Scoop Ice Cream, will be donating ice cream cones to the first twelve people who show up at the event on May 27, 2023.

Ms. Podlipny will continue collecting plastics and the bin which the Library no longer wishes to have will be placed at Stevens Hall.

Ms. Podlipny shared the benefits of having a composting pile at the Transfer Station. Chairman Myette suggested forming a small committee to form a plan and proposal; members should include Transfer Station, Spring Hill Farm, and the Remillards. He mentioned the need to get permits from the State, the pile will need to be screened, and issues with rats should be considered.

2.2 Appointment to Spring Hill Farm: Ann Podlipny

Ms. Sautter, Spring Hill Farm Chair, met Ms. Podlipny at a Spring Hill Farm workday and invited her to a meeting. She has continued attending meetings since. The Committee voted unanimously to have Ms. Podlipny as a member of the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee.

Selectman Landau motioned to appoint Ann Podlipny as a regular member of the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee with a term to expire May 31st, 2026. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

2.3 Wason Pond Wrangler Update: Jessica Hatch

Ms. Hatch briefed the Board on the Wason Pond Wrangler and how similar in spirit it is to the Wason Pond Pounder. Ms. Hatch mentioned this year they are limiting the event to two hundred participants to make sure they succeed this first year. The event is in two weeks and Ms. Hatch is requesting the Board not to allow animals at Wason Pond during the event. Chief Berube suggested closing the area the night before for set-up.

The Selectboard thanked Ms. Hatch for continuing with this event.

Selectman Landau motioned to not allow animals or vehicles at Wason Pond from dawn on May 19, 2023, to 6:00pm on May 20, 2023. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

2.4 PD – Consideration of New Hire: Chief Berube

Chief Berube requested and was granted prior to the meeting to add bike safety and a computer grant discussion.

Chief Berube introduced Officer Kehoe, coordinator of the bike rodeo, to speak the event. Officer Kehoe mentioned May is Bike Safety month and the 2nd Annual Bike Rodeo will be on Saturday, May 6th, 2023, from 10:00am to 2:00pm at Chester Academy. The rodeo will have different events to promote bike safety. Officer Kehoe mentioned he applied for and received a grant for 20 helmets to give away on Saturday. Chief Berube thanked Officer Kehoe for a job well done.

Chief Berube explained the computers in the cars known as Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) were on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for a few years. The Selectboard decided not to fund them from the CIP but purchase the MDTs using funding from the Police Detail Account. During all the confusion a warrant article to utilize the Police Detail Account was never presented to the town for consideration. The Current MDTs are from 2017 and were originally funded from a Homeland Security grant. Chief Berube explained they started with four and now only one and a half MDTs are working. Another concern is Rockingham County Sheriff’s office is updating their software this year and even the working MDTs will not meet requirements.

Chief Berube had conversations with the Board previously about possibly encumbering the money at the end of the fiscal year. With this being a critical need for the department, Chief Berube reached out to NH Office of Highway Safety for assistance. Chief Berube presented a quote for five MDTs with printers, charging stations, and installation kits. These will allow five cruisers to take reports in cars, investigate on the side of the road, get instantaneous information from dispatch, and file e-crash reports.

The original quote was \$39,992.70 and NH Office of Highway Safety, based on the agreement, would pay 100% of some of the items and 50% of some of the other items. Chief Berube asked for an

amendment to Chester Highway Safety grant 23-034 to enter into an agreement to accept an additional \$18,076.33 from NH Office of Highway Safety with the town’s portion being \$21,925.37.

Chief Berube asked that the Board encumber the money if they approve this amendment. Chairman Myette stated the Board has not identified if there would be money left at the end of the fiscal year. Town Administer Doda mentioned Finance Director Smith (not present) estimates around \$400K left at the end of the fiscal year. Chairman Myette reminded the Board that in the past the ending number was much lower than expected. The Board should make sure the departments do not make purchases just because they have funds left in their budget.

Selectman Trask motioned to enter into the amendment agreement to accept \$18,067.33 from NH Office of Highway Safety added to Chester Highway Safety grant 23-034, and the town’s portion will be \$21,925.37. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

Chief Berube presented Mr. Eiro to the Board for consideration of the Sergeant Detective position in the Police Department. Chief Berube explained the hiring process that the department follows for new hires. Chairman Myette explained the salary has already been discussed and this is an open position that had previously been vacated.

Mr. Eiro briefed the Board on his background starting with his childhood in Lawrence, Massachusetts to his law enforcement career. Mr. Eiro explained that during his law enforcement career with Plaistow Police Department he achieved many ranks and received lots of training. Mr. Eiro also works for the Atkinson Police Department.

Selectwoman Theokas asked how he felt he would fit in to a small department. Mr. Eiro feels he understands what the department wants to achieve, and he understands how to get it done. He would also be a great mentor for all the officers with all his years of experience with different ranks and road experiences.

Selectman Landau motioned to appoint Mr. Eiro to the Chester Police Department as the Full Time Sergeant Detective. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

2.5 Highway update: James Piper

Mr. Piper, Supervisor of Roads, presented pictures to the Board documenting water that had flooded roads in town with all the recent rain. All roads have reopened with the exception of Edwards Mill Road. The culvert could be compromised, and it will not be known until the water levels go down a little more. Chairman Myette stated these areas are repeat offenders for flooding and should be placed on the CIP.

Mr. Piper mentioned he has been stockpiling rock to fix a few of the areas but they need equipment. The money to rent equipment is not in this year’s budget so it will need to wait till next year. Many line items are overspent. Chairman Myette asked Mr. Piper to look at his budget and get a good estimate on any surplus.

Mr. Piper stated he will not be at the next Board meeting due to vacation, but he will have a new candidate for the Highway Department to present at the meeting. Chairman Myette asked that the information on the new candidate be sent to the Board prior to the meeting.

Selectman Landau mentioned Lane Road is falling apart. Mr. Piper said it is on the CIP for FY 27-28.

Selectwoman Theokas thanked Mr. Piper for the sign at the beginning of a closed road vs at the closure.

2.6 Fire Department Purchase: Chief Gladu

Fire Chief Gladu presented a quote for four new 4-Gas meters. They monitor carbon monoxide and oxygen levels. All the vehicles carry them; however, two are not working and they cannot be repaired since they are obsolete. The quote is for four new meters and vehicle chargers and a docking station. The entire package is \$6K and there is money in the budget for the purchase.

Selectman Trask motioned to purchase the 4-gas meters package as presented. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

Chief Gladu mentioned he is not sure if they are currently in stock. It could take a few weeks to get them. Selectman Landau suggested holding off on the purchase until the next budget. Chairman Myette mentioned they could be rented if needed. Chief Gladu stated the order needs to be placed now.

III. New Business

3.1. Solar Working Group Mission

Chairman Myette presented the draft copy of the Solar Workgroup Mission, goals, and objectives in Vice Chairman Couture’s absence. There were no questions from the Board.

Mr. Shriber requested a copy of the document as a member of the Solar Workgroup.

Selectman Trask motioned to allow the use of the Solar Workgroup mission, goals, and objectives as presented. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

IV Consent Agenda

4.1 Minutes April 13, 2023 and April 20, 2023

No comments on the minutes.

Selectman Trask motioned to approve the minutes of April 13, 2023. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – abstained. With three in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent and Landau abstaining.

Selectman Trask motioned to approve the minutes of April 20, 2023. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – abstained. With three in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent and Landau abstaining.

V. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Myette announced the following meetings and upcoming events:

Tuesday May 9, 2023	Conservation Commission Meeting at 6:00pm
Wednesday May 10, 2023	Planning Board at 7:00pm
Monday May 15, 2023	Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee Meeting at 7:00pm
Tuesday May 16, 2023	ZBA Meeting at 7:00pm
Thursday May 18, 2023	Selectboard Meeting at 6:00pm
Saturday, May 5, 2023	Bike Rodeo from 10:00am to 2:00pm at Chester Academy. There will be bike tune-ups and car seat inspections by our very own Officer Michael Kehoe.
Tuesday May 9, 2023	School Safety - Parent Night & Information at 7:00pm at Chester Academy. Presentation and Q&A on school safety, with a focus on training and preparedness for violent critical incidents through the employment of the ALICE protocol.
Chief Berube explained the ALICE protocol is active shooter training.	
Saturday, May 13, 2023	Chester Historical Society free concert in Stevens Memorial Hall @ 2:00 PM! Light refreshments will be provided.

Chairman Myette presented items for signature.

Selectman Landau motioned to sign of the MOU between the Cattlemen, Spring Hill Farm, and the Town. Selectman Trask seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –abstained, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With three in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent and Theokas abstaining.

Selectman Trask motioned to sign Town Clerk / Tax Collector Celentano’s rate sheet. Selectwoman Theokas seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

Chairman Myette mentioned the next two items were request for raffles held in Town. One is for bow and arrows and the second is for a shotgun being held by the 4-H JRAL. Selectwoman Theokas explained this a great program for the kids.

Selectman Trask motioned to sign both raffles requested by 4-H JRAL. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.

The question was raised about why these were given to the Board to approve. Chairman Myette stated the RSA requires a permit for all raffles.

4.2 Roundtable

Selectman Landau stated Maintenance Director Cavanaugh (not present) researched where to get rid of the concrete and brick material that has been at the Transfer Station for many years. The Transfer Station cannot accept this material as it is not on the permit. The quote to remove the rubble will be around \$1600.00. Selectman Landau suggested moving or covering the container so no more material can be dumped.

Selectman Landau mentioned the structural engineer should be calling to tour the PD roof and other roofs at the municipal building. Currently there are no plans on when the roofs can go out to bid. Selectman Trask mentioned new leaks in the Recreation Office from all the rain.

Selectman Landau has two non-public sessions on employment.

Selectwoman Theokas mentioned her tour of town owned buildings with Maintenance Supervisor Cavanaugh and Mr. Dalrymple (not present). It was suggested the Maintenance Department walk all the buildings creating a list of maintenance issues. Once the list is complete, they can put a plan in place to fix deficiencies.

Selectman Trask:
Nothing to report.

Chairman Myette has an employment non-public.

4.3 Town Administrator’s Report

Town Administrator Doda mentioned the state has asked if the Town would like to switch the permit at the Transfer Station from a standard permit to a permit by notification. Currently the Town has a standard permit, and any changes need to be approved by the state. A permit by notification allows the Town to tell the State what we want to do. Town Administrator Doda will send in the paperwork to switch the permit.

Town Administrator Doda mentioned at the next meeting there would be about a dozen reappointments to various committees and commissions. Some of the people have been on the committees for years. A discussion followed about if the members up for reappointment needed to physically come to the meeting or not. The Selectboard would be sent a list of reappointments and if they had questions for individuals those individuals would be asked to attend a meeting. Any new appointments will continue to come to a Selectboard meeting.

4.4 Action Items

None

350 4.5 Non-Public Session(s)

351
352 Chairman Myette announced five non-public sessions.

353
354 ***Selectman Landau motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II) (a) public***
355 ***employees, (b) employment, and (c) pending litigation. Selectman Trask seconded the motion. A***
356 ***roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye.***
357 ***With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

358
359 The meeting was closed to the public at 8:21 PM. Police Chief Berube remained in the room.

360
361 Mr. Rue was in the room from 8:48 PM – 9:15 PM and 9:19 PM – 9:21 PM.

362
363 Police Chief Berube also departed the room at 9:21 PM.

364
365 ***Selectman Trask motioned to come out of non-public session. Selectwoman Theokas seconded***
366 ***the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent,***
367 ***Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

368
369 The meeting was reopened to the public at 10:11 PM.

370
371 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the first non-public session, on Employment.***
372 ***Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye,***
373 ***Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture***
374 ***absent.***

375
376 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the second non-public session, on Employment.***
377 ***Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye,***
378 ***Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed with Couture***
379 ***absent.***

380
381 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the third non-public session, on Public***
382 ***Employees. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye,***
383 ***Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed***
384 ***with Couture absent.***

385
386 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the fourth non-public session, on Pending***
387 ***Litigation. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye,***
388 ***Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed***
389 ***with Couture absent.***

390
391 ***Selectman Trask motioned to seal the minutes of the fifth non-public session, on Public***
392 ***Employees. Selectman Landau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Myette – aye,***
393 ***Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With four in favor, the motion passed***
394 ***with Couture absent.***

395
396 VI. Adjournment

398 ***Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Trask seconded the motion. A roll***
399 ***call vote was taken Myette – aye, Trask– aye, Theokas –aye, Couture –absent, Landau – aye. With***
400 ***four in favor, the motion passed with Couture absent.***

401
402 The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 PM.

403
404 Respectfully submitted,

405
406 Janis A. Jalbert
407 Recording Secretary